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# Countering Illegal Wildlife Trade in Southeast Asia: A Critical Comparison of the Leading Strategies and Their Corresponding Initiatives

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# Countering Illegal Wildlife Trade in Southeast Asia: A critical comparison of the leading strategies and their corresponding initiatives.

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## **Abstract:**

This study provides a critical comparison of the leading strategies to mitigate illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia, designated in the paper as Enforcement and Awareness initiatives. The purpose of this comparison is to determine the differences and similarities of those initiatives regarding their respective approaches, effectiveness to tackle illegal wildlife trade and influential parameters.

In the first part, the paper examines Enforcement and Awareness initiatives based on the initiatives' underlying theories, literature and case studies. It reveals the presence of common characteristics summarised under four thematic points: (1) the complexity, (2) velocity, (3) adaptability and (4) scope of an initiative. In a second stage, the study provides an analysis of the empirical findings collected according to the thematic area previously presented. Evidence for this study was obtained from interviews and observations made in the context of an internship.

Thanks to the thematic analysis, the paper approves the presence of specificities and similarities between Enforcement and Awareness initiatives and suggests the consideration of two parameters essential for the success of the initiatives: (1) the governmental authorities' commitment to participate in the conduct of Enforcement or Awareness-related activities and (2) the involvement of non-governmental actors ensuring an efficient conduct.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Illegal Wildlife Trade, Counter-trafficking, Behavioural Change, Southeast Asia.

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## **Summary:**

In an effort to counter illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia, two key approaches stand out. The first approach refers to the Enforcement initiatives aiming to disturb the supply chain of illicit wildlife products in the region through law enforcement activities. The second approach concerns the Awareness initiatives, developed towards the demand driving the illegal wildlife trade in the region, with the intention of discouraging the final consumers to buy wildlife products.

This paper asks how the two approaches are respectively conducted across Southeast Asia by comparing and contrasting their respective activities, outcomes and barriers. To achieve this, it relies on the arguments of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives' practitioners along with personal observations.

From this assessment the significance of two factors affecting the potential of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives is proven to counter illegal wildlife trade. On the one hand, the paper acknowledges that a country's implication is crucial for establishing appropriate framework and easing the implementation of the initiatives. On the other hand, it underlines the necessity of third parties to support and control the countries' commitment.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Illegal Wildlife Trade, Counter-trafficking, Behavioural Change, Southeast Asia.

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# 1 Introduction

On December 2013, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March as the “World Wildlife Day”, same day in 1973 of the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES 2015). On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2015, the theme was “Together, let’s get serious about wildlife crime”. Indeed, the call is timely, as nowadays the trafficking of wildlife resources constitute the third largest illegal trade in the world (Nellemann et al. 2014) valued between USD 7-23 billion annually (Nellemann et al. 2014).

The phenomenon is also not recent, as demonstrated by the creation of CITES. The convention has been created in the 1970s with the purpose of controlling, reducing or eliminating the international trade of endangered species (Favre 1989). At this time, international wildlife trade was already present but less intense than today. The products associated with the exploitation of wildlife (ivory, meat...) also increased in rarity due to an overexploitation. It makes such resources more valuable and therefore reinforced this vicious circle (Courchamp et al. 2006). In an effort to mitigate this rapidly increasing issue, the political scene as well as civil society progressively became involved, and international authorities as well as non-profit organisations emerged.

Despite such efforts, overexploitation of wildlife resources persisted and grown in intensity enough to be considered a serious threat for harvested ecosystems.

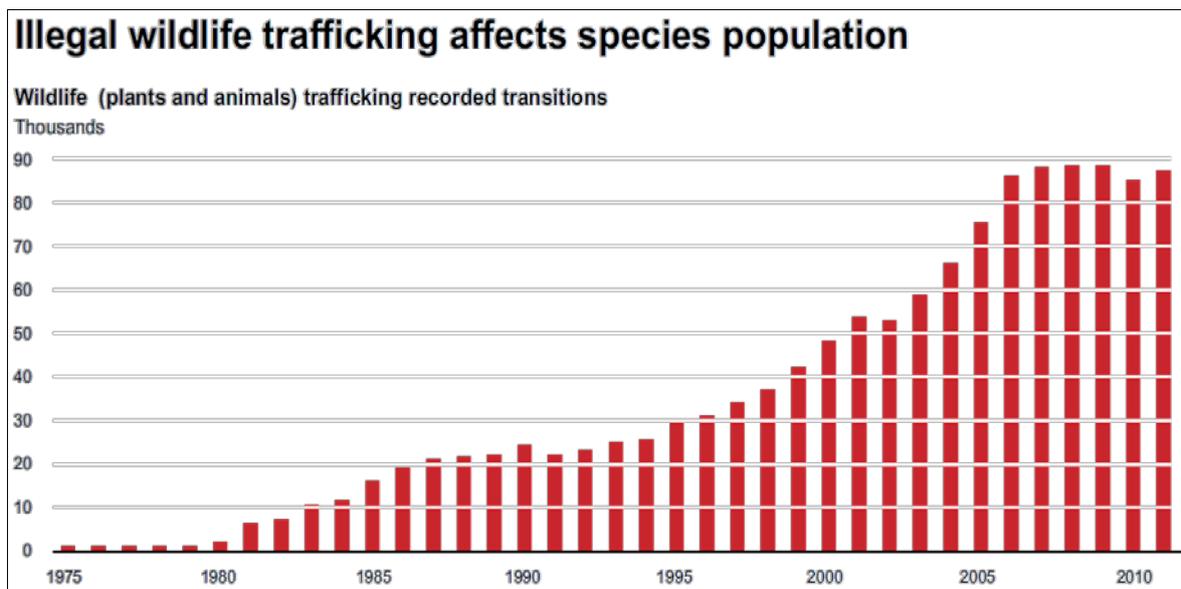


Fig.1. Wildlife trafficking recorded transitions (Nellemann et al. 2014).

Various reasons can explain the expansion of the phenomenon and the failure of the past efforts to counter it. Regulation frameworks have been developed in most of the implicated countries but enforcement systems remained weak (Ayling 2013). As result, wildlife trafficking represents a high profit activity with low risk and has thus attracted various criminal syndicates over the past few decades (ibid.). Such actors are well organised and an international environmental crime network emerged, within which participants are able to adapt themselves and their activities to bypass encountered barriers in enforcement and regulation (Ayling 2013; Nellemann et al. 2014).

Although wildlife trafficking is an international occurrence, some countries and regions are particularly affected (Majumdar et al. 2014). Among these regions China and Southeast Asian countries began to be more involved over the last years in this illegal trade particularly as Transit and Consumer countries (TRAFFIC 2008), principally explained by the growing demand for wildlife products in those regions (Bennett 2011).

Indeed, Southeast Asian countries tend to consume wildlife products for different purposes, from medical to ornamental needs (TRAFFIC 2008). With recent economic growth in the region came stronger buying power, reinforcing dramatically the demand in wildlife products with the arrival of new consumers (TRAFFIC 2008), intensifying the illegal wildlife trade. In view of these elements, the extent of the damages caused by wildlife trade in Southeast Asia arguably calls for the development of appropriate initiatives to counter wildlife trade in this region.

Two prevailing strategies may be demarcated as forms of mitigating wildlife crime: Enforcement and Awareness, though they are not always discrete in practice. For clarity's sake, however, enforcement initiatives refer to the measures aiming to strengthen legislation framework, investigations and sanctions in order to counter illegal wildlife trade activities (TRAFFIC 2008) while Awareness initiatives consider informing and implicate the stakeholders (especially the consumers) involved in the wildlife trade and expecting behavioural change as another method to mitigate illegal wildlife trade (TRAFFIC 2008).

Based on these two approaches currently applied to wildlife trafficking, this paper will ascertain the effectiveness of the previously introduced initiatives in the current context. It will provide an overview of their respective strengths and weaknesses as well as possible connections between the two. The following research questions will be considered in order to find the desired information:

- 1. How do Enforcement and Awareness initiatives respectively aim to mitigate illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia?*

It is essential, here, to first explore the philosophy and normative and practical expectations behind those strategies according to the region's specific context. Such study might provide a situational overview and account for the specifics of each initiatives.

- 2. What is the actual effectiveness of those approaches in countering illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia?*

Based on an appropriate understanding of the current status of the illegal wildlife trade and mitigating measures, this paper will examine the effectiveness of those approaches when put in practices. This would provide an identification of the factors affecting the operational success of approaches in praxis, and depict their associated barriers and opportunities. Finally, the paper asks:

### *3. What are the influential factors of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives?*

The paper will explore the critical components associated to Enforcement and Awareness initiatives and the strategies adopted by the initiatives' practitioners with regard to those elements.

The research presupposes that Enforcement and Awareness initiatives include unique results, challenges and barriers since they are premised on two radically different strategies and philosophies, due to their personal approaches and field of action. Those elements can be considered as parameters affecting the results of each initiatives.

Secondly it has to be mentioned that the paper operates with the assumption that such parameters can be perceived as internal (depending on the approach, methods used, resources, targets...) or external (political, social, economic factors...) to the related initiative.

Finally, the normative expectation of the complementarity between the two initiatives will be explored to observe how they can benefit from each other in their goal to counter illegal wildlife trade. Hence, the paper has a forward-looking dimension to improve effective mitigation of wildlife trade crimes, potentially by merging approaches where appropriate.

In what follows, the philosophies behind the two approaches will be critically compared and contrasted. Next, the way in which each approach operates in the wildlife trade context will be outlined. Finally barriers and opportunities will be highlighted and discussed, feeding into a final discussion on ways forward to combat the wildlife trade crime in Southeast Asia.

In the purpose of providing a baseline understanding of the issue, the paper will introduce the background of illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia and the initiatives implemented in order to counter it as well as the drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade. The next sections will describe the theoretical framework and methods employed to gather desired information. Empirical findings will be consolidated under specific headings in the ensuing section. Final sections will discuss these findings and a summary of the key elements will conclude this paper.

## 2 Background

To provide a general understanding of the situation, this section will first introduce the illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia through specific case studies such as Rhino horn smuggling (Ayling 2013) as well as general facts about illegal wildlife market (Nellemann et al. 2014; Rosen & Smith 2010). This part will moreover contribute to identify the actors involved in the illegal wildlife trade with a focus on crime syndicates and their motivations (Ayling 2013; Duffy 2010; Nellemann et al. 2014).

In a second phase, this section will focus on the measures implemented since the consciousness about the risk of wildlife trade raised on an international scale. It will be highlighted the presence of actors, distinguishable from the scope of their work, international such as CITES or regional with the case of the ASEAN WEN, an intergovernmental network in Southeast Asia aiming to straighten the cooperation in the region (Rosen & Smith 2010), their nature, governmental based or non for profit. Finally their strategy to mitigate wildlife trafficking will be relayed with an emphasis on the two leading approaches in this field, Enforcement and Awareness.

After providing an overview of the illegal wildlife trade and the actors involved toward this issue, the paper will turn its attention to the challenges faced by the initiatives against the trade.

### 2.1 Illegal Wildlife Trade in Southeast Asia

#### 2.1.1 Origin of wildlife trade in Asia

The commerce of living wildlife and wildlife products is not a recent phenomenon in Southeast Asia. Historically, premises of transnational wildlife trade date back to the period of the Chinese Ming Dynasty with the explorer Zheng He. Zeng He conducted many explorations in the direction of the African continent between 1405-1433 (Li 2012), where he developed trade relationships and imported various products to China such as ivory, rhino horn as well as living animals (Li 2012). Regarding regional trades, it has been traced back to 2600 BCE in the case of Rhino horn (Ayling 2013). Such historical roots implicated a strong role of wildlife trade in the development of the region and exchanges between countries also led to share cultural preferences such as food, clothing or medicine.(Knight 2004).

Those exchanges were done over centuries and Southeast Asian countries progressively became important markets for wildlife products, as observed in the case of ivory, for which Southeast Asia was firmly established as leading destination in the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Machado 2014). It appeared later that wildlife trade subsisted since it played a crucial role in local wealth development as indicated by few evidences, such as a description of the “Siam-Macao-China” trade in 1601, mentioning an abundance of wildlife products traded as well as its impact on wealth development in sources areas (Lourido 1996). This leads concerned areas to focus on activities towards wildlife products and local specializations emerged during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries such as ivory craftsmanship or exportation of raw ivory to Thailand (Martin & Stiles 2000). The increase of activities related to wildlife products combined with the economic growth of the 20<sup>th</sup> century entailed that ivory within Southeast Asia could no longer

satisfy the demand. Consequently, Southeast Asian countries switched promptly from exporting countries to importing ones, legally or not (ibid.).

### 2.1.2 Purposes of demand for wildlife products

The trades described earlier had been driven by a demand motivated by various purposes. In *Making a Killing Or Making a Living: Wildlife Trade, Trade Controls, and Rural Livelihoods*, the authors develop a list of the various forms of products traded internationally (Dilys et al. 2002). Among them we can identify the following as important in the context of Southeast Asia:

- **Medicines:** A strong belief in Traditional Chinese Medicine is evident in many countries in Southeast Asia. Indeed, in the case of wildlife, this medicine is based on the "...emphasis on the spirit of the animal as embodied in its flesh and bones" (Ayling, 2013, p.61). However it appears that many species regarded as important in TCM also figured as endangered (Moltke & Spaninks 2000). Two major cases can be perceived in the region, Rhino horn and Tiger bones. In TCM, rhino horn is grounded to a powder and taken orally for its medicinal virtues "...ranging from hangover relief to palliation of fever, rheumatism, gout, and stroke"(Ayling, 2013, p.61). Tiger bones are used In TCM principally as an anti-inflammatory medicine and other parts such as claws and fat are also used (Duffy 2010).
- **Food:** Trading wildlife as food rapidly progressed from subsistence and sometimes ceremonial purposes (Srikosamatara et al. 1992) to symbolic purposes of displaying wealth (Duffy 2010; Pullin & Knight 2003). Some wildlife meat consumed locally came to be traded internationally, which dramatically affected species populations. Indeed, such products are still considered as luxury products in Southeast Asia due to their prices being markedly higher than domestic meat (Srikosamatara et al. 1992).
- **Ornaments:** Various animal parts are used for ornamental purposes, including ivory, coral, turtle shell, skin...(Dilys et al. 2002). Ivory appears as an important one in this category. As well as the previous points, such trade had a significant impact through history in developing international trades (Duffy 2010). In Southeast Asia, it exists a strong cultural attachment to ornamental ivory carving, realised for various purposes such as statues, musical instruments or personal seals (Duffy 2010). Increasing interest of Southeast Asian countries for ivory coming from African elephants is explained by its characteristic of being larger and easier to carve than ivory from Asian elephants (Duffy 2010).
- **Pets:** Possession of exotic pets has been observed as a growing trend. Such opportunities were identified by smugglers and currently exploited (Majumdar et al. 2014). Various elements can explain this motivation but it seems that popularization of species through media (Majumdar et al. 2014), and keeping exotic pets as status symbols (Nellemann et al. 2014) are the main factors soliciting demand for exotic pets.

### 2.1.3 Actors involved in the trade

Today, it is accepted that illegal wildlife trade is happening internationally (Ayling 2013). Moreover, this trade can be observed in key countries, present in Africa and Asia (Ayling 2013; Nellemann et al. 2014) with routes organized as follows:

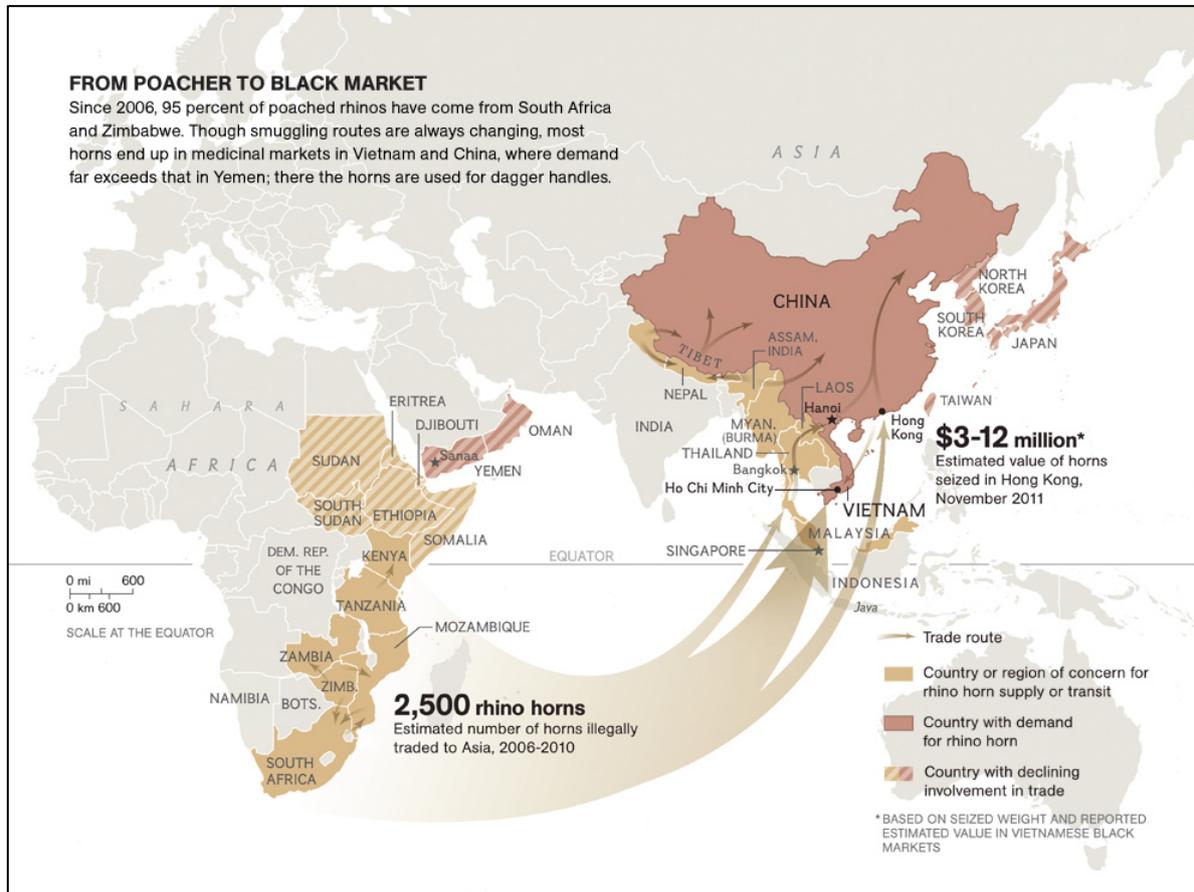


Fig.2. Rhino horn trafficking routes (Mason & Sperry 2012).

Countries involved in illegal wildlife trade can be differentiated according to their role in smuggling wildlife. The first stage involves *Source countries* which are regions rich in term of biodiversity, with specific species (desired by consumers) in abundance or rare and unique species (Majumdar et al. 2014). The next countries are categorised as *Transit countries* and can be identified by the presence of parameters facilitating illegal wildlife trade such as good infrastructure (roads, hub airports, seaports...), strategic geographic location (between source and consumer countries), special trade agreements, level of corruption...(Majumdar et al. 2014). Final stage countries are *Consumer countries*, where buying power and demand for wildlife products reside (Majumdar et al. 2014). In the case of trade routes from Africa to Southeast Asia, major consumer countries are China and Vietnam (Ayling 2013; Majumdar et al. 2014; TRAFFIC 2008).

While wildlife trade across Southeast Asia historically involves merchants and explorers (see 2.1.1 *Origin of wildlife trade in Asia.*) the situation rapidly evolves to organised criminal activity. Indeed, the overexploitation of species conducted to the establishment of measures in order to save them from extinction (see 2.2.1. *From an impulse of international actors.*) such as bans on the wildlife market. Combined with scarcity of products, this increased illegal market prices in Southeast Asia as it can be noticed below:

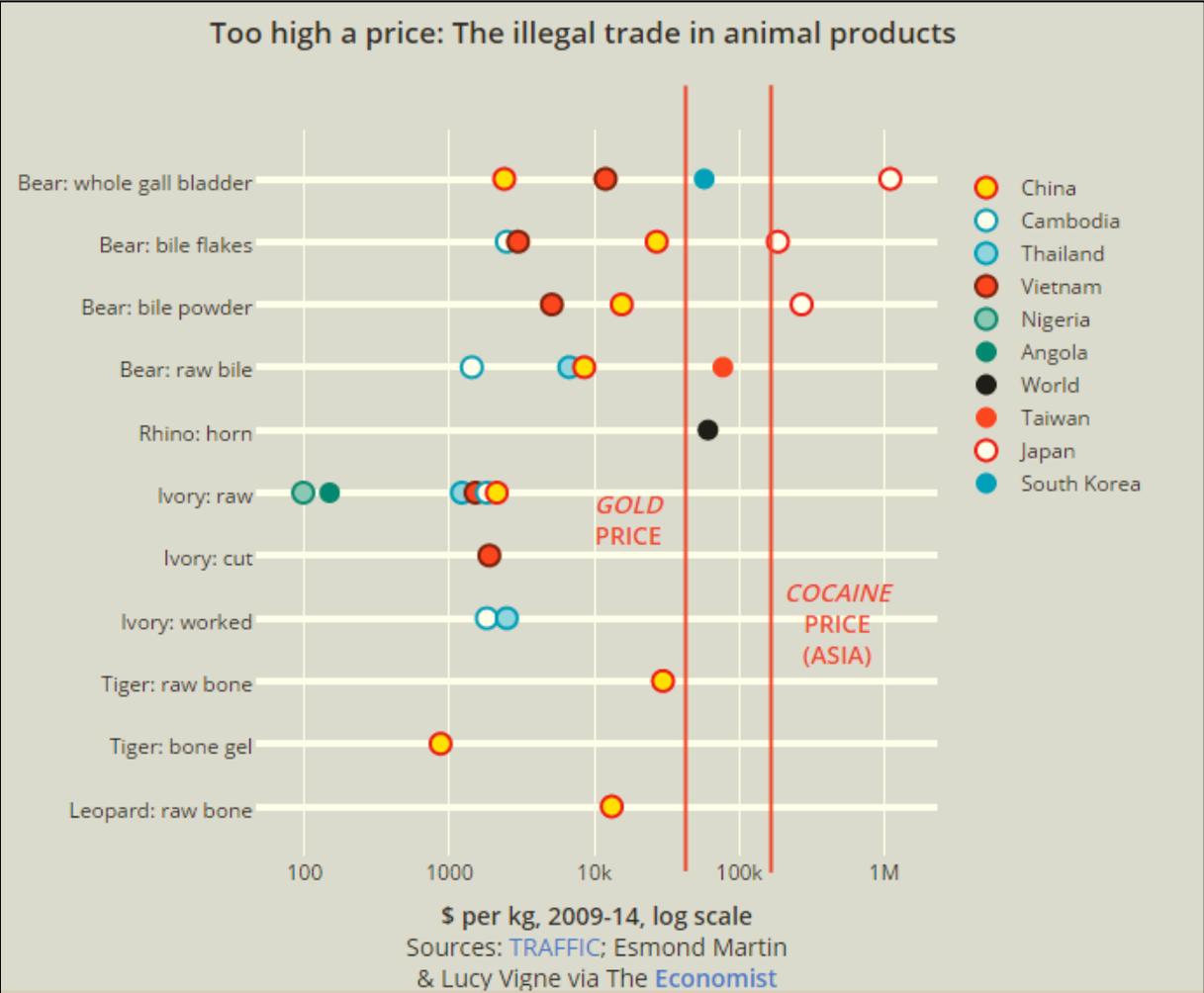
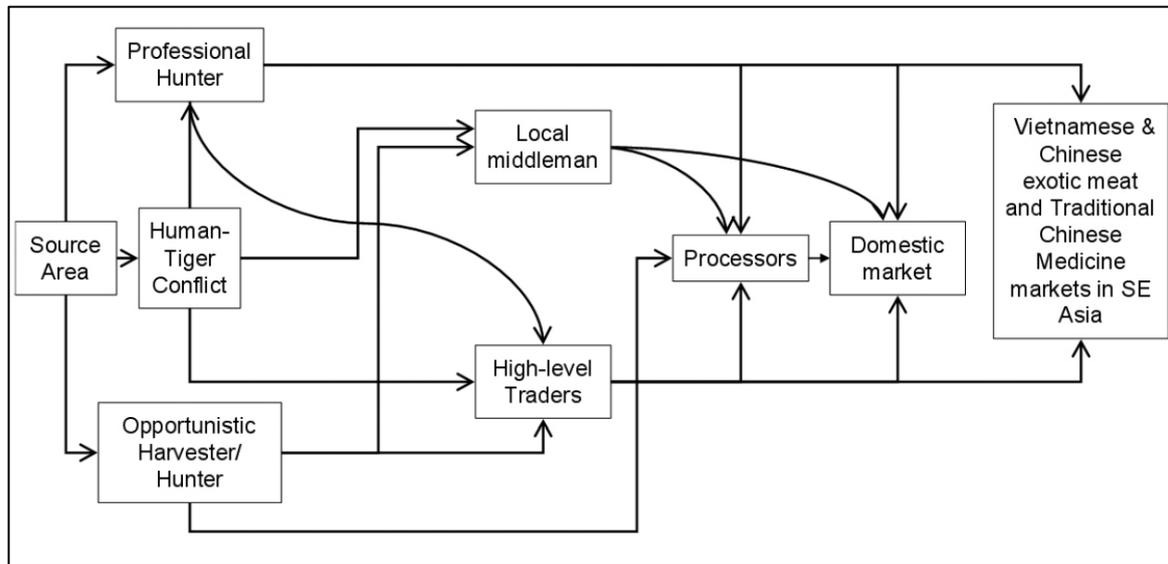


Fig.3. Value of wildlife products

Such a market, by providing high earnings with minimal risk for perpetrators, motivated crime syndicates to get involved in this business, more lucrative than others illegal activities (Bennett 2011; Duffy 2010; TRAFFIC 2008).

Due to its lucrative nature and depending to the type of illegal wildlife products traded, wildlife trafficking involves various type of actors in Southeast Asia (TRAFFIC 2008;



UNODC 2013), as illustrated by the case of tiger trade presented below:

Fig.4. Trade flow diagram for Tigers in Southeast Asia (TRAFFIC 2008)

- *Hunters/Harvesters*: illegal wildlife harvesters can be distinguished in two categories, *professional hunters* and *rural harvesters* (UNODC 2013). The latter is described as “predominantly rural poor people engaged in the trade to supplement otherwise low incomes” (UNODC 2013, p.84).
- *Traders/Middle-men*: middle-men are involved if the traffic requires to cover long distances. Such participants are presented as “are not necessarily wildlife traders but rather experts in the contraband of illegal goods, including drugs. Individuals involved may include domestic and international specialists in storage, handling, transport, processing, packaging, exporting, marketing, security and retailing. Various participants may handle ‘official’ expenditures (such as purchasing permits and paying fines), and ‘unofficial’ expenditures (bribes)” (UNODC 2013, p.83).
- *Processors*: the processors are in charge of transforming the raw part in order to collect various wildlife products. In the case of tiger trade, processors separate the skin, bones and meat from raw parts that will be sold separately. Those actors are “not widespread and largely consist of small-scale family-owned and -operated businesses processing for the traditional medicine market. This is particularly the case in Vietnam, but in other countries processors and retailers are usually one and the same” (TRAFFIC, 2008, p.40).
- *Retailers*: As the final piece in the puzzle, retailers’ profiles may vary depending of the type of products sold and clients targeted (See 2.1.4 Purposes of demand for wildlife

*products*). They are usually established in traditional medicine businesses or restaurants and operate in major urban centres where enforcement is weak (TRAFFIC 2008).

While the literature provides a categorisation of the actors involved in wildlife trafficking, it has to be acknowledged that in practice, roles may be blurred between professional and nonprofessional and such categories are probably not as discrete (von Essen et al. 2014).

## 2.2 Counter-trafficking initiatives in Southeast Asia

### 2.2.1 Enforcement and Awareness measures in Southeast Asia.

While various types of interventions to counter illegal wildlife trade have been implemented, Enforcement and Awareness related interventions are considered as the core elements of mitigation today (TRAFFIC 2008).

Enforcement initiatives encompass legislative and regulatory interventions, targeting harvesters, traders and consumers of wildlife products (Wellsmith 2011). Such interventions expect to reduce the illegal wildlife trade by strengthening level and range of restrictions and discourage participants (TRAFFIC 2008). Two forms of intervention can be distinguished: the *preventative* interventions that are banning trades of specific wildlife products and the *regulative* interventions, establishing controls and quotas on wildlife trade (ibid.). The presence of other norms, rules and codes of conduct evolving toward wildlife trade in Southeast Asia can also be noted (ibid.). Enforcement initiatives involve various participants but there is a strong focus on working with local authorities in order to ensure that legal framework is properly implemented (Majumdar et al. 2014).

Awareness initiatives, on the other hand, are based on the assumption that raising awareness publically regarding the unsustainable and illegal nature of wildlife trade and its consequences might reduce their implication in it via a change in attitudes and practices (TRAFFIC 2008). These interventions are quite diverse regarding the methods employed (PSAs, documentaries, public events, public display...) as well as audience targeted (harvesters, traders, consumers, hoteliers, medical practitioners, general public...) (ibid).

### 2.2.2 From an impulse of international actors...

With the increasing amount of wildlife populations crossing international boundaries thanks to international trade and due to its worrying development, it appeared necessary to develop an international initiative in order to improve co-operation between countries (Duffy 2010): the CITES. Previously introduced, this convention aims to ensure that international trade in wild fauna and flora does not threaten their survival (ibid.). Through a system of Appendices, CITES lists and sort species from Appendices I to III with specific levels and measures of protection (CITES n.d.). By global agreements, CITES members engage themselves to undertake appropriate measures within their respective countries and corresponding issues. However such system appeared to be incoherent because of its generalist approach and insufficient attention to national and regional details (Duffy 2010). Various other weaknesses have been observed in the mechanism of CITES regarding the neutrality and precautionary

principle of its decision-making process, the commitment of parties, or the real outcomes of banning wildlife trade, perceived as driving it underground (ibid.).

In parallel of governmental efforts to fight illegal wildlife trade, there has been an increasing involvement of civil society via Conservation non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Thanks to their programmes such organisations are able to support field action toward specific issues, run public campaigns and provide information and even pressure on decision makers (Duffy 2010). Several organisations nowadays include mitigating wildlife trafficking within the scope of their activities. Moreover, they are often addressing a similar issue differently and various practices can be observed. In *Wildlife Trafficking: A Deconstruction of the Crime, the Victims, and the Offenders*, Wyatt (2013) highlights this by presenting two organisations. TRAFFIC, an international NGO completely dedicated to wildlife trade approaches the issue from an anthropocentric perspective and believes that wildlife trade can be managed at sustainable levels without threatening species and contribute to human needs as well as to conservation efforts (Wyatt 2013). On the opposite, other organisations, such as WWF or Conservation International are considering the issue from a biocentric perspective (ibid.), focusing on wildlife protection against the human impact on nature. Such differences of vision result in specific programmes and therefore provide a diversity in terms of initiatives carried out (Duffy 2010).

### 2.2.3 ...towards an emergence of local initiatives.

In addition to the international stakeholders, local initiatives have been undertaken since few years in Southeast Asia. Indeed, the emergence of such actors is mostly explained by the gap between international decisions and local implementations (Shepherd et al. 2007; Princen et al. 1995). The lack of capacity, awareness of laws towards wildlife trade or co-operation between countries (Shepherd et al. 2007) are some of the contributing factors sustaining this gap. In order to reduce it, Southeast Asian countries created the *ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN)* in 2005 to promote co-operation in terms of law enforcement structure, capacity building and information sharing in Southeast Asia (Shepherd et al. 2007). This network involves enforcement and environmental agencies of all ASEAN members and focus on developing partnership and exchange to strengthen national and regional enforcement initiatives that are context sensitive (ASEAN-WEN 2013).

Local NGOs also play a major role in mitigating wildlife crime on a local scale. By operating at the grassroots level, these organisations are able to conduct significant activities in the field as well as gather considerable knowledge regarding the local framework within which they are evolving (Princen et al. 1995). Another major advantage of NGOs resides in their non-governmental nature, allowing them to explore an issue with fewer constraints (such as international agreements and national interest). Such approaches helped to highlight critical points on the international scene towards illegal wildlife trade issue and weakness of governments' decisions (Princen et al. 1995). The Vietnamese NGO *Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV)* illustrates the previously mentioned facts. ENV has been founded in 2000 with the aim of raising awareness and educating people about the illegal wildlife trade issue (ENV 2013b). However, this organisation rapidly enlarged its scope of activities to consider the issue in Vietnam from a holistic perspective (ENV 2013c). To realize this, ENV developed programmes helping to collect on field information regarding wildlife trade activities in Vietnam and work with local authorities to apply appropriate sanctions to perpetrators (ENV 2013a). Moreover, thanks to its non-governmental nature, ENV is able to monitor the enforcement activities in the country, make sure that authorities respect their commitments and publically expose outcomes, whether they are positives or negatives. To complete this, the organization is putting pressure on the Vietnamese government to ensure that the legislation of the country will remain in opposition with wildlife trade (ENV 2013d). As it can be observed, such activities cannot be conducted by any other type of structure that are attached to political or governmental interests.

In Southeast Asia, interactions between these local actors and international initiatives can be observed. One of the major example in the region was the ARREST initiative developed from 2005 to 2010. The Asia's Regional Response to Endangered Species Trafficking (ARREST) was composed by the member states of ASEAN, NGOs and private sector organizations and focused on three goals: the reduction of consumer demand, strengthening of law enforcement and strengthening regional cooperation and anti-trafficking networks (ARREST n.d.).

## 2.3 Drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia.

Despite the various initiatives and efforts previously introduced, illegal wildlife trade remains important worldwide (see *fig.1.*). Critical elements within Southeast Asian countries appear to play an important role and represent considerable barriers for countermeasures.

The first barrier resides in the nature and capacity of agents involved in wildlife trafficking. In *What Sustains Wildlife Crime? Rhino Horn Trading and the Resilience of Criminal Networks*, Ayling (2013) highlights the resilience of environmental crime in face of countermeasures by discussing the capacity of networks to handle such disturbances. As presented previously (see *2.1.3 Actors involved in the trade.*), critical actors are criminal syndicates which operate in networks and are intensively participating in wildlife trafficking across Southeast Asia. Such actors appeared to have experience in conducting transnational crimes and operate with high skills and technology (Ayling 2013). This results in sophisticated networks, which are flexible and adaptive, able to evolve easily and adapt to other mode of operation or type of products, all in a way making their identification difficult (Ayling 2013; Bennett 2011).

Secondly, the current actions engaged against these perpetrators embody considerable weaknesses and shortcomings. Indeed, these mitigating initiatives operate with insufficient means at a general level: a lack of equipment, skills, information about trade routes and actors...(Duffy 2010; Rosen & Smith 2010; Wellsmith 2011) This lack of capacity, moreover, is significantly impairing the results of the initiatives. These limitations can be explained by the lack of resources provided to develop the initiatives due to a misapprehension of the seriousness of the issue by decision-makers and funders of the political scene (Bennett 2011; Polinsky & Shavell 2007; TRAFFIC 2008; Wellsmith 2011).

This lack of consideration regarding the seriousness of illegal wildlife trade also affects the development of a coherent legislative framework. Various cases highlighted the presence of loopholes exploited by traffickers in order to circumvent the law. For instance, rhino horns trade is regulated between Africa and Asia by CITES permits, attesting the legal nature of the trade. However, it appeared that such system is inefficient due to the presence of corruption within competent authorities and the opportunities to develop a lucrative business easily between concerned agents (Duffy 2010; Majumdar et al. 2014).

Finally, the presence of external factors encouraging the illegal wildlife trade hampered the impact of the countering initiatives. The presence of corruption in the involved countries combined with a lack of commitment and insufficient cooperation between local authorities (Ayling 2013; Bennett 2011; Duffy 2010; Srikosamatara et al. 1992; Wellsmith 2011) prevent the initiatives from operating efficiently. In addition, on the consumer end, the increase of economic wealth in Southeast Asian countries combined with the presence of strong cultural and social habits heavily strengthen the demand for wildlife products. As previously mentioned, wildlife products are consumed for many purposes in Southeast Asia (see *2.1.2 Purposes of demand for wildlife products.*) and some of them are attached to strong social norms, such as use of rhinoceros horn for Traditional Chinese Medicine (Ayling 2013; Bennett 2011), which is gaining in popularity in Vietnam owing to a rumour regarding its ability to cure cancer (Ayling 2013). The main barrier to consumption seems to be the price of those products (see *Fig.3.*). Therefore, an increase of economic wealth, insofar as it eliminates this barrier, contributes to sustain and even expand demand for wildlife products (Ayling 2013; Duffy 2010; TRAFFIC 2008).

Thus, multiple actors on the international and regional scenes are involved in the fight against wildlife trafficking in Southeast Asia. By recognizing the existence of key regions and elements driving and sustaining the illegal trade, various initiatives have been developed over the last years, inspired by the concepts of enforcement and awareness. Before deepening the analysis of the implementation of such concepts in Southeast Asia, it is appropriate to first examine the concepts behind awareness and enforcement themselves as they apply to the crime prevention context. To achieve this, the theories associated with Enforcement and Awareness perspectives will be presented next.

### 3 Theoretical Framework

This section will introduce the theoretical framework used to provide a better understanding of the analysis undertaken in this paper. The first part will develop the concept of Deterrence linked with enforcement initiatives, which focus on identifying the motivations to commit crime and developing appropriate measures to counter it. Then the theory of planned behaviour and its link with awareness initiatives will be outlined. This section will define the elements driving the criminal behaviour of individuals and how awareness initiatives expect to affect those parameters in the case of wildlife products' consumers.

#### 3.1 Enforcement initiatives and the concept of Deterrence

The enforcement initiatives are based on the concept of Deterrence. In *Correctional Theory: Context and Consequences*, the author identifies this concept as “the notion that people consciously try to avoid pain and seek pleasure. It follows that by making a choice painful enough—such as the choice of crime—individuals will choose not to engage in the act.” (Nagin 2012, p.67) Therefore, developing theories about Deterrence means trying to understand the drivers toward a specific crime and then provide coherent thinking for the correctional system (ibid.). In the case of wildlife trade, its fast increase justified the necessity of developing a legal framework and categorize some cases as illegal (see 2.2. *Counter-trafficking initiatives in Southeast Asia*). Since such trade includes minimal risk with high profit, enforcement initiatives expect to deter perpetrators by counterbalancing the situation and discourage them thanks to stronger regulations and penalties than potential benefits associated with the crime. Such barriers might dissuade present perpetrators by creating *specific deterrence* (Sherman & Berk 1984) as well as potential ones via *general deterrence* (Sherman & Weisburd 1995).

In order to prevent crimes to occur, deterrence involves two important components. Firstly, the *certainty of punishment*, defined as “the probability that a criminal act will be followed by punishment. The greater the probability that crime prompts punishment, the greater the certainty of punishment” (Nagin 2012, p.71) The second is the *severity of punishment*, “The severity of punishment involves the level of punishment that is meted out. The harsher the punishment, the greater the severity of punishment” (ibid.). Both elements play a crucial role in deterring crime, however it has to be noticed that *certainty* has a stronger effect, since perpetrators will not give attention to the sanctions if there is a small chance of being caught (Nagin 2012).

Elements previously introduced represent the *cost of crime* and are confronted to the *benefits of crime*, defined by how much money or material benefit crime may bring to the offender (Nagin 2012). Moreover, this assessment is confronted to a similar assessment done for choosing *conformity*, defined as *non-crime* or compliance with regulation (Sutinen & Kuperan 1999). Therefore, if *conformity* appears to be more beneficial than crime, the latter might decrease (ibid).

However, the concept of deterrence appears to be questioned concerning its efficiency in preventing crime. Indeed, by assuming that crime is perpetrated through a rational choice, such a concept seems to omit factors more complex like the understanding of criminal behaviour, especially regarding recidivism, the act of repeating crimes (Nagin 2012). This implies measures with visible signs of effectiveness on a short-term perspective, but questionable in a broader perspective (ibid.).

Although various criticisms about deterrence's efficiency and its lack of consideration regarding other factors of predisposition to commit crime (such as economic and social factors), this paper will not explore more on this aspects. As developed earlier, the lack of structure and weaknesses of enforcement in Southeast Asia combined with the imposing presence of criminal networks in illegal wildlife trade justifies the need to implement adequate measures and having system catching criminals is better than not having one (Bennett 2011; Nagin 2012).

### 3.2 Awareness initiatives and the Theory of Planned behaviour

Awareness initiatives can be analysed thanks to the theory of Planned behaviour. This theory has been developed by Ajzen (1991) as a way to understand the process leading individual to perform a behaviour and then expect to predict it. The author emphasizes the presence of multiple complex factors and summarizes the process in the following model:

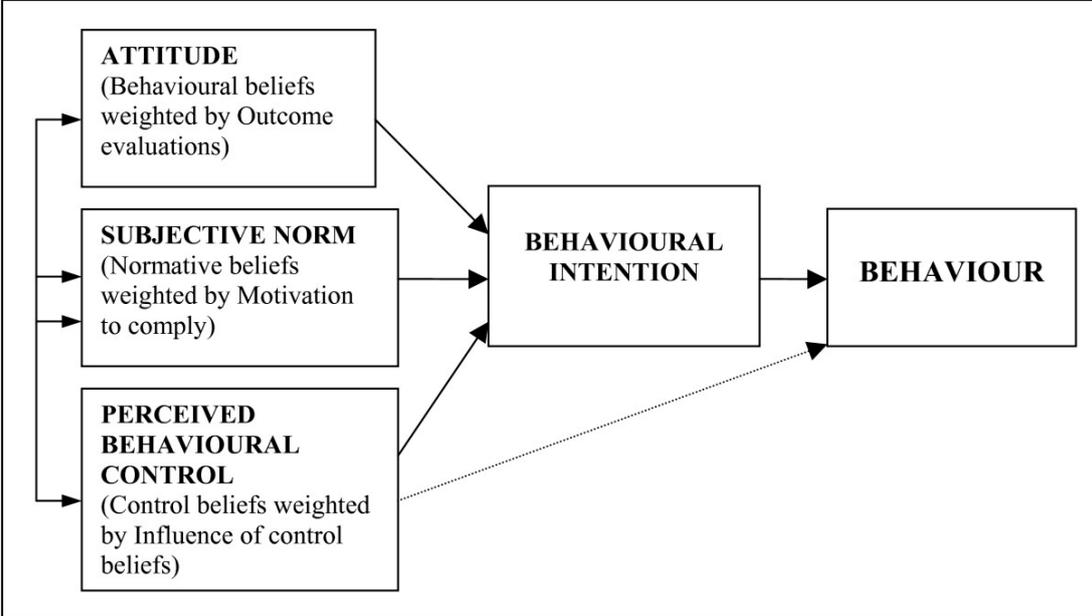


Fig.5. Theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991).

The *Behavioural Intention*, intent to perform the behaviour, is the central factor and stronger it is, likely it should be performed (Ajzen 1991). This factor is influenced by other parameters impacted themselves by individual’s beliefs.

*Attitude* toward the behaviour refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question (ibid.). The attitude is influenced by the *behavioural beliefs*, which are the valuation of the results an individual will do, positively or negatively (ibid). In the case of consumers of wildlife products within Southeast Asia, this parameter can be attached to the belief of medical benefits provided by these products (see 2.1.2.Purposes of demand for wildlife products). People might depict a positive value towards the *Attitude* and therefore a favourable evaluation of the behaviour.

The *subjective norm* refers to the social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour. This parameter is affected by the *normative beliefs*, the approval or disapproval of the behaviour from important individuals or groups related to the individual (ibid). In the context of this paper, this can be connected with the consumption of wildlife products as food, ornaments or pets. The motivation of these types of consumptions as status symbol (see 2.1.2.Purposes of demand for wildlife products) can provide approval from important groups in society sharing same values.

Finally, *perceived behavioural control*, defines the ease or difficulty perceived to realize the behaviour according to past experiences and anticipated obstacles (ibid). This final parameter is influenced by *control beliefs*, including the presence or absence of required resources and opportunities (ibid). Such control might be minimized with the presence of facilitators (see 2.3. Drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia.).

Therefore, Awareness initiatives can be perceived as an application of the Theory of planned behaviour because of its will to create a change of behaviour among consumers. Using the previous model could help to provide an analytic framework for Awareness initiatives by identifying how they are influencing those drivers.

### 3.3 Comparing Awareness and Enforcement initiatives from a theoretical perspective

As highlighted by the theories on which Enforcement and Awareness rely, these initiatives are tackling the illegal wildlife trade issue from distinct theoretical backgrounds. It implies differences between them as well as similarities. Before conducting a more thorough analysis of both strategies, it is necessary to specify major similarities and differences in order to understand what set them apart as well as what brings them closer of each other.

At the first glance, Enforcement and Awareness initiatives seem to share some similarities. Indeed, both operate with the aim of affecting the utility, the ability that wildlife products have to satisfy specific needs and that are driving the wildlife trade. Enforcement, by implementing higher risk and sanctions expect to reduce the gap between cost and profit of committing crime (see 3.1. *Enforcement initiatives and the concept of Deterrence*) and therefore reduce the financial benefits that are considered as a utility driving the illegal wildlife trade (see 2.3. *Drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia.*). In regard to Awareness initiatives, the measures aims to act on the factors (utility) driving individual's behaviour (see 3.2. *Awareness initiatives and the Theory of Planned behaviour*) by putting into question the purpose of consuming wildlife parts (see 2.1.2. *Purposes of demand for wildlife products*) and the resulting consequences. Another element shared by these initiatives is the use of a targeting strategy. As presented earlier, the wildlife trade in Southeast Asia is segmented in plural stages involving specific participants (see 2.1.3. *Actors involved in the trade*). Given this diversity, different measures are implemented and focus on a specific range of individuals. For instance, Enforcement initiatives might differ regarding the stage(s) and actors (rural poor people or criminal) targeted within the trade route, (see 2.1.3. *Actors involved in the trade* and 2.2.1 *Enforcement and Awareness measures in Southeast Asia.*), the will to discourage criminal to reoffend or individual to commit crime...(see 3.1. *Enforcement initiatives and the concept of Deterrence*). Regarding Awareness initiatives, the measures engaged are divided according to the type of actors targeted (see 2.1.3. *Actors involved in the trade* and 2.2.1 *Enforcement and Awareness measures in Southeast Asia.*), the drivers motivating the act of consuming wildlife products (see 3.2. *Awareness initiatives and the Theory of Planned behaviour.*)...

On the other hand, clear differences can be discerned between the two initiatives. One of these differences lies in the targets that Awareness and Enforcement initiatives respectively have. Indeed, Awareness initiatives essentially focus on the last stages of the trade, consumers and retailers (TRAFFIC 2008) that can be considered as the Demand in the wildlife trade while Enforcement initiatives are tackling criminal networks in order to disturb the supply (Offer) of wildlife products in Southeast Asia (ibid.). Another major factor differentiating Awareness from Enforcement concerns the expected timescale for effective results. Indeed, Enforcement initiatives are producing short-term results in countering illegal wildlife trade while Awareness initiatives might require generational timescale before producing effective results (Bennett 2011). Finally, the initiatives differ by their philosophies. Indeed, Enforcement initiatives by being based on the theory of Deterrence seem to address the issue from a strictly rational choice perspective devoid of social norms, and assume that developing measures to make crime more difficult and riskier might dissuade individuals to commit it (Nagin 2012). Conversely, Awareness initiatives are assuming more complex and underlying social factors in the process leading an individual to conduct a specific behaviour (see *3.2.Awareness initiatives and the Theory of Planned behaviour.*)

Although Enforcement and Awareness initiatives share similarities, the presence of major differences must be taken into consideration to obtain a coherent analysis. By keeping such elements in mind for the next steps, the thesis will provide a better understanding of the findings as well as mitigate them.

## 4 Method

This section will describe the methods employed to collect empirical evidence concerning enforcement and awareness initiatives in Southeast Asia. The qualitative approach and arising methods have been assessed as coherent with the subject of this paper. In *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* the author defines qualitative researches as “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell 2013, p.4). Thus, this method is in agreement with the purpose of the paper, of determining the efficiency of the initiatives aiming to mitigate illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia, a human-induced issue. Additionally, Hennink (2010) emphasizes that qualitative research is used to provide an “in depth understanding of the research issues” and is useful for “understanding complex issues” (Hennink et al. 2010, p.10). The authors also provide a list of potential uses including “issues that may be too complex or hidden to be easily disentangled by quantitative research” (ibid.) for the ones similarities with the issue of illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia can be observed (see *2.3 Drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia.*). Three methods of data gathering have been selected. This decision is based on the concept of *methodological triangulation*, which guarantees the reliability of findings thanks to the use of more than one approach for gathering data (Bryman 2011). These are summarized in what follows.

## 4.1 Literature Review

The background section previously developed (see *2. Background*) will be considered as an initial input for the empirical section of this paper. Reviewing literature allows to identify and summarise findings from previous researches conducted on these topics (Creswell 2013) and contributed in establishing a framework for comparing the findings collected with other methods employed (Creswell 2013). Indeed, a literature study on the history and contemporary context of wildlife trafficking crime in Southeast Asia provides critical orientation for this research.

## 4.2 Interviews

Employing in-depth interview as a research method is justified by the significant input it can represent for empirical findings. Indeed, it allows to explore in details a specific problem by collecting information from experienced actors in the area (Rubin & Rubin 2011) and reveals elements hardly discoverable by other means. Such an approach excludes a categorization of questions in order to optimize the exchange and enlarge the field of the query (Zhang & Wildemuth 2009) and, with semi-structured formats, encourage the interviewee to develop as freely as possible towards the topic (Lindseth & Norberg 2004). In the case of this paper, using in depth interview will help to provide a better understanding of the context and a highlight of specific elements regarding the barriers and levers in conducting enforcement or awareness initiatives thanks to the knowledge and experiences of specific actors within the region. The choice of this method has also been motivated by the realisation of a fieldwork within the wildlife trafficking mitigation sector in Vietnam in parallel of this paper. It granted the opportunity to get in touch with experts in the field of this research who provided consequent input, by sharing the experiences and opinions on a series of questions and issues raised by the practical implementation of the two approaches. The design of the interview guide was also much facilitated by the relative embeddedness of the researcher as an intern in a related organisation, insofar as it enables a succinct and well-informed focus.

## 4.3 Field observations

The observation method has been selected due to its capacity to provide a detailed observation of actions and discussions of actors in the desired context (Hennink et al. 2010). Moreover, observational data bring an understanding to the findings of other research methods employed and might reveal complementary evidences (Hennink et al. 2010). Getting involved in an internship provided an opportunity to observe the professional field of awareness and enforcement measures in Southeast Asia and its key actors. The main task consisted of leading an investigative survey conducted in the purpose of determining the involvement of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) shops in illegal wildlife trade and provide information assisting the organisation in the conception of appropriate actions. The context of discovery of problem formulation, prior to conducting interviews, therefore, has been substantial. Two forms of observations have been conducted during this experience: a *participant observation*, by being directly involved in activities in relation with the research topic (Hennink et al.

2010) and *nonparticipant observation* via informal conversations with actors in the field and the observation of their activities (ibid.).

#### 4.4 Data collection method

As previously argued, the relevancy of applying diverse methods of data collection is explained by the potential inputs of a fieldwork as well as the opportunities to get in touch with experts on the topic. However, such diversity of sources of data also implies to develop a classification approach as a first step in determining particular elements affecting initiatives' efficiency. Thus, findings from the field will be thematically arranged into units of meaning in the following thematic analysis:

##### 1. *Complexity.*

The Complexity refers to the actors and means (activities and resources) engaged in the performance of Enforcement or Awareness initiatives. Consequently, the complexity of an initiative will be evaluated primarily based on an assessment of those contributing elements.

##### 2. *Velocity.*

The velocity takes into consideration the time required by an initiative until a generation of outcomes. Examinations on this point will consider the time lapse between the implementation of an initiative and its outcomes, as well as the factors determining this time lapse.

##### 3. *Adaptability.*

The Adaptability is defined as the capacity of an initiative to adapt itself and, perhaps, be reflexive toward its premises and operations. Two particular facets of the Adaptability have been considered: the ability of an implanted initiative to adapt itself (through new objectives, activities...) and the integration capacity of an initiative (according to the context of implementation, actors in charge...). The adaptability of an initiative will be measured thanks to the factors (internal or external) influencing its capacity of adaptation.

##### 4. *Range.*

The Range deals with the range of the initiatives on the illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia. In order to analyse this theme, corresponding findings will encompass the targets (which types of actors involved in the trade) and the effects (intended or observed) of the initiatives on them.

Three points can justify the selection of such themes given the context of this paper. First one refers to the presence of several interrogations and debates between stakeholders involved in wildlife trade tackling initiatives (governments, organisation, media, researchers...). This difference of opinion mostly concerns the efficiency and relevancy of the initiatives and some strong assumptions have been raised, leading the actors to particular decisions. For example, the issue of demand for wildlife products, described by some as "impossible to control" (Srikosamatara et al. 1992, p.1) also comprises opposite opinions as illustrated by the creation

of WildAid, an NGO focusing exclusively on reducing this particular demand<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, exploring the efficiency of the initiatives will allow a deeper comprehension and discussion of such positions. Findings on this aspect will be collected thanks to the themes of *Range* and *Velocity* by analysing Enforcement and Awareness initiatives' contribution in countering illegal wildlife trade (what are the actors targeted by the initiatives and how are they affected) from a temporal perspective (e.g. short-term versus long-term outcomes).

Secondly, the will to explore how the initiatives are facing the challenging issues of transnational criminal networks and deeply rooted values (as highlighted in 2.3. *Drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia*) justify the selection of *Complexity* and *Adaptability*. Indeed, such themes will be able to provide findings about the concrete implementation of the initiatives (such as structures, activities and resources involved), as well as the elements involved in the conduct of such initiatives (such as the influence of stakeholder, the importance of the local context...). Finally, the interviewees evoked numerous arguments toward these themes, thereby confirming the pertinence of this framework.

#### 4.4.1 Data collection process for interviews.

Since in depth-interview does not require rigid guideline, but rather a broad guide of the topic issues that might be covered during the interview (Zhang & Wildemuth 2009) an interview guide has been sequentially developed based on the units as mentioned before.

Four experts on the subjects were selected in order to collect findings based on this method. Because of barriers in terms of planning, expenses or respondents' willingness to participate in these interviews, the study drew from complementary findings.

Respondents' anonymity in regard to names and positions have been secured. However general information can be provided to introduce them.

Interviewees will be quoted as Interviewee A, B, C and D in the next sections of the study in order to differentiate them from one another.

- *Interviewee A* is in charge of managing the Enforcement-related programme of an NGO operating nationally and regionally within Southeast Asia. This participant has been selected due to their strong expertise in the field of enforcement, on a global perspective as well as for the scope of this study.
- *Interviewee B* is involved in measures designed by an NGO to tackle illegal wildlife trade on a regional perspective in Southeast Asia through cooperation between countries, information and skills sharing...getting findings from this expert seemed relevant thanks to their wide experience and knowledge concerning illegal wildlife trade within Southeast Asia.
- *Interviewee C* runs a Southeast Asian national office of an international NGO working towards illegal wildlife trade issues with particular emphasis on measures comparable to

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<sup>1</sup> Vision of WildAid: <http://www.wildaid.org/about-wildaid>

Awareness-related initiatives. The decision of interviewing this participant is justified by their experience in the field of conservation and Awareness-related initiatives.

- *Interviewee D* is the co-founder and manager of an NGO firmly anchored and operating nationally by tackling illegal wildlife trade from various perspectives. This participant has been chosen for their experience regarding conservation issues in Southeast Asia and the initiatives personally undertook and contribution to other projects.

Interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes and have been conducted with the support of an interview guideline (see *Appendix A – Discussion guideline for in-depth interview*). Moreover, it has to be clarified that interviewees A and C mostly provided findings related to their respective areas of expertise (Enforcement for A and Awareness for C).

#### 4.4.2 Data collection process for field observations.

The observational findings have been collected in the context of a three-month long internship realised within an NGO based in Southeast Asia. This organisation works especially towards wildlife trade issues on a national scale and since several years.

Observational findings will be sorted between *participant observation* and *nonparticipant observation*. Nonparticipant observations were collected by encompassing the overall topic of this paper. Indeed, the opportunity of being involved in an organisation tackling illegal wildlife trade from various angles granted the opportunity of gathering practitioners' opinion on both Enforcement and Awareness initiatives. Several respondents here provided valuable insights through informal chats, based on their respective position within the organisation, which were collected in a diary/notes during the internship for reasons comparable to those revealed in *4.4.1 Data collection process for interviews*, practitioners' identity will remain confidential. Where appropriate, these practitioners will be quoted according to their position within an organisation. On the other hand, Findings from *participant observation* are based on activities carried out over the internship and will only relate to Enforcement approaches since given tasks focused exclusively on these initiatives. Indeed, this internship has been realised within the "wildlife crime" programme of the organisation and encompassed tasks related to specifically to its investigating activities.

The absence of specific guidelines regarding this form of data collection led to the decision to report findings from non-participative experience based on the themes developed earlier, while a narrative summary will be developed for the participative experience.

## **5 Narrative summary of participant observation realised through field investigative project.**

As introduced in 4.3. *Field observations*, the participant observation was conducted in the form of an internship within an NGO and focused essentially on activities associated with Enforcement initiatives, with the conduct of an investigations on TCM shops as main task. Indeed, the NGO recognised that such structures may have a certain involvement in illegal wildlife trade across the country by selling wildlife products as medicine. Therefore, an investigative survey was developed to ascertain the situation of those shops and provide information assisting the organisation in the conception of appropriate actions. While a willingness to perform such activity was apparent, the employees in charge of the NGO's Enforcement initiatives also suggested such processes were rare, explained by a lack of available resources (essentially time and staff required to conduct the project).

In light of the aforementioned circumstances, a specific approach was adopted over the development of the internship. Past experience allowed to take into consideration important factors to carry out the survey efficiently. Indeed, the previous internships I realised within NGOs based in Southeast Asia revealed that activities undertaken in the context of an internship should consist of straightforward measures to ensure a greater implementation. This restriction is explained by the lack of resources within more exploratory projects, especially regarding the skills of the participants. As observed in preceding experiences, some employees may have limited competencies in carrying out innovative measures (i.e. projects without a specific guideline), implying a lack of confidence and initiative-taking when involved in such activities. Thus, the implementation and sustainability of innovative projects may be challenged due to the unwillingness (explained by a lack of competence) expressed by the individuals involved. The consideration of this statement in the case of the present participant observation appeared relevant according to the opinion of the internship supervisor, who underlined the presence of comparable barriers and expressed a need of involving somebody able to initiate the project. Moreover, the restraint of skills involved in this project also comprised my own limits since former experiences were not related to Enforcement initiatives. Based on the facts previously reported and owing to insufficient initial inputs (existing elements were limited to a list of TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) shops collected by the organisation's volunteers via online and on-field researches), a pilot project was developed in order to design, pioneer and evaluate a methodological framework as well as a set of tools able to assist the investigators in the conduct of the surveys. The pilot project consisted of three specific stages encompassing a preparatory phase (development of the procedure and instruments to carry out the survey), the performance of the survey and the assessment of the whole project, evaluating the survey's outcomes as well as the pilot project itself. Breaking the project down into phases facilitated the collection of frequent observations since each steps were monitored precisely and on a weekly basis.

Since the participants involved in this pilot project appeared to be unexperienced in conducting such activity, building the methodology of the survey was the initial step of the project. This guideline encompassed key points, ranging from the procedure of conducting an investigation (based on investigating techniques of the NGO) to the survey's report (results of the survey based on KPI as well as reporting the conduct of the survey itself, in order to provide feedbacks on the barriers encountered). In addition, support tools were designed in order to assist surveyors during the conduct of the survey. Such tools were developed in

accordance with the challenges previously underlined (limited resources, time, skills...) and characterised by an easy application, allowing participants of future surveys to adopt similar practices. Although a consequent part of this step involved a certain autonomy, the frequent exchanges of information with the staff involved in the Enforcement Initiatives appeared to play a crucial role at this stage of the pilot survey. Indeed, interacting with those actors helped to ascertain the needs of the NGO regarding the goals of the survey (in terms of sample size, information targeted...) and the pilot project generally. Moreover, the active participation in these exchanges allowed to gather accurate insights (essentially based on past activities of the organisation) reducing the loss of time in information retrieval.

Regarding the deployment phase of the pilot project, an active involvement allowed to experiment and observe its implementation in concrete situations. As a preparatory task, a briefing with the employees responsible for carrying out the survey was organised to ensure the good understanding of the overall process. Thanks to a detailed guideline developed in accordance with the employee's experience and competencies, the latter appeared more confident and able to conduct the investigations. Consequently, any major barriers have been encountered and expected goals have been achieved. However, it has to be noted that the extent of the participant observation appeared limited at this stage of the pilot project due to language obstacles. Indeed, my lack of proficiency in the local language (the single language used by most of the TCM shops owners) limited my involvement to observations and support instead of an active participation in the conduct of the survey. On the subject of the survey's findings, involvement of TCM shops in illegal wildlife trade was established, due to the presence of wildlife products in almost 29% of them. This statement needs however to be moderated due to the limited sample size (170 shops investigated) and the incapacity of proving that TCM shops identified as not selling wildlife products are truly not in possession of illegal wildlife parts' stockpile. Another interesting fact highlighted by the survey deal with the attitude of the TCM shops owners regarding the illegal nature of specific wildlife products. For instance, few cases justified the elevated price of those products by the illicit situation of the trade demonstrating a certain awareness of this situation among some of them.

As a result, the assessment phase showed positive results, in terms of data gathered on the TCM shops as well as the method employed. The methodology developed toward this survey appeared efficient by encompassing the whole survey process in accord with the requirements and capacities of the organisation. Therefore, the organisation expressed the consideration of using the project as a baseline for forthcoming activities.

## 6 Overview of thematic discussions with actors involved in the initiatives.

This section will present the main findings collected thanks to the methods introduced earlier. Results will be sorted according to units selected in *4.4 Data collection method*, with interviews' results in first part followed by non-participant observations' results. Moreover, findings will be reported separately between Enforcement and Awareness initiatives.

### 6.1 Complexity

In order to determine how Enforcement and Awareness initiatives are concretely undertaken across Southeast Asia, findings toward the theme of Complexity will encompass the several actions revealed by the actors with an emphasis on the strategies, methods and resources employed.

#### 6.1.1 Complexity of Enforcement initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

In the case of enforcement-related initiatives, it appeared that most of the experts interviewed agreed that the strategies used were complex. According to Interviewee B, this complexity is first induced by the nature of illegal wildlife trade and the presence of criminal networks involved within. Indeed, the interviewee underlined the capacity of such networks to conduct illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia, by exploiting the weaknesses in specific areas (due to a lack of enforcement authorities or even legal framework) allowing interconnections to develop between countries in the region. Moreover, Interviewee A recognised the flexibility of such networks, able to take action immediately and reorganizing their trafficking methods as a response of Enforcement initiatives. In light of those elements, Interviewee A underlined the necessity of developing pertinent measures to tackle illegal wildlife trade.

Indeed, the interviewee exposed the presence of various Enforcement initiatives across Southeast Asia and made a distinction between “Patrol” and “Investigation” interventions. Regarding “Patrol” interventions, the interviewee implied the actions which consist in monitoring specific zones, borders, remote areas or potential trade routes to apprehend offenders such as harvesters and traders (see *2.1.3 Actors involved in the trade*). According to the interviewee, “Investigation” interventions consist of complex methods such as undercover operations in order to collect evidence about criminal networks and key actors. This presence of multiple measures has also been explained by the will to tackle illegal wildlife trade holistically. Interviewees recognised the involvement of different actors within the trade (see *2.1.3 Actors involved in the trade*), justifying the implementation of a set of measures, including minor cases (e.g. individual smuggling few quantities of illegal wildlife products without apparent association with a criminal network) as well as major cases (e.g. wildlife crime kingpins, criminal syndicates...).

Interviewees highlighted the implication of miscellaneous actors, having their own importance in the implementation of the activities previously presented. Regarding governments' involvement, Interviewee A pointed out the presence of initiatives such as the creation in Thailand of an enforcement unit exclusively dedicated to the tackle of illegal

wildlife trafficking. Interviewee B and D also acknowledged the importance of NGOs, thanks to their ability to provide capacity-building and supporting the activities of national structures as presented earlier. Indeed, Interviewee B illustrated this argument with the case of FREELAND<sup>2</sup>, an NGO working closely with enforcement authorities to strengthen their capacities by providing knowledge through training and tools. Moreover, Interviewee A referred to the ASEAN-WEN (presented in 2.2.3...*towards an emergence of local initiatives*) developed in the purpose of standardising the Enforcement initiatives regionally by encouraging the stakeholders (governments as well as organisation) to share information and practices.

In addition to the involvement of multiple actors, the interconnections between them were emphasised as a key constituent of the complexity of the crime and its mitigation. Indeed, interviewee A detailed the multiple-level of cooperation occurring in the region, with the implication of local enforcement authorities, wildlife officers, police, customs and other crime agencies such as the anti-money laundering agency in Thailand. This inter-agencies' cooperation have been explained by the willingness of countries to conduct extremely complex investigations and develop appropriate actions to tackle wildlife crime across the region. However, this argument was also moderated by the interviewee, who indicated the imbalance between the countries in terms of commitment, explained by a discouragement due to the considerable resources and skills required to implement such initiatives.

- **Findings from observations:**

An employee working as wildlife crime investigator underlined the presence of various activities conducted by their organisation towards Enforcement initiatives, amongst which two main categories can be identified. The first one incorporates the activities aiming to gather evidence of wildlife crimes and perpetrators while the second deals with the enforcement actions.

Within the first category, the employee exposed the implementation of a national hotline service (allowing individuals to report wildlife crime to the organisation that will then transmit the information to the competent authorities), the conduction of investigations (to identify wildlife crime and networks) and monitoring activities (to ensure that previous perpetrators are not involved in wildlife crime anymore). According to the employee, the level of complexity within this group appears important due to the involvement of specific skills (in terms of knowledge about threatened species, investigation methods, monitoring tools...) and human resources, explained by the required involvement of several staff members and volunteers in order to conduct those activities.

The second group highlighted by the employee covers the organisation's activities related to the enforcement procedure undertaken in collaboration with governmental authorities. According to him, the extent of the cooperation appeared to determine the complexity of those activities. For instance, it was mentioned the presence of monitoring activities, with a reduced level of cooperation since it consists of informing and accompanying local authorities to locations where wildlife crime have been reported. The employee noted that the involvement of the organisations for this type of activities was limited in ascertaining the evidence of wildlife crime and ensuring the fulfilment of authorities' duties. On the other hand, activities

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<sup>2</sup> Information on Freeland : <http://www.freeland.org/>

with a higher level of cooperation and requiring an active involvement from the staff members, such as sting operations, were also highlighted. According to the employee, those operations commonly require the participation of the organisation's investigators as potential buyers of illegal wildlife products in order to catch wildlife traffickers. In these cases, experience and confidence are tantamount to operational success due to the crucial role played by the investigator.

### 6.1.2 Complexity of Awareness initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

Awareness initiatives also comprise a certain degree of complexity. This can be initially explained by the purpose of these initiatives, which is to create behavioural change towards wildlife consumption. Interviewee C highlighted that applying awareness initiatives in Southeast Asia is delicate work that questions cultural elements deeply anchored in societies, as well as modern consumption patterns rapidly spreading across the region.

To respond to these challenges, many Awareness initiatives are conducted across Southeast Asia with a variety of objectives. Interviewee B made the distinction between initiatives implemented with the purpose of creating broad awareness towards wildlife trade issue and initiatives aiming to more ambitious outcomes, such as obtaining lasting changes in consumer behaviour. In order to attain those objectives, Interviewee A underlined that Awareness initiatives are addressed to defined target audiences (ranging from general public to specific groups of individuals) with specific messages and tools employed to this target.

For instance, Interviewee B indicated the use of national campaigns developed in the purpose of raising awareness among public opinion in order to create public interest and concern about the issue of illegal wildlife trade. Those initiatives are using traditional and new media (essentially Television, Radio and social networks such as Facebook) to broadcast general messages understandable by a large audience. Such messages commonly take the form of public service announcement and may involve famous people<sup>3</sup>. As underlined by the interviewee, associating known individuals with an Awareness initiative may strengthen the impact of the message thanks to their reputations. Awareness initiatives also encompass more specific activities, addressing a precise content to targeted groups of individuals. Interviewee C has briefly outlined the “Chi campaign”<sup>4</sup>, an Awareness initiative developed specifically for consumers of rhinoceros horn across Vietnam, mostly composed of wealthy businessmen living in the main cities of the country. This campaign aimed to put into question the perceived benefits of consuming rhino horn (providing strength, masculinity...) by highlighting that these traits reside *within* the individual and not from wildlife parts. Interviewee C added that instead of using a broad media coverage, this campaign has selected strategic location to display the campaign's messages to its desired audience such as professional newspapers, websites or outdoor visuals around working places.

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<sup>3</sup> Example of a PSA : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJG7RaLX-DM>

<sup>4</sup> Information on the “Chi campaign” :

[http://www.savetherhino.org/our\\_work/demand\\_reduction/illegal\\_wildlife\\_trafe/chi\\_campaign](http://www.savetherhino.org/our_work/demand_reduction/illegal_wildlife_trafe/chi_campaign)

The complexity of Awareness initiative is also revealed through the stage of monitoring its efficiency. Interviewee C recognised the complexity of such a task and mentioned the partnership developed with a company expert in social surveys to support interviewee's organisation at this stage of the activities undertaken. Interviewee D described an alternative approach, with the use of monitoring indicators based on tools provided to the public, such as the hotline realised by interviewee's organisation.

This hotline has been implemented with the purpose of providing the public a solution to report wildlife crime to the organisation, which will handle the case in partnership with local authorities. The interviewee noted the implementation of awareness campaigns dedicated to this hotline, to ensure that the society is aware of its presence. In order to determine the efficiency of those campaigns, the organisation assessed the number of calls received by the organisation during their courses since it may represent the part of the population impacted by those campaigns.

Although the utilisation of sophisticated methods has been indicated by interviewees, the latter also put an emphasis on the complexity to determine the real efficiency of the Awareness initiatives. Indeed, Interviewee D noted that indicators employed might reveal progress towards a specific objective (e.g. reducing rhino horn consumption) rather than determining which campaigns played a crucial role. According to the interviewee, developing connection between specific measures and behavioural change is not evident since other variables can be perceived as decisive (such as social or economic development), making the identification of key elements difficult.

- **Findings from observations:**

In terms of the complexity of Awareness initiatives, an employee involved in the awareness raising activities of the organisation acknowledged on the presence of minimum requirements of skills to conduct those activities. This argument has been illustrated with the case of the public events organised by the organisation. Those events consist of public exhibition aiming to raise awareness about illegal wildlife trade among the public and encourage the involvement of participants by allowing them to share their opinions. Moreover, the employee underlined that basic knowledge about the issue of illegal wildlife trade, threatened species or even presentation skills are crucial to convey the key messages efficiently. Insofar as those elements were prerequisite, the employee recognised the needs of qualified individuals (staff or volunteers) and basic training in order to carry out Awareness initiatives as minor as public events.

## 6.2 Velocity

Since this section seeks to ascertain the time lapse required to produce outcomes, it appeared relevant to collect information about the actors' perception of this time lapse (based on activities with apparent outcomes as well as activities with expected outcomes) and the components affecting it, including strategies in the context in which the initiative is implemented.

### 6.2.1 Velocity of Enforcement initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

Regarding the velocity of enforcement initiatives, it generally shows that outcomes can be observed on a short term perspective according to interviewees. However this statement must be tempered. Indeed, Interviewee A highlighted the different time scales involved toward the measures engaged. Enforcement measures on minor cases (such as arrest of smugglers or seizure on borders) will occur and generate results on a short-term period since they involve the immediate arrest of perpetrators caught in committing wildlife crime. On the other hand, more sophisticated measures (as in depth investigations toward major cases) will require longer periods of operation due to the complexity of gathering strong evidences on the implication of networks and the presence of prominent actors such as “wildlife crime kingpins”.

Interviewee D defined the countries' prosecution systems as another element determining the actual velocity of Enforcement initiatives. They emphasised the role played by countries' prosecution systems in the achievement of enforcement measures and revealed the presence of inequalities across Southeast Asia. Indeed, Countries with a developed prosecution system appear able to produce sanctions promptly thanks to structures created in this purpose (for example, Interviewee A revealed the presence of environmental courts and tribunals implemented in Thailand and Philippines). Conversely, Interviewee D recognized that other countries in the region (Some cases, like Laos, are severely lacking of legislative framework and enforcement structures according to Interviewee B and D) require similar framework in order to conduct such activities. Therefore, Enforcement initiatives within these countries may involve longer periods before achieving similar results, due to the needs of developing a reference line for the prosecution system nationally.

Another barrier detected by interviewees resides in the functioning of the regional structure created to counter illegal wildlife trade within Southeast Asia. For instance, Interviewee A pointed out that the present wildlife enforcement network (ASEAN-WEN) is suffering of a complicated system of bureaucracy, requiring various protocols and delays for official actions. Indeed, the interviewee claimed that the involvement of various agencies, at multiple stages, slow down the exchange of information between regional decision-makers and local authorities. In contrast, the criminal networks, actively involved in wildlife trafficking and representing a major challenge (according to Interviewee A) are not constrained by the same official procedures, making them more dynamic, flexible and able to adapt their strategies according to enforcement measures implemented. As a result, the excessive bureaucracy required by the regional structure seems to limit the reactivity of Enforcement initiatives by

decreasing their capacity of developing immediate and appropriate responses against the versatility and resourcefulness of criminal networks...

- **Findings from observations:**

According to a staff member involved in the wildlife crime department of the organisation, the velocity of an Enforcement initiative may be affected by brakes emanating from local authorities. Despite strong cooperation efforts, the employee perceived a persistent risk of non-commitment from those authorities during the conduct of enforcement activities with the organisation. Indeed, the employee underlined that in several cases (e.g. inspection of a restaurant suspected of selling endangered species meat, shop alleged of selling live animals...), a lack of obvious evidence (i.e. no efforts were made to cover up the infraction) often resulted in the scrapping of the investigations from local authorities, unwilling to deepen the investigations. They added that recurrent solicitations of those authorities were required by the organisation (convinced by the presence of wildlife crime activities) in order to complete the investigations, slowing down considerably the completion of Enforcement initiatives.

## 6.2.2 Velocity of Awareness initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

The degree of velocity of an awareness initiative seems to vary with its related objectives. According to interviewee C, activities with basic objectives, such as informing society about the consequences of consuming wildlife products, may produce outcomes in a short perspective since the expectation of such actions is limited to raising awareness about a particular issue. To illustrate this, Interviewee D talked about the public events carried by their organisation. The expectations of those events are to inform individuals on the issues on illegal wildlife trade and encourage them to share the information. In order to ascertain that such objectives are completed, a survey is conducted at the end of every event in order to examine if the individuals integrated the information correctly. The interviewee recognised that the survey's outcomes were generally positive, confirming that activities aiming to raise awareness on a global perspective may produce short term outcomes.

On the opposite, initiatives with more advanced purposes appear to imply longer delays. For instance, Interviewee B assumed that activities with ambitious objectives, such as creating demand reduction by changing consumers' behaviour requires "*various methods, approaches and changes of direction*". Indeed, the interviewees recognised the requirement of broadcasting the information through multiple activities (this has been noted by Interviewee C for the "Chi campaign" with the use of various Medias, displays and events) and continuously in order to expect a progressive change of behaviour from consumers of wildlife products. Moreover, the experimental approach evoked by Interviewee B involves long process in the conduct of such initiatives, but appears necessary. Indeed, Both Interviewee B and C recognised the needs of exploring further methods in order to tackle deep-rooted beliefs (such as consuming wildlife products for medicinal values) from various angles.

While different degrees of velocity are thus necessarily present in those activities, the interviewees also recognised the difficulty to identify and measure the outcomes of Awareness initiatives. Even if Interviewee D acknowledged the contribution of the undertaken initiatives in educating society or changing, they also stated the impossibility of determining an initiative's impact precisely. To illustrate this the interviewee described the conduct of a scientific survey about bear bile consumption and attitudes developed in parallel of the organisation's activities. The purpose of this survey was to determine the evolution of bear bile use across the country over a period of 6 years. This survey's outcomes showed a significant reduction of such a practice, however the interviewee recognised the impossibility to determine the contribution of a specific activity due to the implication of a variety of factors within the time frame of this study (other activities, changing conditions...).

- **Findings from observations:**

Regarding the velocity of Awareness initiatives, no relevant elements have been detected during the informal discussions conducted with the organisation's staff.

## 6.3 Adaptability

Regarding the data collected on the theme of Adaptability, the presence of facilitating and constraining elements for the implementation and adaptation of the initiatives are key issues to determine. Therefore, findings will be distinguished between brakes and levers of Adaptability.

### 6.3.1 Adaptability of Enforcement initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

The adaptability of Enforcement initiatives owes some success to structures created in the purpose of building capacity and connections between them across Southeast Asia. The presence of a regional structure, the ASEAN-WEN, appears essential in Interviewee A's opinion owing to the presence of inequalities between national wildlife enforcement networks. Indeed, highly developed networks (as in the case of Thailand, employing a variety of agencies to counter wildlife trafficking) as well as less advanced networks across the region, unable to tackle illegal wildlife trade efficiently, were highlighted. The ASEAN-WEN, by encouraging member countries to share information and practices through regular workshops and meetings, appear to contribute to the adaptability of Enforcement initiatives by reducing the gap between Southeast Asian countries thanks to capacity building and cooperation. The interviewee also underlined the implication of non-governmental organisations supporting these structures. Indeed, Interviewee A admitted that implementing enforcement networks require substantial inputs (of skills and resources) and the presence of organisations such as FREELAND<sup>5</sup> (as cited by Interviewee B) providing technical support through capacity building contribute significantly to increasing the adaptability of Enforcement initiatives.

If the crucial role played by these structures in favouring the adaptability of such initiatives is acknowledged by Interviewees, they also emphasized the existence of barriers limiting it. For instance, the inequalities between countries regarding their legislative framework, may restrain the adaptability of Enforcement initiatives. Indeed, Interviewee A noted the presence of advanced prosecution system in countries, such as Philippines that implemented a Green Courts system, or Thailand, which adopted a Transnational Crime Statute in order to charge Thai citizens abroad and repatriate them to be tried and sentenced. On the opposite, there are countries with a 'weaker' system, as in the case of Laos for which Interview D revealed the absence of Enforcement initiatives regarding illegal wildlife trade. Initiatives coming from countries with a solid framework may be challenging to implement in countries lacking of similar baselines since an extensive work may be required by the structures presented earlier.

Another factor mentioned by the interviewees as determining the adaptability of an initiative is the willingness of national authorities to cooperate in developing Enforcement Initiatives. Indeed, the commitment of those authorities is decisive in the development of a complete framework. For instance, Interviewee A recognised the role played by the Government of Thailand, which has undertaken the creation of green courts and tribunals to develop stronger punishments regarding wildlife crime. On the other hand, cooperating with national

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<sup>5</sup> Details on FREELAND's programmes : <http://www.freeland.org/#!actions/c16c6>

authorities is considered as impractical in the opinion of Interviewee D, who ascertained the presence of conflict of interest in the case of Vietnamese authorities “*wishing to protect wildlife while making profit from it*” and limiting the implementation of important initiatives due a lack of willingness, prosecutions and risk of corruption. As a result, the interviewee underlined the efforts required by its organisation in putting pressure on the governmental authorities to fulfil their commitment. For instance, the interviewee recognised the need of constant monitoring and reminders towards wildlife crime countermeasures conducted by police officers, due to a lack of willingness to fully complete them. Lastly, Interviewee B argued that the authorities’ commitment may be favoured “*thanks to the provision of training and materials*” (regarding new technologies, procedure, information about threaten species, methods of smuggling...) able to sustain the conduct of the initiatives by keeping those agents informed and updated.

- **Findings from observations:**

The lack of cooperation and commitment from local authorities pointed out in 6.2.1. *Velocity of Enforcement initiatives* is also perceived as a barrier for the adaptability of such initiatives. Indeed, the employee recognised that the measures developed by its organisation in countering wildlife crime can be easily implemented in various regions across the country. However, such measures require a total involvement from local authorities, which is not the case in the present context, as underlined by the employee who noted the efforts done by the organisation to urge the authorities to fulfil their obligations. The employee supported their argument by highlighting the rechecking procedure used by the organisation in order to determine the progress of wildlife crime cases. This procedure consists of an initial investigation on a case (conducted independently by the organisation) to confirm the presence of illegal activity, completed by a second-tier observation controlling if the case is effectively handled by the authorities. Developing such procedures appeared mandatory in the employee’s opinion since the enforcement measures by those authorities are typically incomplete, requiring a constant monitoring by the organisation.

On the other hand, the employee also detected that the efforts of monitoring those actions may contribute to partially increase the adaptability of future Enforcement initiatives since a greater commitment of enforcement authorities, possibly explained (in employee’s opinion) by a will to avoid any further pressure from the organisation.

### 6.3.2 Adaptability of Awareness initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

Regarding the Awareness initiatives, the government's willingness to cooperate may influence the initiatives' adaptability. For Instance, Interviewee B introduced the campaign "Operation Game Change"<sup>6</sup>, involving governments, non-governmental organisations and civil society to encourage the development of awareness initiatives aiming to reduce the consumption of threatened wildlife. The interviewee recognised that such partnership may contribute to increase the adaptability of Awareness initiatives by actively involving governmental agencies, who may be more likely to support and ease the implementation of Awareness initiatives. However, this argument has to be tempered given Interviewee C's observation of the presence of dissents during the elaboration of Awareness initiatives in cooperation with governmental authorities. Indeed, the interviewee noted the difficulty to conduct advanced activities in this context, since the authorities appeared more inclined in developing rudimentary activities that are limited to raising awareness generally. The interviewee assumed that this limitation is partially explained by the lack of skills and experiences of those authorities in conducting this type of activities and building their capacity (via trainings and tools) may provide them with greater confidence and allow to develop more complex activities.

Another variable influencing the adaptability of an Awareness initiative is the cultural environment within it will be integrated. As evoked by Interviewee C, the sociocultural environment in which the initiative will be integrated determines its efficiency and an initiative designed regarding a specific context may not have a similar outcome in another contextual environment. To illustrate that, the interviewee noted that a leaflet had been created in the context of an awareness campaign built on a specific message: "You Buy They Die". According to the interviewee, the campaign aimed to change the public's perception about wildlife consumption and creating culpability among consumers of wildlife products by making them aware that demand for wildlife products implies the death of threatened or endangered species. If the interviewee approved the strategy employed to bring this message to the targeted audiences efficiently, they also revealed the debate and concerns regarding the outcomes of the campaign. While some individuals may be dissuaded from consuming wildlife products (such as individuals consuming rhinoceros horn for medicinal purpose as exposed in 2.1.2. *Purposes of demand for wildlife products*), some experts cautioned that it may result in opposite outcomes in the case of other audience, who would be

*"...enticed if he (the targeted audience) knows an animal has be killed on his behalf".*

Reproducing an awareness initiative designed for a specific audience and issue while expecting similar outcomes for other cases seems therefore questionable due to an omission of the subjacent sociocultural context.

Finally, the adaptability of Awareness initiatives is contingent on their perceived effectiveness. Interviewee C underlined that some stakeholders appear to evaluate the potential of those initiatives, express preferences and apply pressure (based on their respective perceptions) on the actors in charge of implementing such activities. As examples, the

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<sup>6</sup> Introduction of Operation Game Change: <http://www.freeland.org/#!ogc-launch/car9>

interviewee referred to the governmental authorities (more inclined to adopt public awareness initiatives, perceived as more effective), the headquarters of international organisations (wishing to implement global initiatives without considering cultural elements) or donors (that appears to have a negative perception of experimental initiatives). Those stakeholders might influence the implementation of awareness initiatives through the use of brakes and levers, such as the will to cooperate or not (in the case of partnership with governmental authorities), the decision of specific directives (specifically from the headquarter of an organisation) or the financial support from donors (by providing more support for some initiatives than others).

- **Findings from observations:**

In order to efficiently disseminate the organisation's Awareness initiatives, an employee mentioned the implementation of outposts across the country. The employee supervising those outposts recognised that such structures are essential to increase the adaptability of Awareness initiatives on a local perspective since those activities are essentially conducted by volunteers. By providing support (e.g. documents, posters and materials for public events) and capacity building, the outposts are therefore easing the conduct of local activities by making the organisation's volunteers able to undertake them.

## 6.4 Range

This section will highlight the findings on the Range of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives by summarising the elements pointed out by the actors regarding the initiatives' impact in terms of targets reached as well as the desired effects on them.

### 6.4.1 Range of Enforcement initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

According to Interviewee A, the enforcement initiatives implemented across Southeast Asia are focused essentially on the supply side of illegal wildlife trade, especially on harvesters and traders. Among these initiatives, Interviewee B and D both distinguished different levels, from minor cases (individuals smuggling wildlife products in minute amount) to major cases (important actors of wildlife trafficking in Southeast Asia, such as major smugglers or criminal organisation's kingpins). In interviewee D's point of view, conducting Enforcement activities targeting minor cases is expected to discourage individuals by increasing the risk and barriers of committing wildlife crime from an isolated approach. The interviewee considered that such initiatives may disturb or otherwise counter wildlife trafficking due to the important involvement of minor cases across the region. Regarding Enforcement initiatives targeting major cases of wildlife trafficking, Interviewee A justified their necessity due to the presence of criminal networks strongly involved in wildlife trafficking, requiring the implementation of complex measures in order to dismantle those networks. It is expected from these activities to disrupt illegal wildlife trade by neutralising the actors in charge of its organisation across Southeast Asia.

From interviewee A's point of view, the range of Enforcement initiatives appeared to be significant on a geographical perspective, owing to measures implemented locally (such as natural parks officers, customs...), nationally (national wildlife tasks force), and regionally (ASEAN-WEN). In addition to the implementation of a variety of structures, the interviewee argued that the interconnections between them contributed toward countering wildlife trafficking regionally and beyond Southeast Asia. Indeed, this inter-agencies cooperation contributed in extending the range of enforcement initiatives outwards Southeast Asia in some specific cases such as the "Operation COBRA II"<sup>7</sup>, defines by interviewee A as a considerable achievement of multi-agencies cooperation across and beyond the region. This global operation involved African, Asian and North American enforcement agencies (encompassing country's customs, police and wildlife authorities) as well as governmental (such as INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization...) in the purpose of identifying and arresting members of ivory-trafficking syndicate. As outcomes, this operation led to the 400 arrests and 350 wildlife seizures and contributed to ease the exchange of information and practices between the agencies.

Conversely, barriers affecting the enforcement initiatives' range were apparent, essentially explained by the disparity of Southeast Asian countries regarding their legal framework. As pointed out by Interviewee B and D, some countries like Laos are lacking a legislative framework on illegal wildlife trade and may not be able to provide an appropriate prosecution system. The interviewees recognised that such gaps across regions constitute loopholes easily

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<sup>7</sup> Operation COBRA II press release:  
[http://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/news/sundry/2014/operation\\_cobra\\_ii\\_pr.pdf](http://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/news/sundry/2014/operation_cobra_ii_pr.pdf)

exploitable by wildlife trafficking syndicate, negatively affecting the de facto reach and range of regional Enforcement initiatives in practice.

- **Findings from observations:**

According to the employee involved as wildlife crime investigator, the set of measures developed by its organisation allow to tackle illegal wildlife trade nationally and on different levels. Indeed, the employee underlined that the investigations undertaken were not limited to specific actors of the trade and encompassed cases from traders (e.g. tracking smugglers across the country) to retailers (e.g. wildlife markets, restaurants selling “exotic meat” or Traditional Chinese Medicine shops). The employee pointed out that investigating from a holistic approach permitted the discovery of serious cases such as the identification and public exposure of a major illegal marine turtle trade and the individuals in charge of its operation.

Nonetheless, the employee mentioned that Enforcement initiatives may also focus on particular issues. They illustrated this statement with the measures developed towards illegal trades of specific species, such as Tiger and Asiatic black bear trades for which the organisation undertook activities aiming to identify key networks and actors of the trades and then develop appropriate enforcement operations with the authorities. Such selectivity has been explained by the employee as a motivation of countering precise cases of illegal wildlife trade in which the organisation’s country is particularly involved.

## 6.4.2 Range of Awareness initiatives.

- **Findings from interviews:**

While the key purpose of Awareness initiatives across Southeast Asia appear to be a demand reduction for wildlife products, the interviewees noted various approaches, implying different targets for the purpose of achieving this main objective. Interviewee C made a distinction between measures focusing exclusively on wildlife products consumers and measures with an audience composed of individuals assumed as able to influence wildlife product consumers. Indeed, in the case of the “Chi campaign” presented by the interviewee, this initiative addresses exclusively the consumers of rhinoceros horn and aims to reduce a demand by changing consumer’s perception of the benefit of using rhinoceros horn.. In addition, the interviewee mentioned the presence of complementary Awareness initiatives focusing on influential persons. For instance, an awareness campaign focusing on Traditional Chinese Medicine doctors has been undertaken aiming to dissuade them from providing wildlife products as medicine to their patients and encourage the use of alternatives. Therefore, those activities may well contribute to a demand reduction by using the capacity of such individuals to influence the consumers of wildlife products in order to discourage the act of buying.

Another variable characterising the range is the timescale of the Awareness initiatives’ outcomes. As argued by Interviewee C, the increasing trend of wildlife consumption across Southeast Asia requires to undertake both present and future demands with the intention of mitigating existing demand (via activities as presented earlier) and neutralizing the future demand. Such initiatives may take the form of educational programs as introduced by Interviewee D, developing various events in schools to raise awareness and concern among young people regarding the issue of illegal wildlife trade. As a result, such Awareness activities intend to prevent any future demand for wildlife products by sensitizing individuals at early stages.

Finally, the difficulty expressed by the interviewees in determining the impact of an Awareness initiative should be pointed out. As an example, Interviewee D mentioned an awareness-raising campaign conducted by another NGO towards rhinoceros horn consumption<sup>8</sup>. While this organisation recognised:

*“a dramatic reduction in public demand since the campaign’s inception”*,

the interviewee expressed doubts regarding the credibility of this statement. Indeed, they argued that the conduct of a single activity (as awareness-campaign in this case) is not sufficient to generate considerable outcomes as behaviour change, which may require additional measures due to its complexity. Moreover, the Interviewee noted that evaluating the exact impact of a specific action is a complex task, with questionable results, due to the involvement of various Awareness initiatives (such as PSAs, public events, articles on newspaper...) conducted in parallel to this specific campaign.

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<sup>8</sup> Details on the HSI Rhino horn campaign : <http://www.hsi.org/assets/pdfs/vietnam-rhino-horn-campaign-poll-results.pdf>

- **Findings from observations:**

The employee in charge of conducting awareness-raising activities claimed that diverse impacts may be perceived according to the individuals targeted and their influence on the illegal wildlife trade.

First, the activities developed to raise public awareness toward the general issue of illegal wildlife trade were brought up. The employee underlined the requirement of diverse activities to meet this objective, due to an audience geographically scattered and composed of multiple groups of individuals. Indeed, developing initiatives focused on definite actors has been explained by the employee as a way to broadcast a general message efficiently, since it allows to adapt the latter according to the targeted audience. Among the examples enumerated, the conduct of public events within universities can be noted, consisting of discussions with students across the country. Consequently, the employee assumed that an active involvement of those participants would allow to efficiently sensitize the young population of the country. By influencing this social group as well as others, the organisation aims for a demand reduction of wildlife products as projected in a more long-term perspective.

The second form of the Awareness initiatives revealed by the employee encompasses actions targeting key actors of the illegal wildlife trade, with an accent on consumers of wildlife products. As an example, the employee described an awareness campaign dealing with the trade of rhinoceros horn and based on the objective of questioning the presumed benefits of its consumption. According to the employee, developing elements discrediting the beliefs toward the consumption of rhinoceros horn may discourage the demand, due to a loss of interest in the product. The employee recognised that developing measures entirely focused on the consumers may contribute in mitigating the illegal wildlife trade by dissuading them of buying wildlife products.

## 7 Influential factors towards Enforcement and Awareness initiatives across Southeast Asia.

The conduct of this study allowed to identify critical components determining the effectiveness of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives in tackling illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia. Those elements can be regrouped under two critical features which are the implication of governmental authorities in the conduct of the initiatives and the efforts engaged by prominent actors in tackling illegal wildlife trade across the region.

### 7.1 The importance of the countries' commitment.

The involvement of governmental authorities is decisive in order to maximise the potential of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives. The first reason relates to their capacity of developing a supportive framework easing the implementation of those initiatives. This framework essentially encompasses legal measures along with cooperative agreements and significant accomplishment have been pointed out, on a national (with the implementation of green courts in Thailand or Philippines, as highlighted by Interviewee A in *6.3.1 Adaptability of Enforcement initiatives*), regional (expressed by the creation of the ASEAN-WEN introduced in *2.2.3...towards an emergence of local initiatives*) and international perspective (such as the "Operation COBRA II" described in *6.4.1 Range of Enforcement initiatives*). Supporting the implementation of diverse initiatives is crucial in light of a transnational illegal wildlife trade (see *2.1.3. Actors involved in the trade, Fig.2. Rhino horn trafficking route*) implying countermeasures on both local and regional scales within Southeast Asia, due to the presence of specific zones with elements (good infrastructure, geographic location, level of corruption...) easing the conduct of illegal wildlife trade (Majumdar et al. 2014). Indeed, the absence of similar engagement in some countries may sustain wildlife trafficking in the region, as pointed out by Interviewee B and D with the case of Laos, disturbing the efficiency of regional initiatives by lacking of Enforcement initiatives implemented nationally. Therefore, the countries' commitment is crucial to ensure a harmonised framework allowing to dismantle the existing trafficking networks across the region and discourage the entry of new actors. Indeed, through activities aiming to arrest major traffickers (such as the "Operation COBRA II" described by Interviewee A), it is expected to counteract the existing perpetrators by increasing the severity of punishment (i.e. the level of punishment, described in *3.1. Enforcement initiatives and the concept of Deterrence*) and generate a deterrent effect specific to those individuals (Nagin 2012). Additionally, the presence of national and regional structures (such as the ASEAN-WEN) may contribute to create a general deterrent effect regionally thanks to a harmonisation of Enforcement initiatives, improving the certainty of punishment (the probability that a crime will be followed by a punishment, as presented in *3.1. Enforcement initiatives and the concept of Deterrence*) resulting in a general deterrent effect among the stakeholders of the illegal wildlife trade (Nagin 2012).

Moreover, the role of governmental authorities in the development of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives is not limited to the implementation of founding elements. Indeed, the analysis pointed out diverse degrees of involvement in the conduct of Enforcement or Awareness initiatives, with various outcomes. Pink (2010) explained this difference of results in function of the agencies' (e.g. governmental authorities) involvement in a network (such as the ASEAN-WEN studied in this paper) determined by the benefit provided by this involvement. According to the author, the active participation is "vital for networks" (Pink 2010, p.44) since it "inevitably and unavoidably shapes the network itself" (ibid) and countries with strong engagement are easing the execution of those initiatives (such as the "Operation Game Change" introduced in *6.3.2.Adaptability of Awareness initiatives*). Reversely, a lack of engagement (that can be explained by a conflict of interest as revealed in *6.3.1.Adaptability of Enforcement initiatives*) leads to the risk of slowing down the running of the initiatives (observed in *6.2.1.Velocity of Enforcement initiatives* with the case of the ASEAN-WEN) and the development of incomplete measures (for instance, Interviewee C revealed in *6.3.2.Adaptability of Awareness initiatives* the problematic of developing advanced awareness-related activities in partnership with governmental authorities).

Consequently, the importance of governmental authorities' commitment has been recognised in the whole formation of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives owing to the outcomes generated by a strong involvement. On the other hand, it was also indicated that countries with an insufficient participation may weaken the capacity of the whole initiatives undertaken across the region. Therefore, the contribution of external actors is crucial to respond to this challenge and will be synthetized in the next section.

## 7.2 The crucial involvement of non-governmental actors.

In order to effectively counter illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia, Enforcement and Awareness are relying on the support of significant actors. Indeed, the interviewees pointed out the presence of “Champions” (term used by Interviewees B and C) encompassing multiple individuals or structures who significantly contribute to the maintenance and good operation of activities tackling illegal wildlife trade in the region. Those actors can be distinguished in two categories according to the underlying purposes of the actions engaged.

The first category includes non-governmental actors involved with the purpose of supporting the deployment and sustainment of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives across Southeast Asia. The role of those actors is important thanks to their ability of “supplementing, replacing, bypassing and even substituting for traditional politics” (Princen et al. 1995, p.54). For instance, the presence of initiatives exclusively undertaken by those actors were highlighted, such as the national hotline service, introduced in the observational findings of the section *6.1.1.Complexity of Enforcement initiatives*. As explained by Interviewee D (in *6.3.1.Adaptability of Enforcement initiatives*) and Interviewee C (in *6.3.2.Adaptability of Awareness initiatives*) such undertaking implies the involvement of external actors owing to the reticence expressed by governmental authorities in investing resources into those initiatives. This category also comprises the actors supporting the initiatives conducted by governmental authorities. As underlined in *2.3.Drivers sustaining illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia*, the lack of skills, methods and resources allocated in Enforcement and Awareness initiatives is limiting their impact on illegal wildlife trade occurring in the region. Therefore, actors with a support role such as the non-governmental organisation FREELAND (depicted by Interviewee B in *6.1.1.Complexity of Enforcement initiatives*) make a significant contribution by increasing the *severity of punishment* (Nagin 2012) of Enforcement initiatives through capacity building, providing them a greater efficiency, especially on major cases. Finally, the participation of influential individuals may increase the efficiency of the initiatives undertaken. In the case of Awareness initiatives, the interviewees recognised the important role played by famous people to raise awareness regarding the issues of illegal wildlife trade (as noted in *6.1.2.Complexity of Awareness initiatives*). Indeed, involving those actors can increase the impact of Awareness initiatives thanks to their capacity of influencing wide groups of individuals and affect behaviour pattern by soliciting individuals’ *subjective norm* and *attitude*. As developed in *3.2 Awareness initiatives and the Theory of Planned behaviour*, an individual’s *Behavioural Intention* (i.e. buying illegal wildlife products) can be determined by a *subjective norm* (i.e. consuming wildlife products as status symbol as seen in *2.1.2.Purposes of demand for wildlife products*) affected by *normative beliefs*, the approval or disapproval of the behaviour from important individuals or groups related to the individual (Ajzen 1991). Consequently, it can be expected a significant impact from Awareness initiatives involving famous people, due to their immediate influence on *subjective norm*.

In addition to the supporting activities, the study revealed the presence of actions developed in order to monitor the operations conducted by the governmental authorities. Interviewee D recognised (in *6.3.1.Adaptability of Enforcement initiatives*) the necessary involvement of third parties to bring transparency on the conduct of Enforcement initiatives and mitigate the risk of corruption (of enforcement authorities) that may undermine their effectiveness (Majumdar et al. 2014). Moreover, the literature supported the necessity of integrating non-governmental entities as third parties (thanks to their apolitical nature, developed in

2.2.3...*towards an emergence of local initiatives*) in the process of Enforcement initiatives due to issues of governance such as breakdown of the rule of law or inadequate political will (TRAFFIC 2008). This has been confirmed by the findings provided by the discussion realised with a professional of Enforcement initiatives, who underlined the frequent incompleteness of investigations from local enforcement authorities (in 6.2.1.*Velocity of Enforcement initiatives*), implying monitoring efforts (as explained in 6.3.1.*Adaptability of Enforcement initiatives*) from the organisation to force the authorities to fulfil their duties. The presence of third-parties is therefore determinant to ensure the effectiveness of Enforcement initiatives, since the barriers previously mentioned can decrease the *certainty of punishment* of the initiatives and weakening their deterrent effect (Nagin 2012).

## 8 Summary/Conclusion

In light of the findings collected throughout this study, it will now be possible to provide an answer to the research questions:

- How do Enforcement and Awareness initiatives respectively aim to mitigate illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia?
- What is the actual effectiveness of those approaches in countering illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia?
- What are the influential factors of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives?

As initially assumed, Enforcement and Awareness initiatives are focusing on various types of actors involved in illegal wildlife trade, ranging from individual cases to major criminal cases for Enforcement while Awareness initiatives cope with a multitude of consumers driven by specific motivations. Therefore, the initiatives are implying a multitude of activities in order to target every actor effectively. Those activities are also differentiable by their complexity. Indeed, both Enforcement and Awareness initiatives comprise activities involving minimal skills and resources as well as activities requiring multi-agency collaboration. Finally, the study revealed the presence of structures and partnerships allowing to disseminate Enforcement and Awareness initiatives and harmonise the practices in order to counter illegal wildlife trade on a regional perspective.

Regarding the effectiveness of the initiatives, most of the Enforcement initiatives appear to provide results on a short-term perspective with impact on a large geographic scale. Conversely, Awareness initiatives are expected to produce results on a longer timeframe with a reduced range. This difference is essentially explained by inequalities at the monitoring stage. While Enforcements initiatives results are certainly measurable and traceable, it remains difficult to determine the connexion between a behavioural change and a specific Awareness initiatives as well as its impact on the behavioural change. However, the effectiveness of Enforcement and Awareness is not exclusively determined by their characteristics since external factors are also involved.

Indeed, the study pointed out the predominant role played by Southeast Asian countries' authorities due to their involvement in the conduct of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives across the region. However, the presence of inequalities concerning the countries' level of commitment has also been demonstrated, challenging therefore the capacity of the initiatives to counter illegal wildlife trade across Southeast Asia from a holistic approach. For this

reason, the implication of third parties remains essential by supporting the conduct of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives across the region as well as lobbying governmental authorities to ensure their commitment and participation in Enforcement and Awareness initiatives.

Despite the negative observation formulated in the beginning of this study (see *fig.1.*), the interviewees agreed on the increasing success of Enforcement and Awareness initiatives undertaken within Southeast Asia while expressing some restraint. The Interviewee D has stated that

“...we (the practitioners) *are winning the war, but we are winning it with Pyrrhic Victory*”.

Indeed significant changes occurred in the region such as the creation of the enforcement network ASEAN-WEN and the strengthening of the legislative network in some countries. Moreover, the contribution of NGOs is significant according to the support provided and their involvement as third parties.

While debates continue whether Enforcement or Awareness is the best approach to mitigate illegal wildlife trade, this study acknowledged that both initiatives play a crucial role. Enforcement activities and legislative framework still have to be improved in both national and regional scales in order to consolidate the regional capacity to counter wildlife trafficking and undertake harsher measures toward major cases. Although the evidence of impact of Awareness initiatives remains uncertain, educating society and trying to influence the diverse consumers of wildlife products may help to mitigate the dramatic increase of regional demand for wildlife products as well as prevent the arise of future demand.

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## 11 Appendix

### Appendix A – Discussion guideline for in-depth interview

#### I. Initiating phase :

- ◆ Purpose of the interview: collect data for thesis on Awareness and Enforcement initiatives in SE Asia. Interviewee is free to answer and narrate based on his/her overall experience / vision and not only current position. Important since it can provide significant input for the paper.
- ◆ Duration of the interview: around 60min
- ◆ Recording: ask if ok to record the conversation to facilitate face to face conversation. Identity will remain confidential.
- ◆ Start by asking a brief description of interviewee's background and actual position.
- ◆ Introduce to discussion phase:

#### II. Guideline :

1. *In your opinion, what initially justified the implementation of those initiatives in S/E Asia as a way to counter illegal wildlife trade?*

Targeted information: problems encountered in the past, expected solutions, barriers and opportunities...

2. *Can you tell me more about How A & E are implemented in S/E Asia?*

Targeted information: identification of important actors, level of implication, resources, skills, and technology employed...

3. *Do you perceive in Strengths/Weaknesses in the implementation of these initiatives? What outcomes (positive or negative) has been observed in S/E Asia?*

Targeted information: focus on information concerning results, perceived efficiency of initiatives as well as implementation and conduct of the initiatives.

4. *What will (or should) be done in future based on those facts?*

Targeted information: barriers and opportunities perceived by interviewee, chances to discover unconsidered findings...

5. *Is here anything further that you feel important to mention?*





