

Terms of Reference: Analysis of patrol data and the Uganda Wildlife Offenders Database for Queen Elizabeth National Park to enhance capabilities and coordination of park-level and national responses to wildlife trafficking and poaching.

Background

Often referred to as the “pearl of Africa”, Uganda contains globally important biodiversity that sustains key sectors such as tourism, agriculture, water, and energy, providing direct and indirect employment for the country’s population of 45,905,417 (45.9 million people)¹. Uganda’s biodiversity, however, faces enormous threats from wildlife crimes such as illegal wildlife trafficking (IWT) and poaching due to the country’s porous borders, weak law enforcement, corruption, low capacity of wildlife authorities, and persistent insecurity in neighboring countries such as South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Over the past several years, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has collaborated with the Government of Uganda—particularly the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), the agency responsible for managing the country’s national parks, wildlife reserves, and wildlife—in combatting wildlife crime (CWC). WCS continues to build on this long-term partnership with UWA to strengthen the agency’s ability to combat wildlife trafficking, including poaching at both the park level—focusing on the Queen Elizabeth Protected Area (QEPA).

WCS has proposed a new game-changing collaborative management partnership (CMP) with UWA in QEPA for Ishasha sector. The proposed new site engagement focuses initially on securing Ishasha as the most viable source site of lions for the wider QEPA and transboundary area, but will have longer-term wide-reaching positive impacts on QEPA’s species and ecosystems.

WCS and UWA have co-designed a co-management approach for Ishasha that will innovate governance and management, enhance flexibility and adaptability, strengthen partnerships and collaboration, invest in long-term capacity and unlock additional financing opportunities. The proposed CMP will implement comprehensive species recovery, habitat management, community engagement and tourism enhancement initiatives that will restore the park’s ecological integrity and help transform relationships between local communities and the park.

The CMP will be for a duration of twenty years, split into five-year strategic periods. The goal of the CMP is: ‘To protect Ishasha’s globally important ecosystems and iconic tree-climbing lions through collaborative and innovative conservation efforts in partnership with local stakeholders’.

Under the CMP, Strategic Objective three will focus on enhancement of wildlife protection and Law Enforcement (LE) in Ishasha sector, QEPA. A LE robust strategy development will be informed by reliable data. It will be managed adaptively based on a continuous flow of information between rangers and management. The law enforcement strategy will be grounded in a strong understanding of the situation in the field, such as poaching hotspots, seasonality and timing of illegal activities, and key park access

¹ <https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/National-Population-and-Housing-Census-2024-Final-Report-Volume-1-Main.pdf>

points. UWA rangers have an intimate understanding of these factors, and this will be utilized to inform strategy development in the first six months of the CMP. WCS will provide support to UWA in the implementation and monitoring of the strategy. Specifically, data collection will be improved: on-the-ground information used for LE strategy and adaptation begins with UWA's eyes and ears: rangers in the field. They collect crucial information about the location, timing, nature, and intensity of illegal activities; confiscations of contraband; arrests or other human contacts; key species sightings; and duration and coverage of patrols. Under the CMP we would implement a program of long-term, hands-on training to build rangers' skills in data collection and to expose them to the kind of reports and analyses to which their data contributes. Greater understanding of how their day-to-day activities can lead to more effective patrol planning and improved protection of the park will motivate rangers to better use SMART which will, in turn, provide better data on which to base the LE strategy. This training will be park-wide across QEPA, not restricted to Ishasha. Additionally, Law enforcement monitoring data guides patrols will be guided by law enforcement monitoring data and strategies developed. WCS will support UWA to deploy targeted patrols in Ishasha. These will include overnight patrols, de-snaring missions, intelligence-led operations, transboundary engagement with Virunga Foundation rangers, and other-directed initiatives. Patrols will focus on deterring crimes and intercepting individuals before crimes have taken place, to minimize the harm to wildlife and habitats.

The aim of this consultancy is to contribute to WCS' efforts to strengthen UWA's anti-poaching capacity in QENP, and support WCS' co-management of the Ishasha Sector of QEPA. To achieve this, the consultancy will apply advanced GIS and crime analysis techniques to identify and explain patterns and trends for the poaching of wildlife in QEPA.

The consultancy should go beyond descriptive mapping and apply crime science principles to identify prevention opportunities. Outputs should directly inform intervention design, patrol planning, and strategic decision-making for QEPA and Ishasha.

Scope of Work

WCS is seeking a consultant to:

- Deliver a comprehensive spatial analysis of patrol and environmental data to identify and explain the spatial and temporal patterns of poaching, assess the influence of key environmental and accessibility factors (e.g. terrain, water, infrastructure), evaluate the relationship between patrol effort and detected incidents, and apply crime science approaches to uncover high-risk areas, and priority locations for targeted interventions within QENP and Ishasha.
- Deliver a comprehensive analysis of offender case management data (UWA managed Online Wildlife Offenders Database) that examines patterns and trends in offending (including offence types, frequency, and case outcomes), profiles offender characteristics (e.g. age, occupation, home village), and identifies high-risk groups and locations. The analysis should further explore the relationship between offender data and spatial patterns derived from patrol and incident datasets, integrating crime science approaches to understand underlying drivers of offending and support the development of targeted, prevention-focused interventions within QENP and Ishasha.

Deliverables will be in the form of:

- Two (2) reports:
 - 1) An inception report detailing the methodology, data assessment and workplan for the consultancy.
 - 2) A final report detailing the (crime science) analysis results of both primary datasets (EarthRanger, SMART and UWA Wildlife Offenders Database), findings and recommendations for enhancing anti-poaching efforts within QENP and Ishasha.
 - The report will include maps and visual products including density (hotspot), risk, patrol coverage vs threat, accessibility, nodes and paths.
 - The report will include a structured outline for a peer-review crime science focused research paper emanating from the analysis.
- A cleaned and structured GIS database including all spatial layers and metadata documentation.
- Useable shapefiles that can be applied to decision-support tools, specifically EarthRanger.
 - Patrol optimization model for Ishasha.
- A presentation (virtual) of findings to UWA and WCS staff.

Delivery

Milestone Description	Due Date
1. Execution of Contract	TBD All
2. Completion of Scoping Meetings	
3. Inception Report	
4. Draft Final Report	
5. Final Report	
6. Presentation of results to UWA and WCS staff.	

Meetings

- Planning meeting with WCS project lead following execution of contract.
- Scoping meeting(s) with WCS project lead to inform Inception Report
- Presentation of draft final report to WCS project lead at milestone submission.
- Presentation of final report to WCS and UWA

Requirements

- Advanced GIS spatial and data modelling skills and demonstrated experience in the application of these towards the analysis of environmental crime problems and protected area management.
- Formal qualifications in Crime Science/Environmental Criminology applied to environmental crime problems.
- Strong project management skills, including the ability to develop and execute strategic plans.

- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills to effectively collaborate with diverse field programs, stakeholders, and internal teams.
- Excellent English language verbal and written communication skills (Fluency in French or Spanish is preferable)
- This role can be delivered from any location and therefore the applicant must have their own reliable internet connection (strong enough to join regular video calls and handle transfer of large files).

Application procedure

1. Submission of the technical proposal and budget for conducting this service not exceeding seven pages, including references.
2. Submission of the current CV of the applicant with at least two referees.
3. Submit the application documents to **wcsuganda@wcs.org** and copy to **snampindo@wcs.org**
4. WCS will not cover application costs
5. Deadline for submission of application is **April 14, 2026**.