

# INVESTIGATOR

Spring • 2021

**eia** environmental  
investigation  
agency

The team keeping  
Intelligence right at the  
heart of all we do

Criminal network exposed  
- all the latest on Myanmar's  
tainted teak

We reveal the Chinese  
Government's pangolin trade  
deception

The Big 10 UK supermarkets  
tread water in a rising ocean  
of plastic

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CONNECTION  
ANALYSIS  
DATA  
CODING  
SENDING



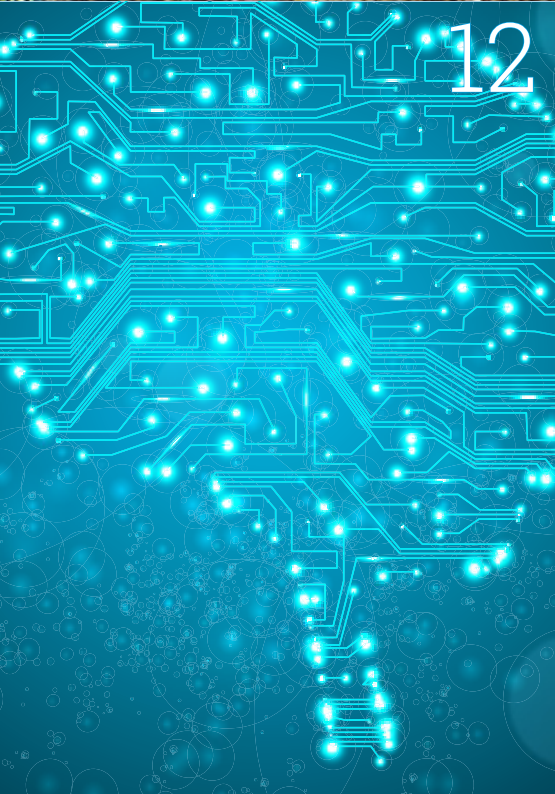
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## INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the Spring 2021 *Investigator* magazine, keeping you up to date on our activities and successes.

Inside, you can find out about the amazing work behind the scenes by our Intelligence Team, unsung heroes whose ability to crunch the data and make sense of the huge amount of information we get from the field is essential for the success of our campaigns.

There's also a round-up of our key activities, including an update on illegal timber trade out of Myanmar in light of the violent coup of 1 February.

Despite the uncertainty and challenges of the pandemic, I'm delighted to report that EIA's campaigns go from strength to strength.

Thank you for your vital support – without it, we simply couldn't achieve so much.

**Mary Rice, Executive Director**

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## Major UK supermarkets tread water in a rising ocean of plastic

Too many of the UK's leading supermarket chains are standing still in the fight against plastic pollution.

In January, our third annual plastics survey produced with Greenpeace UK, *Checking Out on Plastics III*, showed that the 10 leading supermarkets collectively put almost 900,000 tonnes of plastic packaging on the market in 2019 – the equivalent weight of almost 90 Eiffel Towers.

But while the 896,853 tonnes was a reduction of 1.6 per cent on 2018, it was actually a 1.2 per cent increase from 2017 when they produced a total of 886,021 tonnes of plastic.

The report ranked the 10 on their efforts to effectively reduce plastic pollution and this year's scorecard shows Waitrose at the top for the second consecutive year, with Iceland in tenth place. Of the five largest UK supermarkets according to market share, Aldi ranked first, followed by Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda and Morrisons.

Senior Ocean Campaigner Christina Dixon said: "In our third year of looking at plastic packaging in UK supermarkets, we had hoped to see a much sharper downwards trajectory as strategies and targets bear fruit. Instead, we are looking at a relatively static picture – the sector urgently needs to pick up the pace."

Other significant findings, based entirely on data supplied by the supermarkets themselves, include:

- more than 1.58 billion plastic 'bags for life' (which contain more plastic than thinner single-use bags) were issued in 2019, a 4.5 per cent increase over 2018. This represents almost 57 bags per UK household during the year;
- the number of single-use plastic carrier bags issued fell by 33 per cent and several supermarkets have banned them entirely;

## Support growing for global plastic pollution treaty

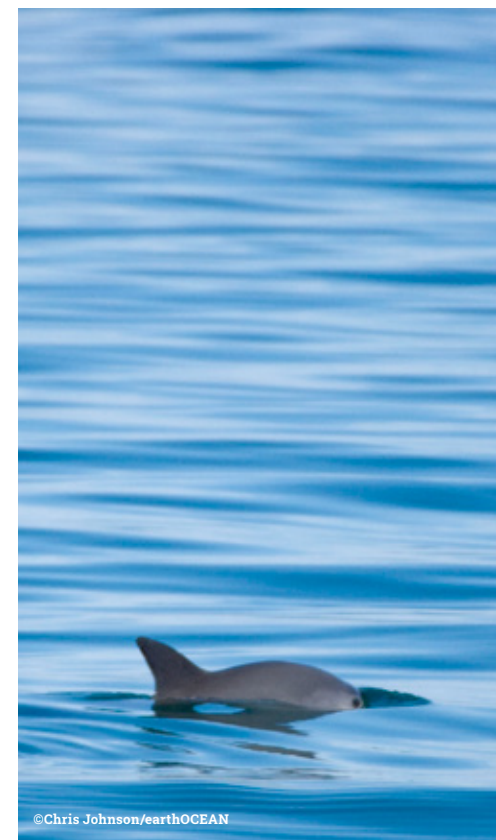
In November, the 'ad hoc expert group' (AHEG) tasked by the United Nations Environment Assembly to explore global options to combat plastic waste was concluded.

We were encouraged to see more than half of all countries have now expressed support for a new legally binding global treaty.

EIA has played a critical role in the AHEG to date, developing proposals for the design and elements of a potential treaty and working closely with allies around the world to provide technical support and strategic advice as the process has moved along. ●

- almost 2.5 billion plastic water bottles were sold or given away in UK supermarkets in 2019;
- while most companies reported reductions on own-brand plastic packaging, the percentage of branded packaging in 2019 increased by five per cent compared to 2017.

With supermarket reduction efforts primarily focused on their own brands, the plastic packaging used for popular branded goods is not reducing and we want to see supermarkets stepping up the pressure on big manufacturers. ●



©Chris Johnson/earthOCEAN

### TRADE SANCTIONS CALL OVER ENDANGERED VAQUITAS

In April, we and three partner organisations called on the US to use sanctions to pressure Mexico to save the vaquita porpoise, just 10 of which are estimated to still exist.

The vaquita is not hunted directly but is dying in illegal gillnets set to catch endangered totoaba fish, whose dried swim bladder is prized in China.

Despite repeated promises for decades, the Mexican Government has failed to stop the use of deadly gillnets.

## Myanmar's tainted teak – new criminal network exposed and Dutch court action

Despite pandemic travel restrictions and the dangers to our in-country partners in Myanmar under the brutal military coup, we have identified and exposed a major new forest crime syndicate in the country.

Headed by a Mr Da Shi Naw and involving at least five other sawmill owners, the group is shipping illegal timber across Myanmar's land border to China.

In the past decade, EIA has worked in Myanmar to monitor the smuggling of hardwoods – especially teak – across the Myanmar-China border.

By January 2020, our research suggested that, after Chinese enforcement was carried out against the main syndicate called BDYA in 2019, illegal wood smuggling across the border had virtually stopped.

However, earlier this year we received intelligence of illegal logging in the Government-controlled Sagaing Division, in central Myanmar, with a significant cut of the money being taken by the Forest Department and military.

Following the 1 February coup, we received information that operations previously run by the BDYA syndicate – exposed in our 2015 report *Organised Chaos* – had resumed and expanded to now include sawmills and warehouses to process timber, presumably on order from traders in China.

The sheer scale of this operation can only take place with the knowledge and involvement of the State.

In April, we were pleased to see Dutch traders facing legal action for importing illicit teak from Myanmar.

The European Union Timber Regulation requires due diligence to trace imported timber back to the very point of felling, but some traders have sought to circumvent the law by routing timber through the Czech Republic.

© Dutch Police

## Palm oil body's 'sustainability' claims still untrustworthy

Consumers around the world still can't trust claims of 'sustainable' palm oil in the products they buy.

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) is one of the world's best-known certification schemes – but its seal of approval lacks credibility as members continue to be exposed for violations of the body's own standard.

In our February report *Burning Questions*, we and Malaysian partner Grassroots found the RSPO had yet to complete any major tasks to address long-standing concerns about the production of palm oil bearing its stamp of approval.

\* In October, the European Parliament called on the EU to develop a new law to prevent products sold in the EU from being produced from deforestation. The EU is a major consumer of products driving deforestation, such as beef, cocoa, coffee, palm oil and soy, and there is currently no law to prevent them being sold in the bloc.

Now the Dutch Public Prosecution Service has issued summons against the following companies and associated individuals:

- Dutch Marine Plywood & Timber and Enno P;
- Fairwind Trading and Arthur van de V;
- one additional Czech company.

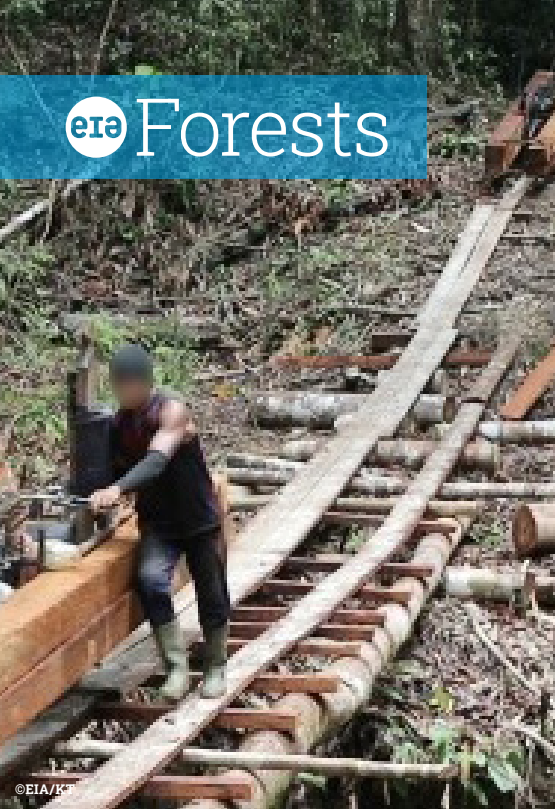


©EIA/KT

Above: an independent smallholder fights a forest fire in Indonesia

At the same time, the Dutch authorities are also investigating Royal Boogaerdt Timber (director Cees Boogaerdt) and Mercura Trade & Services (director Roelof Brouwer) with a view to prosecutions.

Opposite, top: illicit timber seized by Dutch authorities in December 2019. The teak originated from Myanmar, allegedly imported into the Netherlands via the Czech Republic



Above: a felled merbau tree being transported out of the forest on specially modified motorbikes

## Indonesia's legal system fails to properly punish timber criminals

Indonesia's legal system is failing to act against timber criminals, seriously undermining the country's efforts to tackle illegal logging and deforestation.

New research conducted with our Indonesian partner Kaoem Telapak revealed that enforcement action through the courts was taken against only a handful of companies out of more than 50 investigated which were proven to have either traded directly or indirectly in illegal timber.

In one shocking case, Indonesia's Supreme Court actually returned

\$1.6m worth of illegally acquired timber to a criminal found guilty of trading it and who had been given a jail sentence.

Released in January, *Criminal Neglect* was a forensic analysis of enforcement actions and court cases between 2018-20 involving companies and company directors prosecuted for trading illegal timber.

We found that courts routinely ignored guidelines and rules, such as the 2008 Law on Public Information Disclosure, and operated in a secretive manner.

Senior Forests Campaigner David Gritten said: "This lack of transparency, coupled with some seemingly irrational decisions by various courts, leads to the concern that many criminals are going unpunished or are having their punishments reduced with no explanation from the courts."

In recent years, the Government of Indonesia has been making significant efforts to stop illegal logging and its associated trade – but once forest crime cases reach the courts, inexplicable stumbling blocks and failings become apparent in the way cases are handled, including:

- companies found guilty of trading in illegal timber are still allowed to retain their legitimate chain of supply/ custody certificates;
- companies remaining in business despite being found guilty of dealing in illegal wood and ordered to cease trading;
- court verdicts which by law should be made public and yet are kept secret;
- hardly any action taken against named directors of companies found guilty of trading in illegal timber. ●

## Our verdict on the EU Timber Regulation

In 2013, after years of campaigning by EIA and others, the European Union brought in new laws to combat illegal timber trade.

Between them, the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) and the Forests, Law, Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation banned the trade in illegally harvested timber in the EU, no matter where it was obtained.

The regulation is undergoing a 'fitness check' and in February we turned in our report card on how it's doing, in the new briefing *Does Well, Could Do Better*.

On the whole, we found the EUTR does

work – when it's enforced properly. We've also seen declines in the trade of high-risk timber from Myanmar in EU countries which have taken strong enforcement steps, such as Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia.

However, there is more to be done to improve the law's effectiveness and we made several recommendations to the European Commission and Member States which we believe will help to improve enforcement. ●

Below: piles of illegal timber seized in Myanmar in 2020



©EIAimage

### ULIN FOR THE WIN!

We were proud to see our award-winning short film *Ulin* scoop yet another major accolade in March when it featured in a UN forests films showcase for World Wildlife Day 2021 and was declared winner of the 'My Forests' short film category against 60 competitors!



## Energy and petrochemical sectors must not be let off the hook over methane

A new strategy to cut methane emissions in the EU must not fail to tackle those from the petrochemical industry.

In October, the European Commission released its EU Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions.

Our Climate team responded by urging it to beef up limited commitments in the energy sector and to urgently address its near-complete omission of the petrochemical industry – a sector which plays a huge role in methane emissions.

Tim Grabel, our Senior Lawyer, said the strategy cannot be allowed to fail nor be half-hearted – and it absolutely must not sweep the role of EU consumption in the energy and petrochemical sectors under the rug.

Methane is the main component in fossil gas and is responsible for a quarter of the global warming experienced today.

The first bid to come up with a European methane emissions strategy failed 14 years ago; this new attempt seeks to address methane emissions in the energy, agricultural and waste sectors.

The EU's energy sector plays an outsized role in global methane emissions, with gas comprising a quarter of the EU energy mix and the EU importing more than half of all the methane traded globally.

The EU Strategy makes a legislative commitment in the energy sector to submit a proposal this year to require monitoring, reporting and verification and to improve leakage detection and repair, but it stops short of a clear commitment to apply those obligations across the entire supply chain, including to imports.

It also omits any mention of methane emissions from the petrochemical industry. Petrochemicals, such as naphtha and natural gas liquids, are used as the raw materials to produce plastics and are co-products of oil and gas production and processing, which is where significant methane emissions occur. ●

Top: methane flaring at a gas production plant



## The coolest products list around!

With average global temperatures rising, the growth in use of air-conditioning to cool homes, workplaces and for the storage of foods and medicines poses a serious problem.

Most of the world's refrigeration and air-conditioning systems run on fluorinated gases, also known as F-gases, most notably hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) – which are major contributors to the climate crisis.

Understanding that many companies are increasingly aware of the importance of doing their bit in the fight against climate change, our Climate team decided to take some of the slog out of looking for alternatives by producing the new Pathway to Net-Zero: Cooling Product List in March.

EIA has long been campaigning to make the switch from harmful systems running

on F-gases to natural refrigerants such as ammonia, hydrocarbons and carbon dioxide, which have a much smaller impact on the climate, as part of a push to reach net-zero –achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere and those taken out.

We researched and compiled the Pathway to Net-Zero: Cooling Product List to showcase some of the very best climate-friendly alternatives available; it also provides information on how to reduce the use of cooling and improve the energy consumption of existing equipment. ●

Top: our product list takes the leg work out of looking for climate-friendly cooling equipment



# The team keeping Intelligence right at the heart of all we do

Long-term followers and supporters of EIA have probably encountered our oft-used catchphrase 'Protecting the environment with intelligence' at one time or another.

This doesn't mean we're a bit full of ourselves and our collective IQ; instead, it refers to the fact that intelligence, in the sense of intelligence-gathering, has informed and shaped our ground-breaking work right from the earliest days.

By its nature, the work of our Intelligence Team is usually conducted behind the scenes and seldom has its praises sung in public, so in February we decided to turn the spotlight on them and the key role they play in our investigations and campaigns.

## From the front lines to the office ...

On the front lines of our work are our undercover investigators, who pick up a formidable amount of information in their dealings with wildlife and forest criminals, whether from piecing together mutual connections across organised crime syndicates or collecting addresses, phone numbers and usernames on social media platforms.

It's often a staggering amount of seemingly disparate information and to make sense of it, we rely heavily on our Intelligence Team.

The team comprises intelligence analysts who work alongside investigators and campaigners to gather together and scrutinise the information collected so it can be turned into actionable intelligence and results.

Once information comes in from the field, it is assessed by the team using established intelligence processes before it is used to inform decision-making at EIA – where we need to allocate resources, what warrants further research and identifying high-priority targets and cases.

They need to evaluate the reliability of the source, along with the validity and accuracy of the information secured and to do this they use an approved intelligence-grading system as set out by the College of Policing.

Properly handling and piecing together such a wealth of information is crucial, so we store it all in an intelligence database which can be queried using specialist analysis software to map networks. .

This allows the team to view the information in different ways and make valuable connections, allowing us to see, for example, how one particular individual and his mobile phone number might be connected with another criminal, perhaps based in a different country entirely.

An analyst's main job at EIA is to provide answers to the 'What? Why? When? Who? and How?' questions of environmental crime, such as how a certain crime type or network might operate. Additional research can then be carried out to corroborate information and fill knowledge gaps.

The Intelligence Team also works closely with our partners around the world, sharing our knowledge of intelligence processes and our findings to assist in building further capacity and skills in intelligence analysis.

We do this because we believe that working with these partners, and ensuring they have the resources and capability to conduct intelligence-led investigations is key in disrupting transnational organised crime groups and combatting environmental crime.

$zulu = us\$ 30000 \oplus 40000 \oplus 15000 \oplus 50000 = 135000$   
 $ALA = 40000 \oplus 10000 = 50000$

Date	under 3	3-10K	10K up	Total	Remark
96-28	243.1	1249.3	955.4	2447.8	PANG HANU.
2-9	131	523	108.7	762.7	PANG.
6-22	191.5	717	317.	1225.5	peter
6-23		65.2	<del>485.2</del> (485)	550.2	"
9-14	336.2	832.8	439.7	1608.7	peter
9-19	281	667.6	455.1	1403.7	"
	81	675.7	130.4	887.1	"
9-26	55.7	194.1	603.	852.8	"



## Intelligence past – the ‘Singapore seizure’

In 2002, the world was a very different place – mobile phones weren’t yet ‘smart’, Facebook was still two years away and EIA was reliant on more physical intelligence-gathering.

But despite the technological changes since, the key principles used to investigate the ivory case 18 years ago still hold true. Behind the morass of false information and aliases used by criminal networks, there is always a pattern to be revealed by analysis of intelligence. Criminals using front companies, banks and moving contraband in shipping containers occasionally have to tell the truth in official documents. And criminals, like anyone, can make mistakes when filling out paperwork.

It was Spring 2002 when a fax arrived at EIA’s London office from a law enforcement contact in Zambia, a hand-drawn chart showing connections between various individuals believed to be part of a network poaching elephants in Zambia and smuggling the tusks into neighbouring Malawi before onward shipment to the Far East.

In June, we had the tangible lead we needed to start investigating and disrupting the network. The contact provided details of a shipping container

bound for Singapore which he believed carried a consignment of ivory sent by the syndicate, and he provided crucial information from the Bill of Lading, including the container number, vessel, name of the shipper and consignee in Singapore plus the description of the contents – six wooden boxes containing stone sculptures.

We informed INTERPOL and, on 28 June, customs officers in Singapore found 6.2 tonnes of ivory tusks packed into wooden crates, the biggest haul of ivory since the international ban on trade in 1989.

EIA research next revealed extensive connections between firms named in the documents, including shared addresses and key staff – suspicions confirmed when a check through

our own internal data uncovered the involvement of former lieutenants for the notorious Poon family ivory syndicate based in Hong Kong.

A subsequent visit to Malawi unearthed documents relating not only to the ivory seized in Singapore but to all shipments bound for the Far East using the same freight company in Lilongwe.

Ultimately, the EIA team was able to conclude that the consignment seized in Singapore was just the tip of the iceberg; the syndicate had made at least 19 previous shipments of ivory since 1994, 15 going to Singapore.

*Clockwise from opposite: notebook detailing the sale of more than 10 tonnes of ivory; some of the ivory from the ‘Singapore seizure’ of 2002; the Singapore delivery address for the ivory shipment; Manica Freight Company, Lilongwe, Malawi was involved in transporting shipments.*



# Intelligence present – a new dimension to Forests investigations

In May 2020, we published the findings of an investigation which uncovered European timber traders evading EU laws to sneak illicit timber products from Myanmar into the market.

Using more than 1,000 pages of documents from the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture, EIA was able to piece together the details of 10 shipments of teak from Myanmar, supplied to companies throughout Europe.

They revealed that a Croatian company

was being used as a focal point for the scheme to circumvent the EU Timber Regulation.

Analysing large quantities of information can be time-consuming and requires meticulous attention to detail. To assist with investigations,

EIA's Intelligence Team uses analysis software to significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to identify links between companies and entities involved in illegal activity.

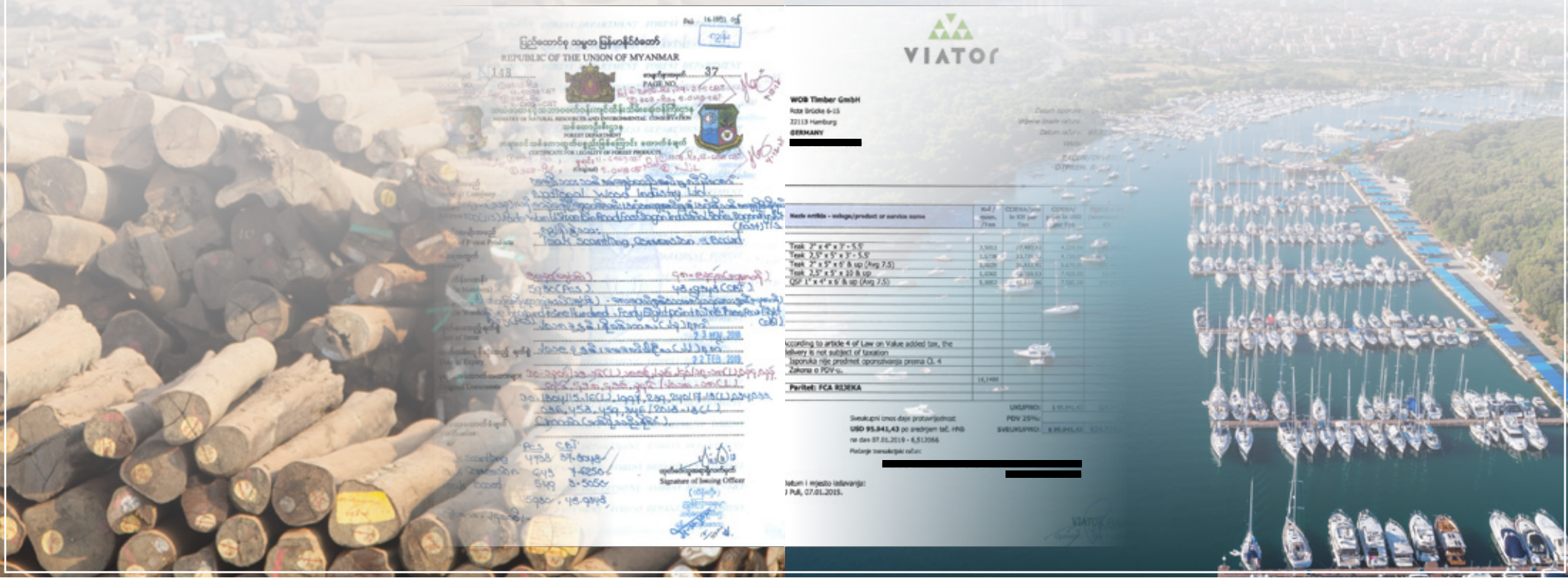
Instead of cross-referencing hundreds of pieces of data on spreadsheets, analysis software can do this more easily by providing a visual chart of links and identifying primary targets.

Transactions and shipments can also be easily monitored and analysed using this software, showing the movement of goods along the trade

chain. Mapping out shipments of timber using Bill of Lading documents and country export data can help identify companies linked to multiple shipments.

\* Check out the News section on our website at [www.eia-international.org](http://www.eia-international.org) to catch up with all the features and stories from February's Intelligence Week, including a podcast chat with three of the Team.

Below left, right: Burmese teak is a timber highly valued by the luxury yachting sector, so much so that some unscrupulous traders try to sneak it into Europe via the back door



## Chinese Government's pangolin trade deception exposed

A major new EIA report exposed the Chinese Government's ongoing support for the use of endangered pangolins, the world's most trafficked mammal.

Chinese State media reported in June that pangolin scales had been removed from traditional medicines – but we found major loopholes in the announcement allowing continued use in patented products .

October's *Smoke and Mirrors* report identified:

- 221 companies licenced to sell pangolin scale products;
- 56 of these actively advertising online products claiming to contain pangolin;
- 64 products listing pangolin as an ingredient advertised on manufacturer websites;
- six of these available via e-commerce websites.

One of the companies identified is China's largest traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) company, China Beijing Tong Ren Tang Group Co Ltd, which has subsidiaries around the world and shareholders including major European and US investment funds.

Chris Hamley, our Senior Pangolin Campaigner, said: "Amid mounting concerns about the role of wildlife trade in causing the coronavirus pandemic, it is critical that the Chinese Government ends all legal use of pangolin scales instead of allowing the multi-billion dollar TCM industry to carry on as usual.

"The Government claims the pangolin scales used in medicines come from a national stockpile – but it is a stockpile shrouded in secrecy and never seems to run out. Demand is being met by

## Thai 'zoo' where tigers were seized was on the radar for illegal trade

On November, five live tigers and a severed tiger head were seized from a 'zoo' in Mukdahan, Thailand, long suspected of involvement in illegal wildlife trade.

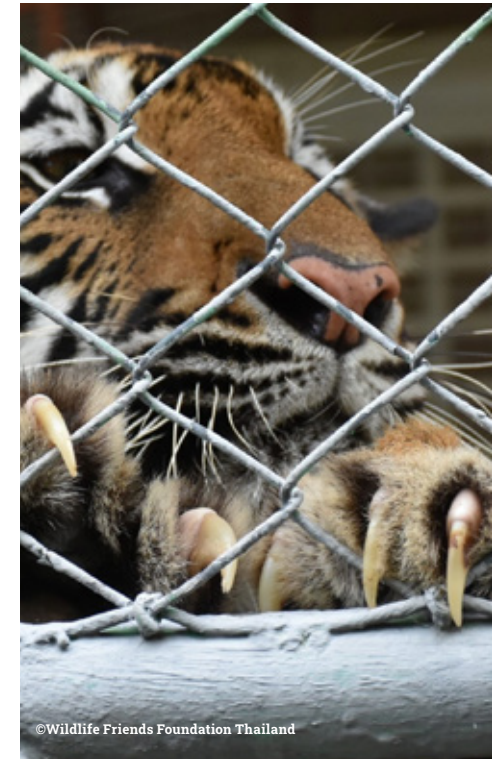
Three tigers were declared as having been born at the facility, but DNA tests revealed they were not related to the other tigers held there, raising suspicions over their origins and the possibility of illegal trade.

During investigations into tiger trafficking by EIA with Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand (WFFT) and Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV), sources revealed that the Thai 'zoo' was being used as a holding facility for wildlife smuggled into neighbouring Laos and Vietnam.

"We sincerely hope this marks the beginning of greater nationwide scrutiny to end tiger farming and tiger trade in Thailand and across South-East Asia, which is serving to stimulate the demand for body parts of tigers and other big cats and is driving poaching and regional extinctions across their range," said Debbie Banks, our Tiger and Wildlife Crime Campaign Leader. ●

trafficking from across Africa and Asia; the vast majority of pangolin scale shipments seized from illegal trade are ultimately bound for China.

"By keeping the door open for the TCM industry to exploit pangolins, it is undermining international efforts to end the global pangolin trafficking crisis and fuelling transnational organised crime."



©Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand

Earlier in 2020, EIA warned that while pangolin scales had been removed as a raw ingredient from the country's 2020 Pharmacopoeia – an official reference book on traditional Chinese and Western medicines – they remain listed in some of the book's patent medicine formulations. ●

Opposite, top: part of a shipment of pangolin scales seized by customs officers



## West and Central Africa the epicentre for ivory and pangolin trafficking

On the eve of UN International Anti-Corruption Day in December, our report *Out of Africa* revealed West and Central Africa have emerged as major sourcing and export hubs for the illegal trafficking of elephant ivory and pangolin scales to Asia.

It detailed how endemic corruption, weak or absent rule of law, low levels of development and hotspots of armed conflict have left the region wide open to exploitation by well-organised transnational criminal gangs.

Since 2015, Nigeria has emerged as the world's primary exit point for ivory and pangolin scales trafficked from Africa to Asia. During the past five years, it has been implicated in global seizures of more than 30 tonnes of ivory and 167 tonnes of pangolin scales – the equivalent of at least 4,400 elephants and many hundreds of thousands of pangolins.

Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) and Nigeria are

affected by some of the highest levels of organised crime on the African continent; all have well-established criminal networks involved in trafficking wildlife, humans, drugs, minerals, timber and weapons.

Shruti Suresh, our Senior Wildlife Campaigner, said: "Given the challenges of crime and corruption in several parts of West and Central Africa, we need to act now before elephants, pangolins and other wildlife disappear forever from this part of the world.

"As a matter of urgency, governments in the region need to address corruption, the lack of political will to tackle wildlife crime, poor law enforcement – particularly at porous borders and entry/

## Hotspots where wildlife and forest crimes overlap

To tackle environmental criminals more effectively, it's vital to understand how they operate – and new EIA research published in January revealed crossovers between wildlife and forest crime.

Our Forests and Wildlife campaigners have conducted a review of the extensive data gathered in the field and via research to study the relationship between the different crime streams – the 'nexus' where they meet. The findings were highlighted in *Double Impact: The nexus where wildlife and forest crime overlap*.

Senior Campaigner James Toone, who oversaw the project, said: "Put simply, transnational organised crime groups use the same networks of corruption from source to destination to facilitate the movement of both illegal wildlife and forest crime products."

Based on our findings, we maintain it is essential for the two crime types to be considered together when creating new national or international legislation to tackle them. ●

exit ports – as well as the role of foreign nationals involved in wildlife crime operating in this region."

Key transportation companies identified as carriers for wildlife contraband included Maersk, the world's largest



## SHUTTING ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMINALS OUT OF GLOBAL FINANCE

In January, EIA assumed responsibility for an innovative project seeking to shut wildlife and forest criminals out of the global financial system.

The Media Monitoring system – created more than six years ago by Liberty Shared, a non-profit working on anti-trafficking projects – assists financial institutions to curb the huge money flows associated with crimes such as the trafficking of elephant ivory, pangolin scales and other endangered species as well as timber from illegal logging.

container shipping company, and Pacific International Lines; airlines include Ethiopian Airlines, Turkish Airlines and Emirates Airlines. ●

Opposite, top: a trader shows off a pair of ivory tusks for sale



## MEET THE TEAM

**Name:** Chris Hamley

**Age:** 36

**Role:** Deputy Campaign Lead (Pangolins)

### Hometown

Born in Devon, 'grew-up' and went to secondary school and university in Leicester, now lives in London.

### Education

Studied physical geography with a specialism in conservation biology at undergraduate level and international rural development with a specialism in natural resource management at postgraduate level.

### Campaign specialism

As the Deputy Campaign Lead for the Pangolin Campaign, I am responsible for ensuring the delivery of EIA's campaign aiming to end the global trafficking of pangolins, including the involvement of transnational criminal networks and role of China's domestic legal pangolin medicine market. My position is diverse and involves strategic planning, project management, working with EIA's civil society partners, coordinating investigations, and raising the profile of pangolin trafficking issues.

### What first interested you in environmental issues?

I spent most of my childhood years

living in rural areas and always felt a natural affinity to wild places and animals! At around age 12, I remember telling myself that I wanted to be a zoologist and live in the 'wilderness'. It wasn't until I was an undergraduate student when, in 2004, I read Nick Middleton's Global Casino textbook on environmental issues that my eyes opened to what humanity is doing to the planet. I was shocked to tears and committed myself to doing something about it. After this, I got more into conservation biology and decided to follow a path working for NGOs. This led me to take up conservation jobs in Belize, Nigeria, South Sudan and Cambodia between 2009-18 before joining EIA.

### What is your most memorable experience at EIA?

Working with our Uganda partner, Natural Resource Conservation Network, has been a really fulfilling experience. East Africa is a region I find fascinating and always eager to learn more about. Uganda is a major trafficking hub for illicit wildlife products and this makes any investment of effort to combat wildlife trafficking there a very worthwhile endeavour. At EIA, not only have I had the opportunity to travel to Uganda, but also collaborate with a courageous civil society organisation using innovative methods to combat wildlife crime. I have found working with the NRCN team particularly inspiring and have enjoyed the wide range of activities I have been working on. ●



**“If it wasn't for EIA the world would be a darker place”.**

**Mary, EIA supporter.**

**Support our campaigns against wildlife trade and for the protection of biodiversity**

For a future where humanity respects, protects and celebrates the natural world for the benefit of all.

**Let your passion live on. Remember EIA in your Will.**

Visit [eia-international.org/giftinyourwill](http://eia-international.org/giftinyourwill)