

What Does It Take to Make Wild Meat Regulations Work?

USAID WILDLIFE TRAPS (TRAFFICKING RESPONSE, ASSESSMENT, AND PRIORITY SETTING) IN TANZANIA

Photo credit: USAID in Africa

Activity Summary

Launched in 2013 and implemented by TRAFFIC, the Wildlife Trafficking Response, Assessment, and Priority Setting (TRAPS) project addresses wildlife trafficking in Africa and Asia. After the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, the project shifted its focus to the global health risks associated with the wildlife trade, particularly the transmission of zoonotic diseases. To enable the project to tackle this emergent need, USAID granted a three-year extension, which concentrates activities in four priority countries: Cameroon, Vietnam, China, and Tanzania. The new phase highlights the importance of addressing the spread of diseases from wildlife trade, including the harvest, consumption, and sale of wild meat. It aims to address current wildlife trade dynamics and their connections to human and animal health, and to identify and mitigate high-risk practices to ensure that trade in wild animals is safe, sustainable, and legal. This case study examines Wildlife TRAPS' efforts to address wild meat challenges in Tanzania.

This case study uses “bushmeat” to refer to illegal hunting, trading, and selling of wildlife for consumption, while “game meat” denotes the legal sale. It uses “wild meat” as a general term encompassing both bushmeat and game meat.

In 2020, the Government of Tanzania enacted the [Wildlife Conservation \(Game Meat Selling\) Regulations](#) to formalize the game meat sector, with the aim of reducing illegal hunting and trade of “bushmeat.” These regulations govern access to resident hunting blocks, where residents can harvest a portion of designated species to supply registered game meat selling facilities that offer legally sourced game meat to the public. However, TRAFFIC’s monitoring uncovered a lack of supply chain transparency and unclear collaboration among actors, revealing the challenges legal game meat selling facilities encounter in sourcing legally obtained game meat, especially through

Activity Highlights



IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

TRAFFIC and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



LOCATION

Central Africa, East Africa, and Asia, focusing on the priority countries of Cameroon, Tanzania, Vietnam, and China. This case study highlights activities in Tanzania.



FUNDING AMOUNT

\$12 million initial funding plus a \$3 million extension



PERFORMANCE PERIOD

February 2013–September 2024. This case study highlights work from 2021–2024.



STRATEGIC APPROACHES

- Strengthen interagency collaboration for effective implementation of a One Health model for wildlife trade
- Advance national policies for animal trade

resident hunting. Concurrently, illegal and unregulated hunting, trade, and sale of “bushmeat” (as opposed to legal “game meat”) continued. In response, the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism suspended resident hunting. Local authorities are still working to strengthen the governance of resident hunting.

In a rapidly developing game meat industry, there is an urgent need for improved supply chain management and traceability to guarantee the legal and sustainable sourcing of game meat, thus mitigating the risk of disease transmission in supply chains. To meet these needs, Wildlife TRAPS Tanzania implements various activities, such as analyzing wildlife meat value chains, assessing the risks of zoonotic diseases, improving game meat regulations and laws, and conducting social behavior change campaigns that target potential consumers and illegal traders.

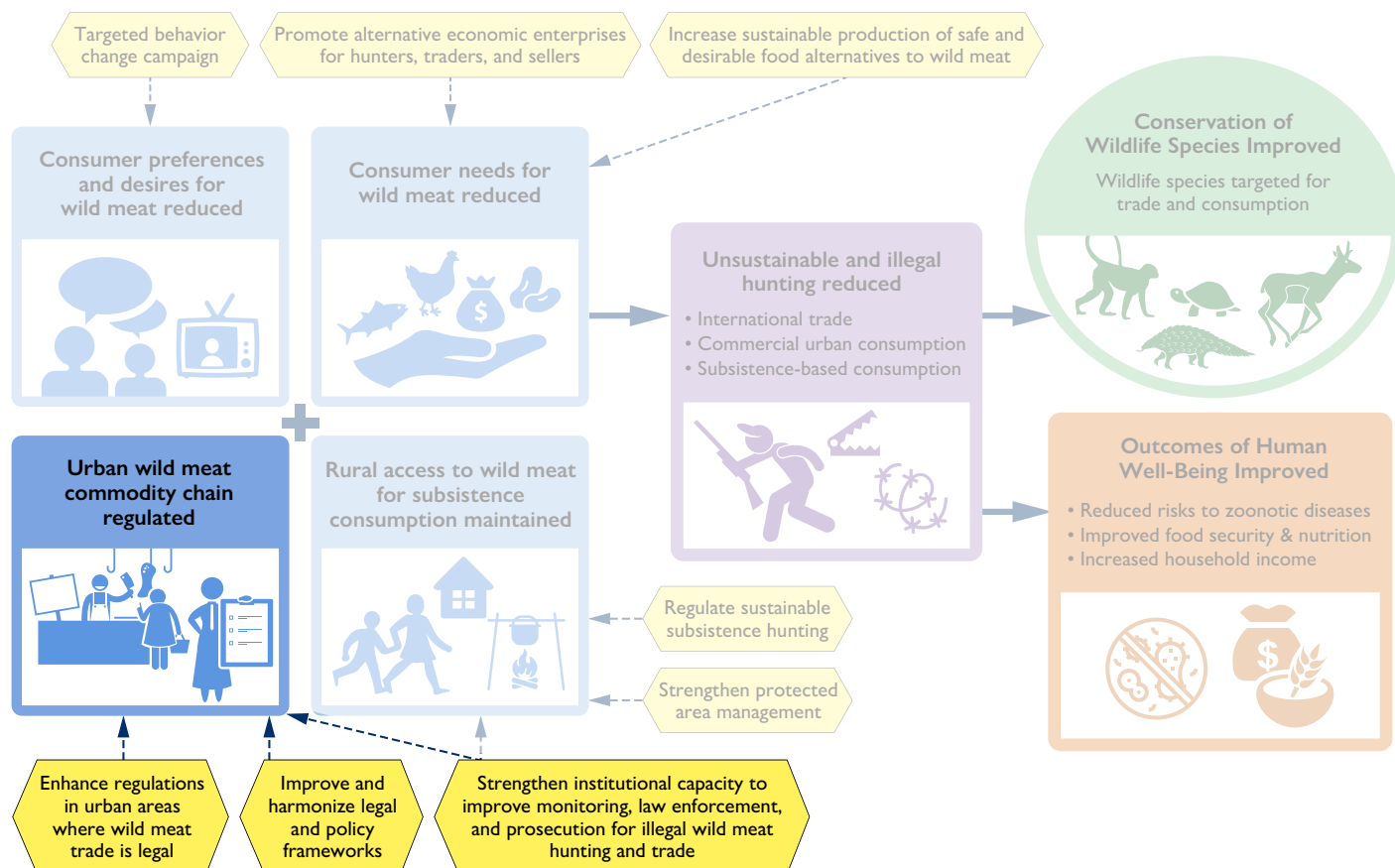
Approach and Implementation

With USAID support for Wildlife TRAPS, TRAFFIC provided the Government of Tanzania with vital

insights into the game meat industry to support its formalization. Across all focus countries, Wildlife TRAPS used a three-pronged approach to address wild meat issues: integrating zoonotic disease risk reduction into international policy, law, and guidance on the wildlife trade; strengthening interagency collaboration for effective implementation of a One Health model for wildlife trade management in each priority country; and trialing new approaches to encourage and enable businesses, organizations, and civil society actors involved in and related to wildlife trade to reduce risk of wildlife trafficking and zoonotic disease transfer in supply chains.

In 2021, Wildlife TRAPS initiated wild meat activities in Tanzania, concentrating on two primary areas. First, the project conducted complementary analyses of disease risk and game meat supply chains in northern Tanzania. The disease risk analysis assesses the potential for certain pathogens to enter and spread along the game meat supply chain. The supply chain analysis seeks to understand and identify potential hotspots for

FIGURE 1: Wildlife TRAPS Tanzania approaches highlighted on the Wild Meat Learning Group Theory of Change



illegal bushmeat, traded species, supply chain methods, interagency cooperation and law enforcement counter-efforts, and other links between illegal hunting and legal game meat sales. Second, the project used the analyses to inform development of social and behavior change messaging. Targeting local families, traders, and potential game meat consumers in northern Tanzania’s Kwakuchinja corridor, this messaging emphasizes the risks associated with illegal bushmeat trade and highlights the economic and social benefits of conserving natural resources.

Wildlife TRAPS is one of three USAID activities that collectively address wild meat issues in Tanzania, with each tackling a different facet of the system. Wildlife TRAPS focuses on analyzing disease risk along the supply chain and promoting behavior change campaigns for potential consumers and traders. For more information on USAID’s work in Tanzania, reference case studies exploring the CONNECT activity to strengthen policy

and enforcement, and the Tuhifadhi Maliasili activity to strengthen institutional capacity to manage natural resources, both on the Wild Meat Learning Group page on www.biodiversitylinks.org.

Indicators and Results

By combating wildlife trafficking and building sustainable stakeholder networks for continued action, Wildlife TRAPS works to ensure that any trade in wild animals is legal, sustainable, and safe from disease risks. The expected key results of the project are that:

1. Wildlife trade is managed with a reduced risk of zoonotic disease transmission.
2. Wildlife trade is managed sustainably and with a reduced risk of wildlife trafficking.

Table 1 shows the relevant indicators for this activity. Note that these indicators center around partnerships and policies for the whole global project rather than in-country implementation.

TABLE 1: Wildlife TRAPS Objectives and Indicators

Relevant Objectives	Relevant Indicators
Objective 2: Strengthen interagency collaboration for effective implementation of a One Health model for wildlife trade management at the national level.	Number of tools and resources developed or strengthened by TRAFFIC for use by national agencies to build capacity in interagency collaboration on One Health approaches to wildlife trade supply-chain management and prevention of illegal wildlife trade.
	Number of national agencies that have committed to collaborating with TRAFFIC on wildlife trade supply-chain issues, One Health approach, and prevention of illegal wildlife trade.
	Number of relevant national stakeholder organizations in wildlife trade regulation and management and animal and human health that receive training or adopt relevant tools, systems, and collaboration mechanisms for implementing national policies, laws, and the One Health approach.
Objective 3: Trial new approaches to encourage and enable businesses, organizations, and civil society actors involved in and related to wildlife trade to reduce the risk of wildlife trafficking and zoonotic disease transfer in their supply chains.	Number of target stakeholders who express understanding of the issues, risks, and solutions regarding wildlife trade supply chains, illegal trade, and zoonotic disease prevention.



Lessons Learned

Learning Question: How effective are regulations at reducing the illegal and unsustainable sale of wildlife?

NEED FOR CLEAR LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND REGULATIONS

Findings from the value chain analysis underscore the need for clear legal frameworks and regulations in Tanzania. Enacted in 2020, the Game Meat Selling Regulations aimed to formalize the industry and reduce illegal hunting by permitting the sale of legally sourced game meat in licensed outlets. This incentivization resulted in 34 licensed butcheries after 2021 and 74 after 2022. However, TRAFFIC discovered a crucial loophole in the regulations: meat inspectors only inspected the meat after it

was supplied to retailers. As such, inspectors and consumers are unable to verify the legality of the meat they purchase—heightening the risk of illegal and unregulated bushmeat entering the legal supply chain. This regulatory gap increases the chances of contaminated meat entering the food supply and amplifies the risk of zoonotic disease transmission, particularly as game meat is generally considered safe in Tanzania. Without well-crafted legislation and the capacity and resources needed to implement agency mandates, the risk of unintended consequences rises—including the risk of selling illegally-sourced bushmeat as if it were legal.

Learning Question: Where wild meat sales are legal, how effectively are regulations monitored and enforced?

IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

Surveys and stakeholder interviews conducted for the value chain analysis revealed limited coordination among relevant law enforcement agencies in Tanzania and underscored a need for greater consistency in legal frameworks. These issues can hinder the effective enforcement of laws, potentially contributing to the high levels of illegal bushmeat consumption found at the value chain analysis study sites. Moreover, a lack of coordinated monitoring may facilitate the infiltration of illegal bushmeat into the legal supply chain.

Wildlife TRAPS is dedicated to improving interagency collaboration under its second overarching strategic approach. Coordination among Tanzania's One Health teams is improving, notably through the multi-agency Game Meat Selling Advisory Committee. Operating at the national level, this cross-sectoral initiative brings together staff from various authorities to address

the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. In 2022, TRAFFIC organized an expert workshop to inform the project's disease risk analysis, bringing together district game officers, community development officers, veterinary officers, public health officers, and representatives from Tanzania Farmers and Game Meat Sellers Association and the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority. Since the workshop, the project area's One Health team has met more regularly, enhancing information sharing and maximizing the likelihood of early detection and intervention of illegal wild meat activities.

Additionally, Wildlife TRAPS collaborates with relevant government authorities, including the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority and the Directorate of Veterinary Services, to revise outdated game meat inspection regulations—a previously overlooked but important consideration. TRAPS is working to ensure that proper communication and collaboration guide the update process.



Lessons Learned

Learning Question: Where are the synergies between wild meat interventions and those focused on zoonotic disease, food security, and household income in USAID programming? What actions can USAID staff take to support mutually-reinforcing interventions?

THE CULTURAL DISCONNECT BETWEEN GAME MEAT AND ZOOONOTIC DISEASE

Wildlife TRAPS' work in northern Tanzania highlights the risk of zoonotic disease transmission within meat supply chains due to regulatory and safety gaps. However, according to survey responses collected for the activity's value chain analysis, local consumers and traders do not perceive this risk in game meat. Within the study area, people reported they see game meat as a way to improve food security and create income-generating opportunities. Additionally, people believed that, because game meat originates from nature, it inherently must be clean.

The gap in public perception regarding the risk of game meat can create additional challenges in ensuring the safety and sustainability of meat supply chains. In collaboration with the USAID Tuhifadhi Maliasili activity, Wildlife TRAPS piloted behavior change messaging to address this disconnect. The pilot area included 15 villages in the Kwakuchinja Wildlife Corridor, which links two large protected areas. Drawing on project research and findings from the disease risk and value chain analyses, Wildlife TRAPS and Tuhifadhi Maliasili refined a selection

of messages tailored to the local population. The messages highlight the risk of **imprisonment** from participating in the illegal bushmeat trade, the importance of **sustainable** wild meat trade, the risk of **zoonotic disease** transmission through illegal trade activities, and the economic and social **benefits** from conserving wildlife resources. The third message, in particular, aims to address the current disconnect between real risk and local attitudes.



Freshly poached dik-dik, Tanzania, 2019. Photo: Q. Kagembe/TRAFFIC

About this series: In 2022, USAID collected case studies addressing the questions posed in the Wild Meat Learning Agenda. The series looks at USAID-funded activities from around the world. For more information and resources on USAID's Wild Meat Collaborative Learning Group, please visit biodiversitylinks.org/learning-evidence/wild-meat-collaborative-learning-group. This document was produced for review by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by Environmental Incentives LLC with its partners Foundations of Success, NORC at the University of Chicago, and World Resources Institute for the Improving Design, Evidence, and Learning (IDEAL) contract.