

FREELAND COUNTER WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING PROGRAM



The multi-billion dollar illegal trade in protected species is one of the most lucrative illicit markets in the world today, and it's driving many wild animals and plants towards extinction. This is a global problem with poorer nations often

facing the gravest risks. Controlled by highly organized and well-armed international crime syndicates, the value of the illegal wildlife trade is estimated at about US\$20 billion per year by some experts.

Despite national and international laws designed to protect endangered species, a large number of them are traded. Tigers are killed for their body parts, rhinos for their horns, elephants for their ivory, and bears for their paws. The cuter creatures may end up as pets, the more exotic species as exhibits in private zoos, while other animals (the rarer the pricier) sate the appetite of diners for unusual fare.

Freeland has three specific programs to combat this destructive trade:

- Counter poaching (PROTECT)
- Counter trafficking (DETECT)
- Behavioral change (iTHINK)



With species being removed from the wild faster than they can repopulate, the natural world is at a tipping point. While the future of our vital forests and waterways is uncertain, the fallout from this ecocide will be felt for centuries to come.

Wildlife Trafficking Impacts:



Massive and catastrophic biodiversity loss: If this downward trend continues, scientists predict that 13-50% of Southeast Asia's animal and plant species could be wiped out this century. Many of these losses would represent global extinctions.



The collapse of crucial ecosystems will have dire effects on our food and water supplies, while worsening the ravages of climate change.



Human health is endangered by the unregulated trade of wild animals that can spread diseases, like SARS and Avian Influenza.



Organized crime feeds off the blood money from the illegal wildlife trade, as the profits are channeled into other criminal enterprises like narcotics and the flesh trade.