



WWF

REPORT

GMPO

2016



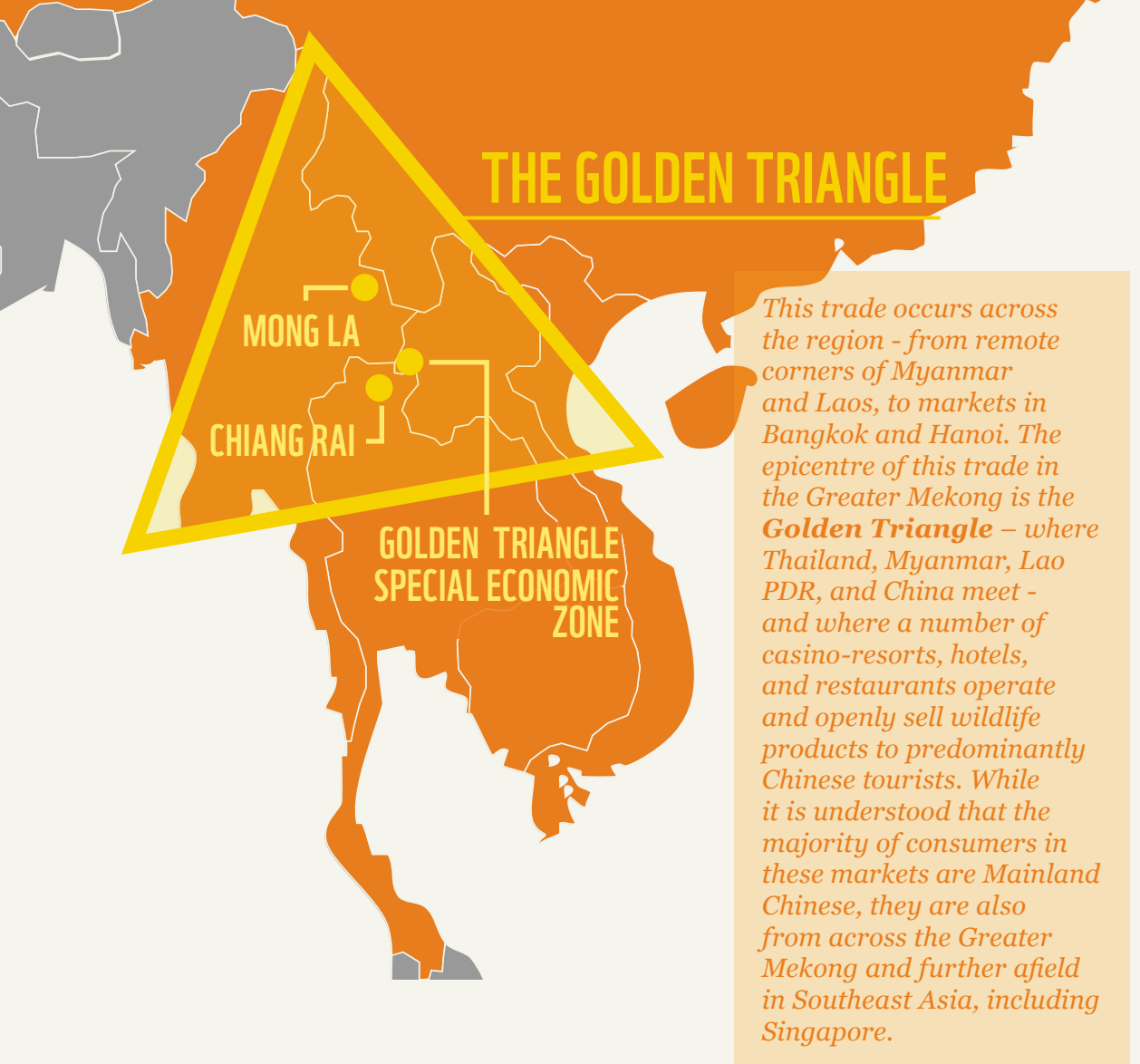
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# CLOSING TIME

## SHUTTING DOWN THE GREATER MEKONG'S ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE MARKETS

The Greater Mekong is a global hubs of wildlife trade – a perfect storm of source, transit route and final destination for many of the world's most valuable and threatened wildlife species. This multi-million dollar trade significantly threatens the survival of WWF priority species including tiger, Asian and African elephant, and all rhino species.

The growing wealth among the urban middle class across the Greater Mekong and in neighboring China means demand for iconic wildlife species is accelerating. Three decades of unprecedented social, political, and economic transformation have generated important opportunities for improvements in quality of life and increased purchasing power across the majority of Asian economies. This has also given rise to trends such as the 'conspicuous consumption' and 'individual ownership' of unique, precious, and rare wildlife products and creating a highly profitable and less risky black market than other issues such as drug and human trafficking.



## THE WWF-GREATER MEKONG BIG WIN

WWF Greater Mekong is implementing an ambitious regional approach for securing effective intergovernmental action against wildlife trade in the Golden Triangle. This includes promoting species protection legislation, supporting effective transboundary cooperation, and improving law enforcement effectiveness at key border crossings. The ultimate goal of this Regional Big Win is that **by March 2018, trade in threatened species in Golden Triangle markets declines by 33% following government commitments to crack down.** The ultimate goal is that **priority target markets are shut down by 2020.**



## THEIR BEST CHANCE

Without drastic action, the Greater Mekong Region, and indeed the rest of the world, will continue to see an escalating decline in flagship species such as tigers, elephants, leopards and rhinos. Pangolin will remain the most widely traded animal on the planet and marine turtles populations will crash. The most visible symbols of this decline – the wide open markets of the Golden Triangle -- must be closed as soon as possible. A combined effort between WWF, regional Governments and NGOs, and international partners can make this happen with an ambitious, coordinated strategy that will finally close this deadly gateway and give hope for the Greater Mekong's world renowned wildlife species.



The future of heavily trafficked species depends on ending the demand for wildlife products.

# MONG LA MARKET

1/3

OF ALL POACHED  
TIGERS PASS THROUGH  
MYANMAR



> \$4 MILLION

WORTH OF IVORY AND  
PANGOLIN PRODUCTS ON  
DISPLAY



The Golden Triangle markets we target have been identified as some of the worst offenders in the global illegal wildlife trade. The poster child for this trade is Mong La, a notorious Golden Triangle wildlife market on the Myanmar-China border, where surveys detected at least 39 tigers in trade in February 2009 and December 2013. **It is estimated that about one-third of poached wild tigers globally pass through Myanmar.** Other wild cat species detected at Mong La include leopard, golden cat, and clouded leopard, with 49 whole elephant tusks, plus more than 3,000 items of carved ivory, detected in December 2013. The estimated retail value of ivory and pangolin products observed in December 2013 at Mong La exceeded four million USD.

Recent surveys have also demonstrated the **availability of African species, including rhino horn.** Surveys in 2015 demonstrated wide availability of rhino horn, as both jewelry and consumable chunks, with openly displayed stocks in just three shops valued at more than 250,000 USD. It is therefore clear that the wildlife markets of the Golden Triangle have direct links with the current rhino and elephant poaching crisis in Southern and Eastern Africa.

Other hotspots include the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Lao PDR, where dining on endangered species such as tiger, bear or pangolin is common among Chinese gamblers who are drawn to the region by a massive casino complex and Chinatown shopping district. Even closer to the Chinese border, shops and restaurants across Boten, Laos sell ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales and tiger parts. Besides being status symbols, rhino horn, tiger bone and pangolin scales are mistakenly believed to have health and wellness benefits, something that no scientific study has ever confirmed.

# KEY AREAS OF WORK

NOVEMBER  
2016

## Hanoi Conference On Wildlife Trade

Hosted and funded by the Vietnam government as part of the intergovernmental process initiated at the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade, February 2014.

**Goal:** secure inter-ministerial commitments from Greater Mekong countries to ensure aligned and effective legal deterrents for dealing with organized wildlife crime.

*Currently key government institutions and ministries in China, Lao PDR, and Myanmar are not fully aware of the extent of illegal wildlife trade within their borders and the degree to which this negatively impacts their global reputation and their international commitments, especially to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). The Hanoi Conference is a golden opportunity to leverage inter-governmental commitments for closing these markets whilst simultaneously providing the information, capacities, and tools for effective action.*

To achieve the Big Win, WWF will focus on:

- Ensuring national wildlife protection legislation is strengthened;
- Strengthening of law enforcement systems including establishing National Coordination Committees (with inter-ministerial and NGO presence) for responding to reports of illegal wildlife trade in Lao PDR and Myanmar;
- Supporting the establishment and training of Mobile Enforcement Units with true national mandates and multi-agency jurisdiction including prosecutors, police, customs and forensic capacities;
- Closing all tiger and bear farms across Asia - many of which supply the illegal wildlife trade and increase demand for these species from the wild;
- Working with neighboring countries' governments to push for sanctions and accountability for companies involved in illegal wildlife trade; and
- Ongoing market monitoring to ensure markets are shut and illegal trade is not displaced/moved underground.

MARCH  
2018

Trade in threatened species in Golden Triangle markets declines by 33% following government commitments to crack down.

2020 BIG WIN:  
PRIORITY TARGET MARKETS  
ARE SHUT DOWN





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Partnerships with key governmental, intergovernmental, and non-profit organisations are critical to success.

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITY

To achieve success, the Wildlife Trade Big Win needs support and buy in from other critical NGOs and intergovernmental organisations working on wildlife trafficking. WWF will partner with a wide range of organisations to share data, coordinate action and push for government actions. WWF will also look to support local organisations and build their capacity to tackle this issue within their communities.



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ENDING THE  
ILLEGAL  
WILDLIFE TRADE  
REQUIRES BOTH  
SHUTTING  
DOWN MARKETS  
AND REDUCING  
DEMAND