

# China Fortifies Anti-Wildlife Trafficking Efforts at its Borders

July 2024, Qinhuangdao — In a significant move to bolster anti-trafficking initiatives, TRAFFIC and the Chinese Academy of Customs Administration (CACA) joined forces on a customs training workshop, from which Customs Officers have come away with renewed confidence in verifying wildlife trade legality and drive to combat trafficking of timber and other wildlife products.



Ling XU (Director of TRAFFIC in China), Shoujun Wang (Deputy Chief of CACA), Linhai LI (Deputy General Secretary of CWCA), and Jian ZHAN (Director of Training Division, CACA). Photo: Xiaoyin WANG / TRAFFIC.

This event builds on the successful collaboration between TRAFFIC and CACA, following the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) and the [inaugural anti-timber-smuggling training](#) in 2023. Ling XU, Director of TRAFFIC in China, emphasised the importance of this partnership, stating,

*We are committed to leveraging this MoU to enhance our collaborative efforts, confident that our synergy will fortify national border security and uphold our dedication to wildlife and forestry conservation."*

The intensive four-day training, held from 8 to 11 July 2024, engaged 61 frontline Chinese customs officers and had three main focuses: reinforcing the oversight of wildlife and timber species in international trade, combating illegal trafficking, and promoting adherence to the World Customs Organization (WCO) Guidelines to verify timber legality. China is the world's largest importer of tropical timber, so legality was a prominent feature during training, alongside a curriculum meticulously aligned with the World Customs Organization (WCO) Timber Guidelines.

Presentations by distinguished experts covered a range of topics, including:

- **The Import and Export Management of Endangered Timber Species in China**, by Ms. GUO Lin from China CITES Management Authority.
- **Combating Wildlife and Timber Trafficking**, by Ms. XU Jie from the Anti-Smuggling Bureau, China Customs.
- **Import Timber Port Inspection**, by Research Professor Mr. LU Jun from the National Key Laboratory of Timber Species Identification and Timber Quarantine, China Customs.
- **National and International Timber Policies**, by Research Professor Dr. SU Haiying from the Chinese Academy of Forestry.
- **Tropical Timber Supply Chain Overview**, by Deputy Secretary General Ms. YANG Junyi from the China Timber & Wood Product Distribution Association.
- **Identification Techniques for Endangered Timber Species**, by Senior Agronomist Ms. WANG Jingjing from Zhangjiagang Customs.
- **WCO Timber Guidelines Overview**, by ZHANG Ke, Project Manager of TRAFFIC China.

Recognising the intertwined nature of timber smuggling with Endangered animal product trafficking, the workshop also addressed identifying and managing threatened animal species and products. Additional topics included:

- **The Import and Export Management on the Endangered Animal Species and Products in China**, by the Deputy Secretary General Dr. LI Linhai from the China Wildlife Conservation Association.
- **AI in Species Inspection**, by Mr. GUO Jiandong from Tongfang Nuctech.
- **Identification of Commonly-Traded Endangered Animals Species and Products**, by Professor ZHOU Yongwu from the Nanjing Police College Identification Center.
- **Trade-Based Money Laundering in Wildlife**, by LI Cong, AML Project Officer, TRAFFIC China.



*Cong LI, Project Officer at TRAFFIC's China office, presented on trade-based money laundering in wildlife. Photo: Ke ZHANG / TRAFFIC.*

Post-training evaluations revealed the great success of the workshop: attendees achieved an average test score of 96 out of 100, with 81% of participants strongly agreeing that the training was beneficial for their work in timber and wildlife supervision. A significant 76% believed the content would enhance their work efficiency. The feedback will guide future training improvements to better meet the needs of Customs Officers to ensure legality and prevent wildlife trafficking.

*China Customs has achieved notable progress in preventing wildlife crimes. However, given the ongoing demand for illicit wildlife products and the evolution of smuggling methods, targeted training is more crucial than ever. The positive responses from our post-training surveys underscore the value of these efforts."*

*Ling XU, Director of TRAFFIC in China*

This training workshop was made possible through the joint funding from TRAFFIC's "[Leveraging legality along China's timber supply to reduce deforestation](#)" project and "Demand reduction, Enforcement and policies supporting The conservation of Elephants and Rhinos (DETER)" project.