



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Second Meeting and Workshop of the Central American and Dominican Republic Wildlife Enforcement Network (ROAVIS for its acronym in Spanish)**

The implementation of the “Second Meeting and Workshop of ROAVIS” taking place from December 2<sup>nd</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 2012 in Managua, Nicaragua aimed to follow up on ROAVIS’s progress. This workshop included the involvement of the following countries (in alphabetical order): Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panamá; as well as regional and international experts leading several presentations. A total of 54 individuals participated.



This activity aimed to hold the Second Regional Meeting of ROAVIS and to strengthen and enhance ROAVIS’s capacities.

The opening and welcoming speech were delivered by Mr. Adrian Reuter, TRAFFIC Coordinator for Mesoamerica; Ms. Christine Dawson, Director of the Office of Ecology and Conservation (OES/ECW) of the U.S. Department of State, and the Honorable Dr. Julio Centeno Gómez, Nicaragua’s Attorney General and Director of Nicaragua’s Public Ministry. They welcomed the participants and thanked them for their presence and interest in the subject.

One of the main topics in the agenda of this event was the presentation of country reports on advancements and accomplishments contributing to the goals and under the framework of ROAVIS.

Thereupon, the representatives of TRAFFIC, INTERPOL, the CITES Secretariat and the Department of the Interior (DOI) made their presentations during the section of Lessons learnt and collaboration perspectives with ROAVIS. These presentations focused on the collaboration that every organization has offered to ROAVIS mentioning successes, challenges and achievements, as well as areas of opportunity to continue supporting this effort.

The following presentations so as to support ROAVIS's strengthening included: "The United States Customs and Border Protection" by Mr. David Monreal from US Customs and Border Protection (CBP); "How to tackle wildlife crimes" by Edward van Asch from CITES Secretariat; "Challenges and Experiences by customs for law enforcement in ROAVIS's framework" by Mr. Álvaro Duarte from the Directorate-General of Customs, and "The Role of judges in terms of crime against wild fauna and flora" by Dr. María José Morales, Local Criminal Judge from Managua.

Another topic in the agenda was the presentation of Collaboration perspectives with ROAVIS, in which Mr. Saúl Hernández from INTERPOL, Mr. Edward van Asch from CITES Secretariat and Ms. Christina Kish from DOI mentioned the areas in which each of these organizations could contribute to ROAVIS. The strengthening of capacities, operational support, and exchange of information, tools and good practices were some of the subjects of collaboration brought up.

Afterwards, the preliminary design of ROAVIS's website was presented, explaining each of the sections this site may comprise and the possible information included in each one. The participants then made observations and suggestions.

Other topics covered during the capacities strengthening workshop included a "Case study on law enforcement" by Mr. Edward van Asch from CITES Secretariat, who also offered insight on the International Consortium to Combat Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) signed in 2010 between the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank, CITES Secretariat and the World Custom Organization, and whose main function is to provide global, general and structured support regarding those topics to all organizations and countries; "The coordination between coastal-maritime authorities and onshore authorities in terms of law enforcement on wildlife, the USA's experience" by Mr. Christopher Hale from the United States Department of Justice; "The coastal-maritime authorities and their role in law enforcement on wildlife" by Mr. Mario González from OSPESCA; "Finning: Regional problem. Countries' actions and challenges" by Mr. Reinaldo Morales Rodríguez from OSPESCA; "Tree frogs: Their problems and commercialization" by Mr. Emmanuel Rivera Téllez from CONABIO; "CITES decree in Nicaragua" by Mr. René Castellón from CITES management authority in Nicaragua, and "The complex investigation in wildlife-related crimes" by Ms. Christina Kish from DOI.

Another activity undertaken by working groups among the participants present ("Planning of Joint Regional Operations") aimed to develop improved enforcement approaches and identify one or several issues in need of attention regarding national operations, the demarcation of activities and the coordination mechanisms they would use. This information, by the way, will serve each country as the basis for bi-national and regional planning under ROAVIS's for 2013.

An additional topic discussed during the event was on advances made in relation to Policies on Criminal Prosecution in Public Prosecutor's and Attorney General's Offices. During this session, the representatives of the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Costa Rica pointed out that these countries already had Policies on Criminal Prosecution

regarding Environmental Crimes and that these instruments have enabled the prosecution of environmental crimes; thus, the promotion of these policies is considered highly important. In the case of Panama, Guatemala and Honduras, their representatives indicated the advancements made in their countries, such as: The Guide for the Analysis of Environmental Crimes in Panama, the role of the Attorney General's Office for the Environment and Natural Resources in Honduras specifically related to ROAVIS, and the establishment of guidelines to standardize the work of attorneys on the subject of the environment in Guatemala.

The general conclusions and agreements of the Second Meeting and Workshop of ROAVIS are listed below:

- The motion of creating a Regional Protocol of Action and Attention to Crimes against Flora and Fauna in a book which includes the compared legislation and types of crimes by country, and appoints administrative regulations in which law enforcement will be underpinned and coordinated.
- TRAFFIC expressed that, as an external support organism, it will continue collaboration and support specifically on:
  - Edition and distribution of another ROAVIS bulletin. A request for information and materials will be sent to participants (press notes and institutional bulletins including topics related to ROAVIS, successful cases, outcomes, etc.).
  - By the end of 2013, update of the information compendium DVD.
  - Completion of ROAVIS's website; but in order to do this, further observations were required for their consideration. The deadline for these comments is due January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013, and a contact person from every country will be asked for information in order to fill out some sections of the website.
- It was agreed that the environmental attorneys from the Central American Environmental Prosecutors Network will be the ROAVIS's contact people and will be in charge of sending/confirming the information from every country's contact person.
- DOI stated that the four support areas in which this organization can assist in 2013 are: judges' workshop, public campaign for education, bi-national and national workshops and activities of national or bi-national operations.
- In regards to these four support areas indicated by DOI, the countries then transferred priority activities to be planned for 2013. This will be the basis for defining the support given by DOI to ROAVIS according to the available funds.
- As a final item, the new Pro-Tempore Presidency of the



Environmental Prosecutors Network was presented, now under the leadership of Sergio Valdelomar from Costa Rica.