NEWS RELEASE

ACAMS and WWF Answer Call to Action on Illegal Wildlife Trade

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Partnership seeks to build global alliances and facilitate compliance efforts to uncover the financial networks of criminal syndicates

CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), a leading international conservation organization, and ACAMS, a global association of financial crime prevention professionals, have launched an initiative to empower compliance professionals to face the growing threats associated with the illegal wildlife trade (IWT). The partnership seeks to drive collaboration among financial institutions, governmental bodies and non-profit groups in the fight against a major trans-national crime that fuels corruption and threatens biodiversity worldwide.

The project has three immediate goals: to raise awareness of the issue through conferences, strategic roundtables, member engagement and other ACAMS forums and publications, to develop educational and training modules for public- and private-sector organizations, and to create a compliance toolkit incorporating the red flags of IWT and the ACAMS Risk Assessment model. The initiative will also offer a free, first-of-its-kind certificate outlining the steps financial sector actors should take to identify, report, mitigate and remedy the risks associated with each stage of an illegal wildlife supply chain.

The partnership aims to help financial intelligence units and compliance investigators and seeks the initiation of regional and national operations targeting suspicious transactions or ongoing cases with red flags for IWT financial flows.

“Wildlife crime is the fourth largest illegal trade business after firearms, human trafficking and drugs with an estimated annual value of $19 billion a year. It is run by highly sophisticated and organized criminal syndicates with Wall Street savvy whose activities pose a serious threat to the biodiversity of our planet. This important partnership will go a long way towards bridging the gaps in the financial systems that these criminals exploit to move, hide and launder the proceeds of the illegal trade in wildlife," Margaret Kinnaird, Wildlife Practice Leader, WWF.

“While it’s long been considered outside the scope of ‘mainstream’ criminality, the illegal exploitation of the world’s wild flora and fauna and endangered animals is driven by the same profit-motive as human trafficking & modern day slavery, drug trafficking and other organized crime schemes,” said Angela

Salter, Interim President of ACAMS. “The vast sums that can be generated by a single syndicate will typically move across multiple borders and through multiple entities, including traditional financial institutions,” she added.

About WWF

WWF is an independent conservation organization, with over 30 million followers and a global network active in nearly 100 countries. Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. Visit panda.org/news for the latest news and media resources; follow us on Twitter @WWF_media

About ACAMS®

ACAMS is a member of Adtalem Global Education (NYSE: ATGE), a leading workforce solutions provider headquartered in the United States. ACAMS is the largest international membership organization dedicated to enhancing the knowledge and skills of anti-money laundering (AML) and financial crime prevention professionals from a wide range of industries. Its CAMS certification is the most widely recognized AML certification among compliance professionals worldwide. Its new Certified Global Sanctions Specialist (CGSS) certification commenced in January 2020. Visit acams.org for more information.

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