



National Museum  
of American Diplomacy

# INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

---

## Plight of the Pangolins



The **National Museum of American Diplomacy (NMAD)** offers educators immersive programs that explore the goals and practice of diplomacy, teach diplomatic skills, build global competence, and illustrate how the critical work of American diplomats impacts people's everyday lives. Lesson plans emphasize 21st century skills: creativity and innovation; critical thinking and problem solving; and communication and collaboration. These skills are keys to success for the next generation of global citizens.

The **Diplomacy Simulation Program** is the museum's premier educational tool. In a collaborative learning environment, students step into the shoes of real-life diplomats. The diplomacy simulations are designed for 15-30 participants, plus a teacher/moderator. Students receive a scenario related to a global issue, which could be real-world or hypothetical, current or historic. Within each simulation, there are five to six stakeholder groups (e.g., foreign ministries, NGOs, and international organizations), each with different perspectives and priorities. Students role-play these stakeholders in small teams of three to five. Under set time constraints, the groups are challenged to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis in the scenario. Students use the information provided in the simulation packet to develop their group's policy positions and defend or modify their choices in real time.

The simulations have no right or wrong actions or solutions because the process, rather than the end result, is the goal. The learning experience develops organically as the students engage in the simulation. Once the simulation has been completed, students are encouraged to express how their views on diplomacy have evolved as a result of the simulation, and to contemplate how they can apply diplomatic skills to their everyday lives.

To access the complete Diplomacy Simulation Program, including training and subject matter expert videos, please visit [diplomacy.state.gov](https://diplomacy.state.gov)



National Museum  
*of American Diplomacy*



@NMADMuseum



@NMADMuseum



[diplomacy.state.gov](https://diplomacy.state.gov)



@NMADMuseum



Diplomacy Simulations are developed and presented by NMAD as an integral component of the museum's education offerings. This document and all associated materials are intended exclusively for educational use.

## Background and Scenario



## Student Materials

- 4 Issue Background
- 7 Crisis Map
- 8 Summary of Recent Events
- 10 Worksheet 1: Questions to Think Through
- 12 Worksheet 2: Possible Actions
- 13 Tools for Negotiating Effectively
- 14 Glossary of Terms

Wild animals and plants, or wildlife, contribute to the health and stability of the world's **ecosystems** and play important roles that provide economic and health benefits for all humans. The illegal trade in wildlife, known as **wildlife trafficking**, is caused by demand for species or products that exceeds **sustainable** consumption. Today, **wildlife trafficking** is a lucrative illegal trade generating billions of dollars a year.

The population of all species worldwide declined by an average of 40% from 1970 to 2000. **Wildlife trafficking** is one of several causes of this decline, along with habitat destruction or degradation, climate change, invasive species, and other threats. Each species plays a part in their local environment. When elephants are killed for ivory, exotic birds for feathers, or leopards for their pelts, it disrupts the **ecosystem**.

**Wildlife trafficking** poses significant risks to more than just wildlife and the environment. The rapid growth in **wildlife trafficking** also contributes to societal instability by driving corruption, undermining the rule of law, and providing a source of funding for criminal and militant groups. Wildlife crime occurs at all levels of the global economy. Environmental crime transcends national borders and undercuts efforts of protective legislation. This urgent wildlife crisis requires an international response.

In 1975, member countries of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**), adopted the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**. The objective of **CITES** is to ensure that international trade in animals and plants does not threaten their survival in the wild. The treaty protects approximately 35,000 species under three categories:

- Appendix I: Species threatened with **extinction**; all trade is prohibited;

- Appendix II: Species not currently threatened with **extinction** that need trade controls for protection; and

- Appendix III: Species for which a country has requested help with international trade.

While **CITES** is legally binding, it does not replace national laws. Each member country must adopt national legislation to enforce **CITES** recommendations.

**Wildlife trafficking** compromises both national and international security, social and economic development, and global health. According to a joint International **Criminal Police Organization (ICPO-INTERPOL)** and United Nations (UN) report published in 2016, the profits of **wildlife trafficking** are linked to large-scale international crime. It is among the most lucrative illegal trades worldwide with low risk and high reward.

Driven by the growing demand for wildlife, illegal trade has escalated into a global crisis, pushing several iconic species, including the elephant and rhinoceros, to the edge of extinction. However, a little known species is actually the target of more illegal trade than any other mammal, the pangolin.

**Pangolins**, the only mammals covered head-to-toe in scales, are solitary, nocturnal creatures that are vulnerable to exploitation because of their low reproductive rates and ease of capture. **Pangolins** have a single pup every one to two years. A juvenile pangolin remains with its mother for up to four months, clinging to her tail as she forages for insects. **Pangolins** play a significant environmental role in regulating insect populations. They use their claws to break into nests of ants and termites, and they use their long, sticky tongues to lap up the insects. It is estimated that each adult pangolin consumes more than 70 million insects annually. **Pangolins** have few defenses beyond their scaly exterior. When threatened by predators such as lions and tigers, they roll into a ball. Unfortunately, this makes it easy for poachers to collect and transport them.

Since 2000, an estimated 200,000 **pangolins** have been seized in Asia alone. The number of animals traded annually is closer to one million. The eight species of **pangolin** are spread across 31 African and 17 Asian countries. **Pangolin** habitats range from tropical forests, grasslands, and savannas, to deciduous forests.

**Pangolins** are hunted for two main reasons. Their scales have been used by some cultures in traditional medicine for thousands of years. Practitioners believe that dried **pangolin** scales can treat a range of physical illnesses, such as malarial fever, and can neutralize witchcraft and evil spirits. Local populations traditionally consumed **pangolin** meat as a protein source, but in recent years it has become a luxury item sold in exclusive restaurants for up to \$1,000 per meal. The soaring prices have increased demand and made **pangolins** more lucrative for poachers and illegal traders.

According to the **IUCN Red List of Threatened Species**, **pangolins** are at high risk of **extinction**. These **prehistoric** creatures, long valued by rural communities, may disappear as demand for **pangolin** scales and meat continues to grow.

In this simulation exercise, you will focus on **wildlife trafficking** of the **endangered pangolin**. The countries of Bengkano, Keneselles, and Trangalia are affected by declining pangolin populations in different ways. These **stakeholders**, however, have different objectives. You will need to find common ground to save the **pangolin** from **extinction**, respect cultural traditions, and find ways to stop organized crime, poachers, and local consumers from exploiting the situation.

Today's exercise will simulate an international diplomatic meeting called to address a fictionalized instance of a real world problem. There will be a Chair to call the meeting together and moderate. Each of you will be a member of a delegation for one of the following groups:



**Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat**



**League of Endangered Animal Protectors (LEAP)**



**The Government of Bengkano**



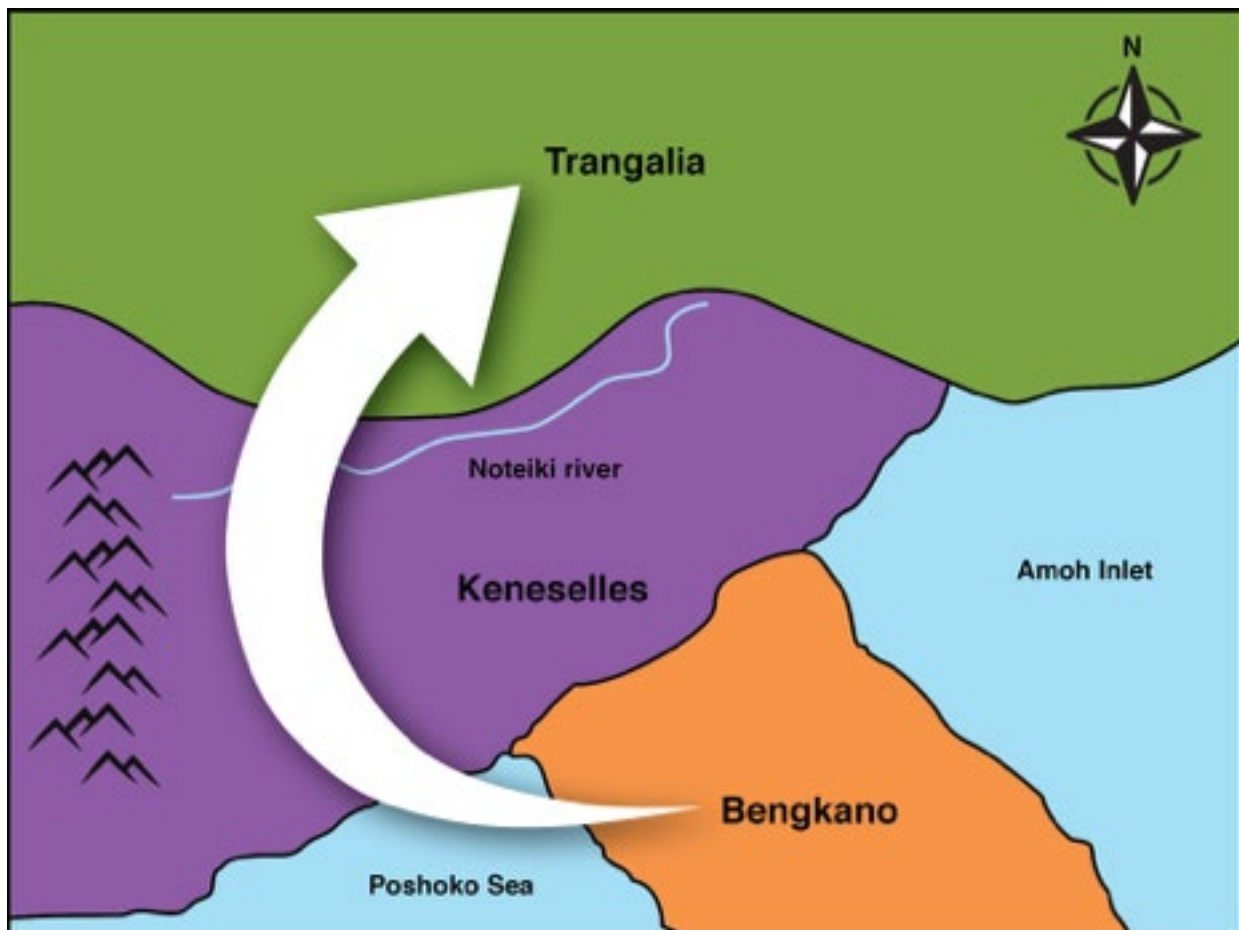
**The Department of State (DOS)**



**The Government of Keneselles**



**The Government of Trangalia**



One of the transit routes used by pangolin poachers traveling from Bengkano, through Keneselles, and then to the final destination in Trangalia.

# SUMMARY OF RECENT EVENTS

The country of Keneselles has emerged as a major hub in the international **pangolin** trade. Customs officials recently intercepted a large shipment of **pangolins** at the border between Keneselles and Trangalia. Keneselles appears to function primarily as a **transit country**, meaning that illegally captured pangolins are passed through the country for sale elsewhere. Some **pangolins** and other **endangered** species are frequently available for sale in markets or restaurants in Keneselles, and the vendors appear to operate without fear of fines or arrest. However, most of this local trade targets tourists from Trangalia and not residents of Keneselles.

In fact, demand in Trangalia appears to be the main stimulus for the international **pangolin** trade. The once flourishing population of **pangolins** in Trangalia has declined dramatically in the past ten years. Over half of the illegal shipments that have been seized in Keneselles were headed for Trangalia. As a major **destination country**, Trangalia consumes **pangolins** as luxury meat and processes their scales for medicinal purposes. Now that there are no longer enough **pangolins** to meet demands in Trangalia, they are turning to illegal trade. Trangalia is not a signatory to **CITES** and has thus far not shown any serious intentions to become one.

Bengkano was a large consumer of native **pangolins** in the past, but it has recently established a **pangolin** preserve to rehabilitate animals captured in illegal shipments. Bengkano is receiving advice from the League of Endangered Animal Protectors (LEAP) on how to educate their citizens regarding the benefits of protecting wildlife and habitats. Bengkano wants to protect **pangolins** because of their cultural significance. Both Bengkano and Keneselles are signatories to **CITES**, although Keneselles is having difficulty enforcing anti-trafficking laws. Ironically, Bengkano's effort at protecting **pangolins** has made it an **origin country**, where poachers come to capture **pangolins** illegally.

Bengkano is frustrated with the lack of enforcement at the border between Keneselles and Trangalia, a major path for illegal trafficking. UNEP and the U.S. State Department (DOS) want to encourage Keneselles to implement the **CITES** provisions and increase enforcement. On a recent visit to Keneselles, the **CITES** Secretariat found that the country is being targeted by organized crime networks who are smuggling **pangolins** across their borders. Keneselles has weak enforcement of national laws and many loopholes, so criminals have become more active. In addition, militant groups are learning that **wildlife trafficking** is a lucrative means to fund their aims.

While Bengkano is working to improve its laws and enforcement, the weak policing in Keneselles and Trangalia is making all three countries potential targets of criminal **wildlife trafficking** networks. The rising profit from **pangolin** trade makes the risk worth it for poachers to cross the borders between the countries. They change transit routes frequently to avoid detection. Recent seizures of **pangolin** shipments reveal that trade volume has increased. Despite their enforcement efforts, there is more that both Bengkano and Trangalia can do to prevent poachers and illegal traders - even if Keneselles can not or will not act.

LEAP wants to work with Trangalia to educate their citizens on the benefits of wildlife conservation, but is not receiving much encouragement to work within the country. They have had success in Bengkano and are making some small advances in Keneselles, but still have much to accomplish. In order to convince individuals in Keneselles to stop their involvement in the pangolin trade, they will need to know that local authorities will protect them from the poachers. LEAP would like to see all eight species of **pangolins** moved from Appendix II to Appendix I of **CITES**, which would provide the animals with greater protection. This would not immediately stop the illegal trade, but it would raise awareness of the serious threat of **extinction** for **pangolins**.

Bengkano has requested that the CITES Secretariat call a diplomatic meeting to address their fears of organized crime and terrorist organizations entering their country to take advantage of the **pangolin**

trade. DOS is concerned about the stability of the region and has been making diplomatic overtures to several countries. LEAP hopes to introduce a plan to find alternative economic opportunities and advance understanding of the value of wildlife populations and their habitats.

*\*This is a hypothetical scenario, though it is grounded in real issues and circumstances. The statistics, geography, and details in this exercise should not be read as describing any specific, real world situation.*

Whom do you represent?

---

---

---

---

What is your overall goal?

---

---

---

---

What goals (in priority order) would you also like to achieve?

---

---

---

---

Who can help you?

---

---

---

---

# WORKSHEET 1: QUESTIONS TO THINK THROUGH

Who might oppose your approach?

---

---

What incentives and disincentives can you offer to persuade others?

---

---

What should be your strategy in dealing with the other parties, i.e., with whom should you speak first?

---

---

Remember: There is no “right” or “wrong” outcome. This is not a debate in which you need to win the argument. Your goal today is to work together to find a solution everyone can agree upon. This situation requires diplomacy and compromise. Build on common ground. Look for areas where you and the other parties agree and try to expand those. Where you disagree, try to create options that address the other parties’ concerns.

# WORKSHEET 2: POSSIBLE ACTIONS

The follow points are possible actions to be taken. Prioritize your top two choices according to your group's policy position. Feel free to add additional actions. You will share your group's prioritized list of actions when the negotiation begins.

- Enforce penalties for wildlife trafficking
- Find economic alternatives for communities that are involved in poaching
- Build a sense of responsibility and pride in a country's wildlife
- Create culturally sensitive educational programs that emphasize the importance of protecting wildlife and their habitats
- Ban all trade in pangolins worldwide
- Assist countries with the means to achieve their goals

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Clearly Determine Your Position And Agree On Your Strategy:

- Clarify or restate your position if it is mis-represented by one of the other stakeholder groups.
- If during informal discussions you decide your group should change its position, discuss it with the other group members as soon as possible.

## Realistically Evaluate Possible Actions Before You Propose Them:

- Are the proposals possible?
- Will they achieve the results you want?
- Watch for unintended consequences.



## Analyze Other Groups' Positions:

- Why do they hold that position?
- Why do they oppose or support your proposals?
- Can you apply pressure to make stakeholders re-evaluate their positions?
- Can you offer any incentives to make stakeholders re-evaluate their positions?

## Build Alliances:

- Identify which stakeholders share your position and which do not.
- Do not spend all your time trying to persuade others. Listen carefully to other delegates and absorb what they are saying.
- Try to identify common interests and concerns you share with other stakeholders.
- Even if your end goal is different, what can you agree on with others?

## Identify Incentives and Disincentives (“Carrots and Sticks”):

- Consider what incentives you can safely offer to other groups.
- Explain to other stakeholders the negative consequences (either direct or indirect) that may follow if they oppose your position.

## General Tips\*:

- Separate the people from the problem.
- Interests: Focus on interests, not positions.
- Options: Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do.
- Criteria: Insist that the result be based on some objective standard.

\*Excerpted from “Getting To Yes”, Roger Fisher and William Ury, Random House Business Books, 1981

**Bilateral**

Involving two countries.

**Biodiversity**

The numbers of different species and plants in an environment.

**Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)**

An international agreement between governments to ensure that trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

**Destination country**

The last known point of a trade route.

**Ecosystem**

The whole group of living and nonliving things that make up an environment and affect each other.

**Endangered**

A species existing in such small numbers that it is in danger of becoming extinct.

**Extinction**

A species having no living members.

**G-20**

The G-20, or Group of Twenty, is an international forum for the governments of 20 major economies worldwide.

**International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO-INTERPOL)**

A network of police forces from 190 countries to help law enforcement officers in different countries work together to solve crimes that cross borders.

**International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**

An international organization working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, including pangolin.

**IUCN Red List of Threatened Species**

A list, published by the IUCN, that assesses the conservation status of species worldwide.

**Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)**

A not-for-profit organization that is independent of government and is often involved in human rights, the environment, health, and/or development.

**Origin Country**

The first known point of a trade route.

**Pangolin**

An African and Asian mammal that has a body covered with large, protective scales, a small head with an elongated snout, a long sticky tongue for catching ants and termites, and a tapering tail.

**Prehistoric**

The period of history relating to human development before the appearance of the written word.

**Preserve**

An area restricted for the protection and preservation of natural resources; in this case pangolins.

**Stakeholder**

A person, organization, or government who has an interest in a specific event or issue.

**Sustainable**

Practices where the rate of harvest does not exceed the rate of regeneration of natural resources.

**Transit Country**

A country which functions as both an importing and a re-exporting country in a trade route.

**Wildlife Conservation**

Planned management of wildlife to prevent exploitation or extinction.

**Wildlife Trafficking**

The illegal poaching or taking of wildlife and the illegal trade of wildlife and/or wildlife products.









Located at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., the National Museum of American Diplomacy is a public-private partnership between the State Department and the Diplomacy Center Foundation. NMAD's education program connects high school and college students with the world of American diplomacy, increasing their understanding of the skills, practices, and language of diplomats. Through simulations, online resources, and the museum's annual Educator's Workshop, NMAD inspires involvement in foreign affairs and citizen diplomacy.





# National Museum *of* American Diplomacy



@NMADMuseum



@NMADMuseum



@NMADMuseum



[diplomacy.state.gov](https://diplomacy.state.gov)