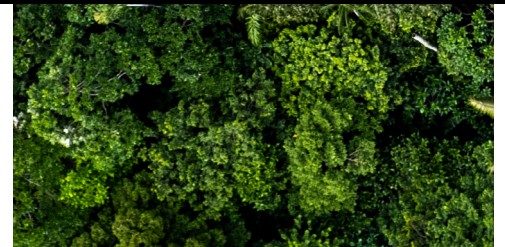# ADDRESSING CORRUPTION'S IMPACT ON CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

LESSONS FROM THE TARGETING NATURAL RESOURCE CORRUPTION PROJECT

APRIL 2024

Targeting Natural Resource Corruption

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AGREEMENT INFORMATION

DISCLAIMER

CONTENTS

Targeting Natural Resource Corruption

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

- Knowledge building
- Other capacity strengthening
- Pilot projects
- Associate awards*

*TNRC Associate Awards are stand-alone projects with independent final reports

Capacity strengthened	**Knowledge built**	170+ resources and tools 7 topic areas	1,200+ NGO staff trained 140+ learning events	**Anti-corruption mainstreaming**
$10M knowledge project	**Approaches field-tested**	6 country-based anti-corruption pilot projects	1 regional initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean	2 global conservation organizations (WWF, TRAFFIC) integrate a corruption lens into strategies and risk tools
$20M country-based and regional projects in Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Madagascar and the Mekong	**Partnerships & networks forged**	600+ global members (and counting) in Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum, a new collaborative initiative	4 working groups connecting cross-sectoral practitioners beyond TNRC	Corruption issue elevated

TNRC CONTRIBUTIONS: STRENGTHENING ANTI-CORRUPTION IN CONSERVATION PRACTICE

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INTRODUCTION

A customs agent takes a bribe to turn a blind eye to a shipment of pangolin scales. A local forest user group runs their affairs without accurate or transparent record keeping, risking mismanagement and misuse. A new minister lifts a harvest ban for a dwindling species, receiving $77,000 in thanks from a company wanting to export them. Officials in distant capitals cut deals that empower illegal loggers to take high-value trees from Indigenous-controlled land. Elites "in the know" cash in on bogus carbon claims and expel Indigenous Peoples and local communities to commodify the carbon in their lands. Crime syndicates use political donations and intimidation tactics to ensure they can control transit corridors through protected areas. Governments and corporations take advantage of data gaps to launder illegally sourced natural resources into legal supply chains. Money from all these actions funds criminality, drives conflict, and often ends up in secret bank accounts in financial safe havens. Environmental defenders and investigators are harmed, with powerful connections guaranteeing impunity for perpetrators.

About the project

Targeting Natural Resource Corruption (TNRC) was a United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded project that worked from 2018-2024 to improve biodiversity outcomes by equipping practitioners to address the threats posed by corruption to wildlife, fisheries, and forests. Led by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), TNRC was implemented with a consortium of leading conservation and anti-corruption organizations, including TRAFFIC; the U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre at the Chr. Michelson Institute (U4); the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC) at George Mason University; and in collaboration with the Basel Institute on Governance. Knowledge-building activities under the TNRC Leader Award ended in April 2024. TNRC Associate Awards are stand-alone projects programmed by USAID Missions and Operating Units at the country and regional level that have been implemented on different timelines.

Every day, another example surfaces of corruption's impact on the natural world and on efforts to protect nature and the people who rely on it. Corrupt actions undermine sustainable management of natural resources, puncture holes in national and international frameworks to protect biodiversity and control trade in protected species, and slash through efforts to reduce and adapt to the pace of climate change.

The stakes are massive. Various sources estimate that illegal timber trafficking reaps USD 50–150 billion per year, illegal wildlife trade involves USD 7–23 billion per year, and IUU fishing USD 10–23.5 billion. Corruption has been flagged as a critical factor in the loss of some 420 million hectares of forests globally between 1990 and 2020. Investments in nature-based solutions like REDD+ are thought to need to triple by 2030, but these projects face serious corruption risks, which also plague the mining sector, essential in meeting the world's needs for energy transition away from fossil fuels.

The goals of conservation and natural resource management practitioners – from inclusive conservation to preserving biodiversity, reducing illegal wildlife trade, protecting natural habitats, and stemming disastrous climate change impacts – are constantly under threat from the powerful and adaptive interests that seek economic and political benefits from undermining those goals. But traditional conservation work has not been equipped to address these challenges.

Taking on the challenge

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) recognized that environment and biodiversity work needed to be better informed about the impact of corruption and ways to address it. In 2018, USAID awarded the Targeting Natural Resource Corruption project to a consortium led by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), with the objective of strengthening anti-corruption knowledge and practice for improved biodiversity conservation.

This report summarizes the activities and, most importantly, the learning, from TNRC's five and a half years of work. After a brief description of the overall plan, sections follow that describe first some key lessons from implementing the project, then lessons on doing anti-corruption in the conservation and natural resource management (NRM) space. The final section outlines some critical issues for continuing this critical work.

Defining the task

To get started, TNRC launched a needs assessment to identify the challenges that the project needed to address. The assessment surveyed 239 practitioners in the Natural Resource Management (NRM) and anti-corruption (AC) fields.[1] Conservation practitioners overwhelmingly recognized the negative impact of corruption on conservation and NRM objectives, but they didn't feel that they (or the conservation field in general) had the knowledge to respond effectively. Two further issues emerged when practitioners were asked about the constraints to more effectively addressing corruption's impact on their work: failure to include corruption in pre-project analysis, and concerns that government partners would not be interested and/or that important relationships with government and other partners would be put at risk. A fourth issue—concerns about the safety of staff and project participants—rounded out the top of the list of constraints. Finally, a separate strand of the needs assessment identified a critical lack of existing cases to learn from.

TNRC's agenda became clear: through generating and sharing knowledge, TNRC could strengthen the ability of conservation and NRM practitioners to better assess and address corruption's impact. And by supporting real-world experience designing and implementing projects and navigating the political and individual risks involved, the project could build capacity and confidence among practitioners while also creating more cases for further learning.

Figure 1. TNRC strategic framework

Target audience: Boundary partners in the conservation and natural resource management sector

| Generate knowledge | + | Communicate for change | + | Apply knowledge |

Institutionalization activities

→ Practitioners improve **knowledge** about anti-corruption approaches

Practitioners **apply that knowledge**

Partner organizations **institutionalize better practice**

→ **Opportunities for corruption in the natural resource management sector reduced**

Mapping the course

The TNRC strategic framework (Figure 1) provided the roadmap for getting there: three interconnected strategies to achieve three overarching results that could help reduce opportunities for corruption and its harmful impact on conservation and NRM objectives. The project would 1) harness existing knowledge and generate new evidence about the impact of corruption and how programming can respond, along with 2) communications and networking to disseminate that information. To demonstrate ways of applying that knowledge, build experience, and generate new opportunities to gather learning, the project 3) supported practical application through pilot projects in six countries and a selection of other initiatives aimed at further broadening practitioner experience. Additionally, the project considered from the beginning how to leave behind an institutional footprint in partner organizations that would leave a legacy of concrete change.

What does doing anti-corruption in conservation look like?

WWF Peru created "TrazApp" to close opportunities for officials to demand bribes from artisanal fishers for missing departure certificates. It laid a foundation for continued strengthening of fisheries management in the country.
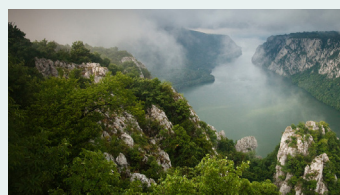
WWF Adria reviewed protected area spatial plans and discovered several improper siting decisions. They plan to use their experience to advocate for greater public oversight of such decisions in the future.

WWF Nepal's efforts to strengthen community forest governance and mobilize youth champions engaged a new generation in transparency and accountable forest management, proving the potential of generational inclusion to promote change.

WWF Guatemala's political economy assessment helped them navigate complex power dynamics affecting illegal jaguar hunting and identify viable options to begin education and livestock protection activities that will help protect these iconic cats.

Photography credits: © Christian Zelaya / WWF-Peru; © Wild Wonders of Europe / Ruben Smit / WWF; © James Morgan / WWF-US; © WWF-Sweden / Ola Jennersten

¹ TNRC Needs Assessment Report. 2019. Unpublished.

STRATEGIES, ACTIVITIES, AND OUTPUTS: LESSONS IN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

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STRATEGIC APPROACH 1

DEVELOPING AND TAILORING ANTI-CORRUPTION KNOWLEDGE FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SECTOR

TNRC's initial years focused on harnessing existing knowledge about the impact of corruption and how conservation and NRM programming can respond, along with generating new evidence on these topics. The development field had already been working on these issues for nearly 30 years, but little of this knowledge had been tailored for conservation and NRM practitioners, nor had the wealth of research on corruption in natural resources been effectively translated into guidance for practical application in programming. TNRC consortium members U4 and TraCCC, along with policy experts at TRAFFIC, created early documents to explain corruption's impact, while WWF staff focused on developing a training course to introduce basic analytical approaches to corruption and the breadth of anti-corruption approaches to conservation and NRM practitioners. Later desk and field research sought to illuminate real-world corruption challenges and risks in renewable natural resources and reveal the political and power dynamics behind them.

Figure 2. Adaptive implementation of Strategic Approach 1

2018

Generate information (desk and field research)

- "Basics" Training
- Introductory Overviews
- Topic Briefs

Translate information for practical use

- Topic Syntheses
- Guides
- Practice Notes

2024
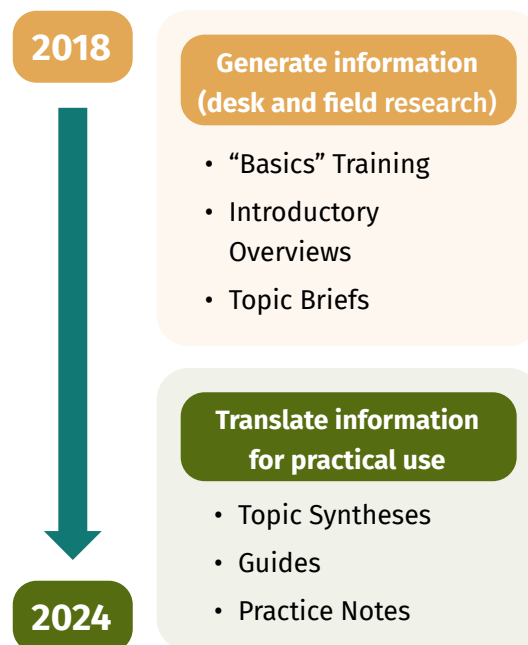
Lessons in knowledge resource generation

- **Start with the basics:** When introducing a new idea or perspective to a professional field, especially one about which there is already a body of expertise outside of that field, it's important to start at the beginning. An introductory training course quickly became a priority for the project, and initial knowledge resources covered basic issues like different ways of defining "corruption" and the range of approaches that constitute "anti-corruption." Next priorities included "Introductory Overviews" of essential themes.

- **Information needs to be mapped for practical use:** As TNRC matured, the Knowledge Hub's wealth of resources outgrew the simple list structure of early years. In year three, the Hub was reorganized around six "pillar" themes to tell the story of the breadth of corruption issues and responses more clearly (see Box 7). Later still, new "getting started" pages mapped the anti-corruption themes against key conservation challenges (see figure 5).

- **The strongest guidance is clear and simple:** Corruption dynamics are inherently complex, yet practitioners need accessible evidence reviews, tools and resources that get straight to the point.

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- **Translating research into practice is a complex and multi-staged process:** TNRC encountered challenges in cases where researchers raised information or questions that seemed sensitive or even risky to consortium members or other stakeholders, and the project had to find ways to navigate publishing independent research findings that could also have real-world effects. In other cases, practical applicability of analytic work was not always clear. About half-way through the project, TNRC responded by implementing a "strategic turn" to focus knowledge outputs more clearly on guidance (products that distilled existing knowledge with an overt practice orientation) and reduce emphasis on broader research and problem analysis.

- **Building trust across professional fields is a critical, if underestimated, task:** As indicated above, research is not necessarily a neutral function, especially when findings have real-world impact on stakeholders involved. Researchers, like practitioners, bring assumptions and values to a project, and especially when they come from different fields of expertise, these assumptions and values may differ from those of intended knowledge users who are embedded and working in specific contexts. A strong recommendation for cross-sectoral work is to provide extra time to build understanding and to identify where values and objectives may diverge.

STRATEGIC APPROACH 2
FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGING NETWORKS FOR IMPROVED NRM ANTI-CORRUPTION KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

TNRC's second strategic approach focused on disseminating information and building networks to broaden and reinforce the knowledge centralized on tnrcproject.org. More than 140 events communicated learning and supported the uptake of good practice in conservation work. The COVID 19 pandemic as well as the desire to reach as many people as possible made webinars the preferred venue, and quarterly newsletters highlighted new additions to the Knowledge Hub. In keeping with the strategic reorientation in later years, the emphasis turned to strengthening and expanding networks that connected practitioners. Key efforts included supporting a Latin America initiative that cemented anti-corruption into WWF's multi-office focus on the Amazon, and the launch of the global Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum in 2022 with an expanded circle of partners and donors. The Forum was created to encourage interaction among practitioners outside of the TNRC consortium (Box 1).

Figure 3. Implementation of Strategic Approach 2

Information dissemination

Training and building networks
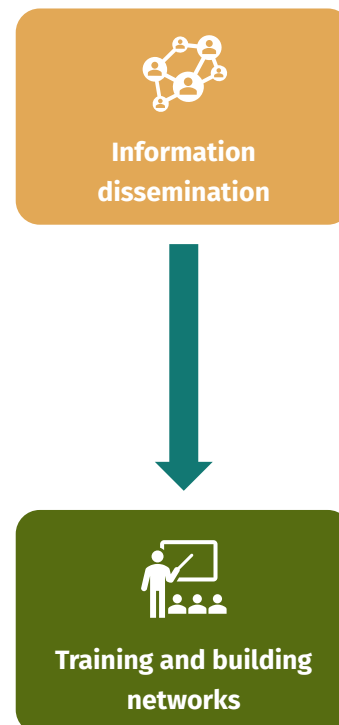
Lessons in knowledge sharing through networking and partnerships

- **Structure events around core learning questions:** Bandwidth is limited, and orienting knowledge-sharing events and communications around specific learning questions helps to surface core priorities and support the uptake of good practice. It also enables follow-up monitoring to assess impact on participants' knowledge and practice. TNRC distilled takeaways and published responses to learning questions soon after events to reinforce key learning points.

- **Create engaging multimedia materials:** Visually appealing infographics, videos, stories, courses and other learning materials provide alternatives that appeal to different learning styles. TNRC also used storytelling to share the experiences of individuals or organizations to inspire and make anti-corruption work less intimidating for conservation practitioners.

- **Finding the right experts can be challenging, so expanding networks is key:** Addressing context-specific corruption challenges often requires expertise beyond standard conservation and natural resource management circles. TNRC's networking initiatives aimed to create infrastructure to meet these needs through peer-to-peer engagement across the anti-corruption, governance, and conservation global communities.

Box 1. The Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum

Founded in 2022 by TNRC in partnership with WWF International, the Basel Institute on Governance, Transparency International, and TRAFFIC, this global online forum aims to encourage learning and exchange across the conservation and anti-corruption communities. By April 2024, the Forum had attracted more than 600 members and now hosts four working groups that are bridging conservation and anti-corruption practitioners to address land corruption, corruption in climate finance, and to coordinate on open data and follow-the-money approaches—an important part of the project's legacy.
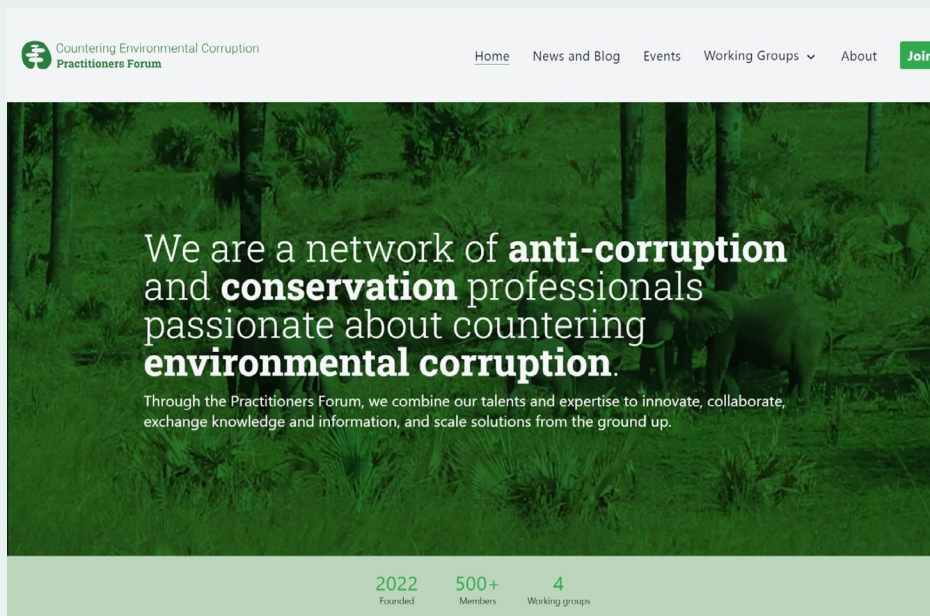
Working Groups

Land Corruption

Land corruption jeopardizes conservation outcomes, climate progress, and human rights by creating insecure land tenure and enabling land grabbing and other negative behaviors. Members of this group explore land grabbing and associated corruption, how it is negatively impacting people and the environment, and possible solutions.

Follow-the-Money

Criminals engaged in environmental crimes and corruption often seek to hide their profits behind opaque ownership arrangements and by moving the proceeds through complex financial systems that make it difficult for law enforcement to trace. Follow-the-money techniques are essential to detect, investigate and prosecute environmental criminals and corrupt facilitators. This group is a peer network for professionals to share experiences and troubleshoot challenges.

Open Data

The ability to swiftly analyze publicly available data on government licensing, public procurement, asset disclosures, tax records, financial allocations, and other interactions can be a game-changer for uncovering red flags of corruption. Members of this group explore emerging opportunities to collaborate in this evolving area.

Climate Finance

Corruption is a major driver of the climate crisis. The cost of responding to, adapting to and mitigating the worst effects of global heating, will be immense, and these financial investments create tempting opportunities for corruption. This group bridges anti-corruption and conservation professionals to advance solutions that can strengthen the integrity of climate finance.

STRATEGIC APPROACH 3
IMPLEMENTING CONTEXT-SPECIFIC SOLUTIONS TO NRM CORRUPTION

Practical application of knowledge was the third critical leg of the TNRC strategy. There is no substitute for learning by doing. TNRC initiated a call for pilot projects to the global WWF network in its second year and worked with six country offices to design activities to target corruption-related challenges they identified. These ranged from perceived political interference in spatial planning decisions about environmentally sensitive infrastructure in protected areas, to pressures to pay bribes that weakened fisheries management, and from opaque and exclusionary community forest management processes to mapping the criminal, political and economic power dynamics affecting illegal jaguar hunting. In the last two years of the project, as familiarity with anti-corruption perspectives increased, TNRC was able to support additional regional and country-based activities that integrated anti-corruption perspectives into existing projects.

Figure 4. Implementation of Strategic Approach 3

Small-scale stand-alone projects

Integrating anti-corruption in existing work
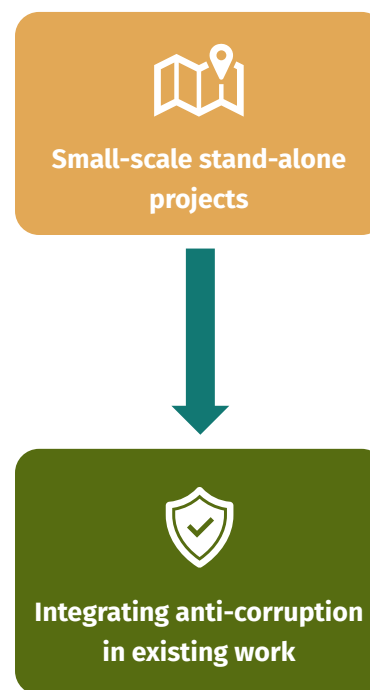
Lessons for supporting projects to address corruption's impact

- **New perspectives don't always come easily:** Because most WWF offices and staff were not familiar with the anti-corruption field, they needed support to identify and design activities.

- **Start with a clear problem identification:** *Anti-corruption learning* can only be brought to bear when *corruption problems* are clearly identified. Often, this required assistance with analytical processes to distinguish undesirable outcomes (e.g., land grabbing or illegal fishing) from the corruption that drove or facilitated those outcomes.

- **Corruption-informed perspectives can fit into familiar conservation project processes:** A first step was helping teams to understand their corruption challenge more clearly by disaggregating corruption issues and linking them to conservation impacts. After that, teams started to see how programming processes they were already familiar with, like root cause threat identification and safeguards, could be adapted to address corruption.

- **Assist with analysis and design:** Initial support for working through their corruption problem from a political economy perspective, and later support connecting teams to each other, TNRC resources, and established methodologies, were both catalytic.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION

From the beginning, the project identified institutionalization of new practices as its highest objective. We could leave behind information and experience, but without concrete changes in processes and priorities of organizations implementing conservation activities, new practices would remain *ad-hoc* and discretionary. Among its key accomplishments, TNRC was directly responsible for a new anti-corruption strategy for TRAFFIC, a mandatory "Introduction to Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Conservation and NRM" training course for staff in WWF US and select field offices, and inclusion of contextual corruption risks in a general project risk screening tool and a specific conservation law enforcement due diligence tool at WWF US.

Lessons for institutionalizing new perspectives and practices

- **Set a manageable target:** To make this objective manageable, TNRC opted for a "boundary partner" approach. Taken from the monitoring and evaluation field, specifically outcome mapping, the concept refers to entities a project interacts with directly and can expect to influence, but where changes could be expected to have ripple effects beyond the project's immediate sphere of influence. For TNRC, these entities were WWF (especially the US office, where the project was based), TRAFFIC, and USAID.[2]

- **Seek and build support from senior management:** Leadership was critical to allow TNRC to achieve what it did. At the same time, staff across offices and partners still noted that without more support, it would be difficult to continue and expand their work. Targeted efforts to share evidence and experience with senior leadership is needed.

- **Preserve flexibility, but define likely outcomes in advance:** TNRC recognized that institutionalization would take time and require acting on opportunities as they emerged. At the same time, good practice mandated that targets should not be "made up" *ex post* to reflect what happened. The team therefore outlined a set of possible outcomes that would constitute evidence of institutionalization and included these in the first Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning plan. These included inclusion of corruption/anti-corruption perspectives in new projects, improvements to institutional training and program guidance, and changes in strategies, policies, and programming frameworks.

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[2] Procedural restrictions (regulatory limits on who could train USAID staff, bureaucratic processes involved in policy changes) made achieving institutionalization results with USAID a less viable avenue than originally expected.

TARGETING CORRUPTION'S IMPACT: LESSONS FOR CONSERVATION PRACTICE

Corruption influences all aspects of conservation and natural resource management. Stakeholders range from the policy makers, power brokers, and communities that affect species, habitats, and people at the source; through the companies and consumers involved in supply chains; to global financial flows and the firms and individuals who benefit from the proceeds of natural resource exploitation and related corruption.

To help practitioners get started in the face of this complexity, TNRC distilled its wide range of resources into a three-step framework. For each step, TNRC has learned valuable lessons about the practice of addressing corruption's negative impact on conservation and NRM outcomes, outlined below.

Taken together, these lessons add up to *five critical takeaways* for conservation practice (Box 2). These takeaways are the top-level headlines from TNRC's work, but they represent the sum of many smaller lessons, outlined below.

Box 2. Five critical takeaways from practice

Improve Knowledge	Assess broadly	Program bodly, but judiciously	Find allies	Keep going
Unpack "corruption" and "anti-corruption;" define terms and check assumptions.	Expand situation analysis perspectives; explore root causes and incentives; go beyond the "front line."	Conservationists can talk about corruption in ways that protect relationships.	Partnerships help fill expertise & capacity gaps and play complementary roles.	Knowledge and practice have improved, but some important global needs remain.

STEP 1
LEARN ABOUT CORRUPTION AND ANTI-CORRUPTION

Conservation and NRM practitioners are, broadly, still at the beginning of the anti-corruption learning curve. Critically, practitioners need to be able to disaggregate "corruption" and "anti-corruption," as well as clarify how they are different from other, related, conservation and NRM challenges. TNRC developed an online introductory course, tailored to conservation and NRM practice, to address this need (Box 3).

Box 3. A TNRC resource for learning the basics

To address the need for learning about corruption and anti-corruption, TNRC developed an online introductory course on corruption, anti-corruption and natural resources that is available to anyone.

TNRC eCourse: Introduction to corrution, anti-corruption and natural resource management

By taking this course, practitioners improve their ability to:

- Identify corrupt behaviors, including how they differ from other negative and illegal behaviors
- Describe factors that can "cause" corruption in natural resource management
- Understand the diversity of anti-corruption approaches that can be considered in natural resource management programming

Chapter 1: What is corruption and what does it look like in NRM/conservation?
Areas covered:
- The technical definition of corruption
- How corruption differs from other illegal activities or "other bad things" that harm conservation and NRM outcomes
- Examples of what corruption looks like within conservation/NRM

Chapter 2: What "causes" corruption
Areas covered:
- Key drivers, facilitators and "functional" causes of corruption
- Exploring the causes within the context of forests, fisheries, and wildlife

Chapter 3: Anti-corruption programming
Areas covered:
- Options and good practices for anti-corruption programming
- Holistic anti-corruption responses
- Exploring these within the context of forests, fisheries, and wildlife

Chapter 4: Wrap up
- What corruption is and is not
- "Causes" of corruption
- Programming approaches

Lesson 1: Define your terms and check assumptions

TNRC learned early that practitioners come to this issue with a wide range of *assumptions and preconceptions*, especially if they come from different professional backgrounds. The TNRC introductory training starts with a clear definition of corruption—the use of entrusted power for private gain, breaks down the different behaviors that are involved, and provides a framework for identifying factors that make corruption easier or more likely. It's essential as well to clarify the differences among, for example, environmental crimes, undesirable policies or actions, and the corruption that *facilitates* crime and encourages undesirable policies. These distinctions bring clarity to project logic by 1) highlighting how and what forms of corruption may stand in the way of project objectives and 2) very importantly, identifying where corruption may threaten assumed relationships between activities and results. For example, if rangers see superiors taking bribes with impunity or skimming resources meant for better staff housing, a project that offers training and technological tools may not be the real key to improved performance against poaching.

- **Addendum to lesson 1:** It may also be necessary to clarify the differences between corruption risks that directly affect project implementation (e.g., misuse of project funds) and the corruption in the broader project context that endangers overall project logic and outcomes. The former is normally the domain of legal and compliance departments, while the latter is a core program design and adaptation issue.

Lesson 2: Understand the range of possible responses

Practitioners with different backgrounds equally bring different assumptions about responses to corruption. Early in the project, TNRC encountered a prevalent assumption that "anti-corruption" mainly involved detecting, investigating, exposing, prosecuting, and punishing people involved in corruption. Unsurprisingly, the idea that conservation work should include "anti-corruption" elements raised some alarms about safety and whether such activities were appropriate for NGOs who needed to work with authorities to protect nature and the people who rely on it. An essential step, then, is to start quickly to broaden understanding of the anti-corruption "toolkit" – a wide range of preventive as well as reactive efforts to address *the conditions that allow corruption to thrive*.

The anti-corruption "toolkit" includes a wide range of approaches that address the conditions that allow corruption to thrive.

Lesson 3: Recognize and accept that addressing the impact of corruption is an inherently political process

Addressing corruption's impact doesn't necessarily mean that conservationists should become detectives and prosecutors, but corruption is a tool of power and entrenches power. Altering the conditions in which it thrives, or the power imbalances it entrenches, involves challenging the *status quo*. The massive stakes that global natural resources represent, along with the convergence of natural resource crimes with other criminality, means that conservation is already a highly political task, however, and conservationists can draw on their own experience managing complex issues and relationships. TNRC experience, as outlined later in this report, shows that conservationists can navigate these issues and implement activities that are better informed by the dynamics of corruption, even as the conservation field needs to build further capacity to do so.

STEP 2
UNDERSTAND CONTEXT

[Good practice for conservation projects](#) requires situation analysis as a first step. A strong situation analysis, expressed in a [situation model](#), identifies direct threats to the identified conservation objectives, delineates indirect drivers and facilitators of those threats, and in doing so, helps practitioners home in on possible intervention points. Traditional approaches in conservation focus on environmental and social factors, perhaps also including economic considerations. A corruption-informed lens on conservation and NRM calls for *broadening assessment perspectives* to ensure that responses go beyond superficial treatment of symptoms and seek to address root causes. TNRC developed a [range of resources](#) to help practitioners add a corruption lens to situation analysis.

Lesson 1: Help practitioners become familiar with different types of corruption-aware situation analysis

While typical conservation analyses may focus on ecological and spatial data and the roles and responsibilities of actors who directly engage with those ecosystems, corruption-informed analyses involve issues like political dynamics and power that are less familiar subjects of analysis for most conservationists. Political economy analysis (PEA) is perhaps the "highest" form of this approach (Box 4), but other options exist, and they can often complement each other. TNRC mapped and explained these different approaches to make it easier for practitioners to see their strengths and weaknesses and choose what will work best for a given circumstance. How-to guides for several different approaches were developed, providing specific steps or formats for the analysis.
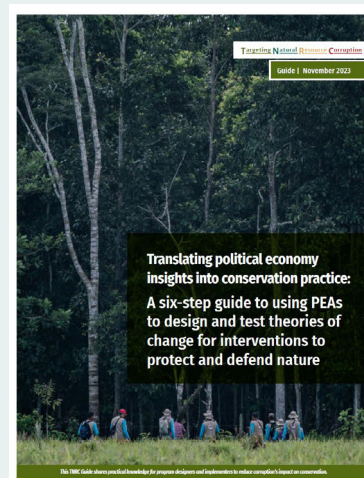
Box 4. PEA insights to improve investigation and prosecution of IWT cases

Corruption risks in law enforcement agencies can undermine efforts against IWT. [Mapping and mitigating risks](#) is critical. A vital component of this is understanding why these risks emerge in the first place. Sector-level PEAs conducted by the Basel Institute on Governance delved into [drivers of corruption risks in three countries](#). The analysis highlighted how prevailing formal and informal political arrangements and power dynamics shaped the law enforcement chain. A key point was that informal political agendas can undermine the work of law enforcement agencies. These insights helped explain why implementation gaps existed and proved critical for designing feasible corruption mitigation measures.

Source: Martini, M. and S. Kassa. 2023. ["Translating political economy insights into conservation practice."](#) TNRC Guide.

Lesson 2: Illustrate how corruption analysis can translate into program design

Corruption-aware situation analysis involves specifying the [types of corruption that may threaten a given conservation goal](), and the factors driving it. TNRC developed model results chains that demonstrate what this can look like in programming that relates to integrating anti-corruption into [traceability initiatives](), [social norms and behavior change]() for anti-corruption, transparency and accountability for [market-based incentives](), and integrating anti-corruption into [law enforcement approaches]().

Lesson 3: Plan for investments in situation analysis and make the best use of these investments

Whenever possible, resources for situation analysis should be part of a project proposal or plan. Up-front investment in strong situation analysis can pay off not only in [better-designed projects]() with more realistic results and assumptions about pathways to change; they also remain a valuable resource for assessing and adapting to changing conditions as the project matures.

Lesson 4: Implement programming that seeks to *address causes rather than front-line symptoms*

This lesson bridges contextual understanding and programming. Strong situation analysis doesn't just identify that certain types of corrupt actions are undermining objectives; it seeks to illuminate *why* it is happening. Accordingly, programs that seek to reduce poaching, for example, by increasing arrests of poachers or instituting codes of conduct for rangers, could be strengthened by methods to [investigate financial networks]() behind poachers or [social norms and incentives]() affecting ranger behaviors.

Box 5. Key learning and resources developed to support situation analysis

Situation analysis

© Luis Barreto / WWF-UK

Key learning

- Good situation analysis is critical for understanding the drivers of corruption and finding feasible entry points.
- Many types of situation analysis can be useful. They can target whole societies or countries, a particular supply chain, individual institutions, and/or a specific problem. The right one will depend on the objective of the analysis, along with time, resources, and expertise.

Selected resources

- [Guide]() to situation analysis for corruption and conservation
- [Where are the weakest links in the illegal wildlife trade enforcement chain?]() Lessons from corruption risk assessments in three countries
- [Conducting a corruption-oriented situation analysis for conservation work](): Guidance from experience
- [Methodological guide for corruption risk assessments in fisheries]()
- [Translating political economy insights into conservation practice](): A guide to using PEAs to design and test theories of change to protect and defend nature
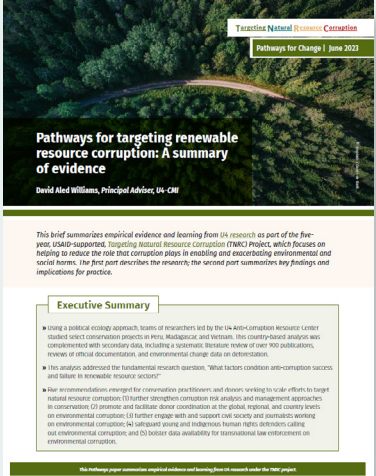
STEP 3
ADAPT PROGRAMMING

TNRC demonstrated that conservation *can take bold steps* to address corruption's impact, even as we must judiciously assess and mitigate related risks. Over the course of the project, the key principle of *partnership* was consistently on display as a critical pathway for doing this work well.

There is no "right" way to adapt conservation and NRM programming to better respond to the impact of corruption. TNRC organized the issues and agendas related to corruption's impact into six thematic pillars,[3] and key lessons on each pillar topic are outlined in Box 7. In addition, broad programming lessons were generated from the TRNC field research led by our U4 partners when that phase of the project ended (Box 6). Finally, the following observations are distilled from the experience of supporting programming:

Lesson 1: Help practitioners tie unfamiliar program areas to familiar ones

TNRC's six anti-corruption pillars can be used in combination with the findings of a situation analysis to help practitioners find programming options. To support this process, TNRC created "getting started" pages for seven core conservation challenges and formulated questions that guide practitioners to anti-corruption issues (Figure 5). Additionally, TNRC work demonstrated how integrity and inclusive conservation principles could be integrated in benefit-sharing arrangements for climate change mitigation and area-based conservation.

Box 6. Recommendations from field research

- Further strengthen corruption risk analysis and management approaches in conservation.
- Promote and facilitate donor coordination at the global, regional, and country levels on environmental corruption.
- Further engage with and support civil society and journalists working on environmental corruption.
- Safeguard young and Indigenous human rights defenders calling out environmental corruption.
- Bolster data availability for transnational law enforcement on environmental corruption.

Source: Williams, A. 2023. "Pathways for targeting renewable resource corruption: A summary of evidence."

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[3] A seventh pillar, situation analysis, is discussed earlier in this report.

Figure 5. The TNRC "Getting Started" pages help map corruption issues against conservation challenges

Identify your conservation challenge

Wildlife trafficking

Illegal, unreported & unregulated fishing

Illegal logging & associated trade

Protected areas & natural resource governance

Community-based conservation

Sustainable supply chains

Climate crisis

Hear from others

Where to Start | Countering Corruption to Combat Wildlife Trafficking

TNRC Project
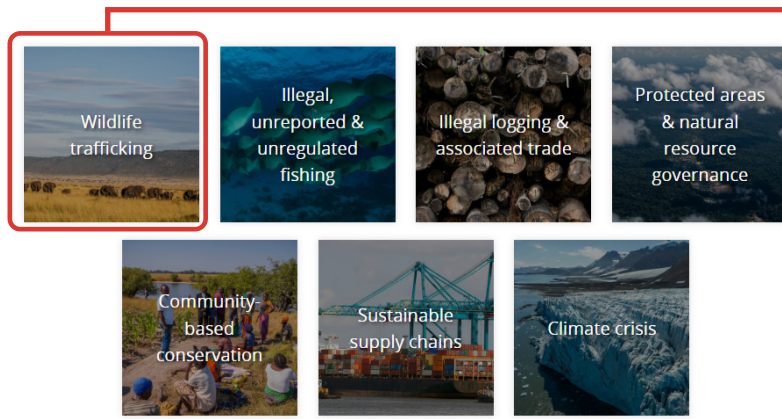
GET STARTED IN THREE STEPS

Three steps to follow

1 Understand Corruption

TNRC eCourse: Introduction to Corruption, Anti-Corruption and Natural Resource Management

This course introduces basic learning from anti-corruption research and practice to help break down the concept of corruption and expand understanding of the ways that it can be addressed in conservation programming. Case studies are included from the wildlife, forests, and fisheries sectors, based on real-world experiences.

Take the eCourse

2 Assess Your Situation

Situation Analysis

Learn more about assessing the threats that corruption may pose to conservation objectives and identify responses that are appropriate to your specific context.

Find TNRC tools for situation analysis

3 Adapt Your Programming

Consider approaches that fit your needs

Is corruption pervasive in the illicit supply chain and you're unsure where to target conservation interventions?
↓
Identify viable entry points along the illicit supply chain

Explore the Supply Chains Guide

Is corruption in law enforcement and the criminal justice system impeding progress?
↓
Strengthen integrity in law enforcement and the judiciary

Explore the Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice Guide

Are higher-level actors like organized criminals and corrupt officials escaping consequences?
↓
Target high-level actors by following the money

Explore the Illicit Financial Flows Guide

Do wildlife management systems incentivize corruption by neglecting community needs?
↓
Support inclusive approaches in wildlife management

Explore the Communities & Inclusion Guide

Do official decisions and permitting systems lack transparency and thus enable corruption?
↓
Empower the public as allies

Explore the Open Governance Guide

Are permissive social norms perpetuating corruption in your context?
↓
Integrate behavioral change approaches

Explore the Social Norms & Behavior Change Guide

Box 7. TNRC's six pillars outline anti-corruption evidence and approaches for conservation practitioners

Communities & inclusion
© Juozas Cernius / WWF-UK

Key learning

- Community-based NRM is vulnerable to corruption, mainly due to inherent power imbalances.
- Higher-level corruption can undermine community-level conservation goals.
- Community-level NRM work can be made more resilient in the face of corruption by integrating rights-based perspectives; recognizing differing perspectives, especially those of Indigenous Peoples and local communities; supporting marginalized voices, strengthening land tenure, openness and transparency; and employing social accountability approaches.

Selected resources

- Guide to issues in corruption and community-based conservation
- Corruption risks and anti-corruption responses in sustainable livelihood interventions
- Who reaps the benefits? Integrity principles for benefit sharing in Nature-based Solutions for climate mitigation
- Reducing corruption's impact on natural resources – How does a gender lens help?
- The Conservation Mosaic Approach to Reduce Corruption and the Illicit Sea Turtle Take and Trade

Supply chains
© James Morgan / WWF US

Key learning

- As global consumption compounds pressures on natural resources, the role of corruption in facilitating illegal and unsustainable trade in natural resources is an increasingly critical issue.
- Corruption risks span natural resource supply chains, but specific threats will differ by step and sector.
- Key anti-corruption approaches include strengthening the rules (laws), boosting accountability and transparency, changing norms of demand, and addressing financial secrecy and money laundering that accompanies illicit trade.
- Tecchnology can be helpful, but it is only as effective as the systems that monitor its use.
- Some private sector actors may be collaborators of illegal wildlife crime, but many others can be partners in fighting corruption.

Selected resources

- Guide to corruption issues in natural resource supply chains
- Corruption in the Fisheries Sector: Import Controls, Transparency, and WWF Practice
- Commodity supply chain traceability initiatives and their anti-corruption potential
- Open secrets: Corruption in Free Trade and Special Economic Zones as an enabler for illegal wildlife trade

Law enforcement & criminal justice
© James Morgan / WWF

Key learning

- Law enforcement is just one of many approaches to address corruption, and its functions can be compromised by corruption, sometimes causing even greater harm.
- Effective law enforcement programming must consider systemic corruption risks and go beyond targeting front-line staff and low-level offenders.
- Safeguards like transparency, accountability, monitoring and whistleblower protection are essential.
- Institutional reforms, corruption risk assessments, and capacity building can strengthen enforcement agencies.
- Follow-the-money approaches are underutilized, in part due to limited knowledge and resources.
- Technology has a role to play but is only as effective as the systems that monitor its use.

Selected resources

- Guide to law enforcement and corruption issues in conservation
- Understanding effects of corruption on law enforcement and environmental crime
- Guide to conducting corruption risk assessments in a wildlife law enforcement context
- Corrupting conservation: Assessing how corruption impacts ranger work

Open governance

© naturepl.com / David Fleetham / WWF

Key learning

- Several characteristics of conservation and NRM pose high risks of corruption in closed government environments, including government control of resources (implying frequent contact between public officials and private actors); lengthy and highly technical negotiations; high financial stakes; remote locations that hamper monitoring; and power disparities between resource exploiters and communities where the exploitation takes place.
- Open government involves transparency, accountability, and participation.
- In conservation and NRM, transparency can be applied to distributing benefits from conservation, government contracts and concessions, ownership of companies, and supply chains, among others.
- Accountability can be enhanced through mechanisms like social monitoring or safeguard regimes implemented by governments, international actors, or civil society.
- Participation can be achieved through Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) mechanisms, among others.
- The impact of open governance approaches depends on other enabling factors, such as political will, a free and independent media, a robust civil society, and the rule of law.

Selected resources

- Guide to open governance and conservation
- Conservation, Corruption, and Civic Space
- The Impacts of Infrastructure Sector Corruption on Conservation
- The Open Government Partnership and Anti-corruption in Conservation: Templates for Collective Action

Social norms and behavior change

© Jamie Cotten / IFAW / WWE-US

Key learning

- Corruption can be a norm, making corrupt behavior accepted and difficult to alter.
- A "social norms and behavior change" (SNBC) lens broadens perspectives on why people become involved in corruption, moving the emphasis from enforcement and punishment to broader factors shaping behavior.
- SNBC approaches can help address some of the most resilient types of corruption, such as those involving collusion among a significant number of stakeholders.
- Behavioral insights show the logic of reducing red tape and other factors that encourage corruption.
- SNBC approaches require understanding both the specific situation (exact behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes) and the drivers behind individual actions (social expectations, material conditions, and normative pressures).

Selected resources

- Guide to social norms and behavior change
- Integrating SNBC approaches to target natural resource corruption
- Researching Social Norms and Behaviors Related to Corruption Affecting Conservation Outcomes
- Designing social norms and behavior change interventions

Illicit financial flows

© Christiaan van der Hoeven / WWF-Netherlands

Key learning

- Efforts to reduce the negative impact of corruption on conservation and NRM are made more difficult by the ease of hiding and laundering the profits of environmental crime and corruption.
- Following the money helps move investigations beyond low-level offenders and creates opportunities for authorities to confiscate assets.
- The financial sector can be a key partner, and beneficial ownership transparency is an important enabling condition for reducing IFFs.
- Like all anti-corruption initiatives, efforts to reduce IFFs may also be appropriated and misused by people in power. Careful situation analysis is needed to reduce risks of unintended consequences.

Selected resources

- Guide to illicit financial flows in conservation and NRM
- Why is money laundering a critical issue in natural resource corruption?
- Targeting corruption and its proceeds: Why we should mainstream anti-corruption into "follow the money" approaches to natural resource crime
- How to Engage the Finance Industry in the Fight Against Cross-Border Corruption: Tackling Money Laundering in the Wildlife Setting
- Can conservation organizations use big data analytics to tackle corruption in the forestry sector?

Lesson 2: The politics and sensitivities of addressing corruption *can be navigated*

Despite concerns that even talking about corruption could endanger relationships, especially with authorities, and pose undue risks to staff or partners, TNRC experience demonstrated that it can be done. Project implementers recommended several tactics:

- **Use positive framing:** Terms like integrity, accountability, and transparency can be used when "corruption" is considered too sensitive. Good situation analysis can also help conservation practitioners frame anti-corruption efforts as steps to help governments achieve their own goals. When bribes weakened fisheries management in Peru, for example, a new technology that took the human element out of permit issuance was a win for fisheries authorities as well as fishers, even if it took money out of the hands of corrupt enforcement officers.

What does doing anti-corruption in conservation look like?

Analysis and advocacy by Fundación Vida Silvestre, WWF's affiliate in Argentina, pushed fisheries traceability legislation towards the finish line, and their e-logbook app is increasingly being used to reduce and prevent illegal discards.

- **Bring external standards and their benefits into the picture:** Reducing opportunities for corruption in fisheries or logging can open opportunities for a countries' products on the international market, which can incentivize governance improvements.

- **Invest in relationships with stakeholders:** Building trust as an honest broker with shared interests can make difficult conversations easier when they need to happen.

- **Offer a value-add from what you already do:** Conservationists often collect data and build connections with stakeholders that can be valuable to authorities seeking to improve their standing in international markets, reduce revenue or nature losses, or strengthen resilience to environmental threats.

Lesson 3: Risks are still real

The tactics above can create unexpected room for maneuver, but not every context can be navigated. The stakes involved in protecting or exploiting the natural world have never been higher, and corruption gives very powerful interests a strong upper hand. Practitioners involved in TNRC projects distilled the following advice:

- **Look for niches where there is a possibility for progress:** Different sectors, industries, or levels of government (e.g., national vs. local) may hold possibilities even when the larger context isn't welcoming.

- **Choose strategies and tactics that reduce risks when needed:** More than one TNRC project conducted situation analyses that significantly aided their ability to address critical threats to wildlife and forests, but they chose not to publicize the analyses for safety and political reasons.

- **"Go global" when local conditions are too dangerous:**

  - TNRC project implementers frequently linked their efforts to international initiatives, such as the Escazú Agreement that codifies rights of access to information about the environment, public participation in environmental decision-making, environmental justice, and a healthy and sustainable environment for all in Latin America. Similarly, the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) obliges signatories to take a range of actions to reduce corruption.

  - In cases where authorities are unlikely to be moved by such commitments, or where non-government actors (criminal networks, etc.) exert greater control than governments, strategies to reduce the negative impact of corruption on conservation objectives may need to address higher-level issues. TNRC partner

💡 What does doing anti-corruption in conservation look like?

WWF Colombia's analysis of the Escazú Agreement prepared them for a powerful campaign to strengthen inclusive environmental democracy in that country.

TRAFFIC, for instance, focused some of its work on methods for identifying corruption risks in timber concessioning through big data analysis. An eCourse on engaging financial institutions helps broaden knowledge about how conservationists can share information that can help the financial sector fulfill its obligations to limit laundering of corruptly-gained funds.

Put safety first: TNRC has demonstrated the costs of not including corruption-informed perspectives in conservation work and has shown that much more is possible than many might have thought. Regardless of conservation objectives, however, responsible conservation organizations must still weigh the risks to their staff, partners, and other stakeholders.

Lesson 4: Partnerships make this work better and easier

Partnerships bring needed anti-corruption and good governance expertise, as well as the opportunity to build on comparative advantages. While a conservation organization may need to protect a relationship with a key authority, for instance, to be able to monitor species health or support communities suffering from environmental threats, other organizations may be able to put pressure on those same authorities to address corruption that endangers those conservation objectives. TNRC project implementers noted that collaboration with non-conservation actors is still relatively underdeveloped, even as the governance and anti-corruption communities have increasingly emphasized environmental themes. The anti-corruption community has also been at the forefront of concern over threats to environmental defenders.

© Andy Isaacson / WWF-US

A LEGACY OF KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE, AND NETWORKS

The TNRC consortium produced a wealth of information and contributed substantially to a growing dialogue about tackling the negative impact of corruption on conservation and environmental goals. More than 170 knowledge resources will remain on an actively-maintained TNRC Knowledge Hub, to assist practitioners as they seek out and try new approaches.

New priorities need to be bolstered by process changes, however, and within WWF-US and TRAFFIC, new strategies and risk checklists put corruption's impact squarely into programming priorities and processes. WWF-US now requires introductory training for all staff involved in programming, including in the eleven global offices it manages. TRAFFIC has a full-time anti-corruption advisor, originally funded through TNRC and now part of the organization's permanent staff.

The Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum, launched by WWF in partnership with the Basel Institute on Governance, TRAFFIC, and Transparency International, will continue to convene practitioners to share experiences and learn from each other.

LOOKING FORWARD

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The world is a different place in 2024 than it was in 2018, but there is much more to do. This is TNRC's final, essential takeaway: *keep going*. At the 2023 Conference of States Parties to the UNCAC, an unprecedented number of proposals for side events on environmental themes led to a first-of-its-kind "mega event"—a half-day series of discussions highlighting the critical threats corruption poses to the planet's ability to survive the pressures on the natural environment. Governments around the world are taking steps to better understand and address the impact of corruption on their environments, and civil society has become a leading voice. Within the donor community, the US Government's strategy on countering corruption has been translated into a groundbreaking new USAID Anti-corruption Policy calling for integration of corruption-informed perspectives across development sectors. Donor countries like Norway, Germany, Liechtenstein, and the United Kingdom are making the nexus between corruption and environmental outcomes core themes of their development assistance.

Alongside these encouraging developments, corruption's impact on the environment still receives little attention in global environmental fora, and new issues are emerging every day. What needs to happen next?

Take steps to continue momentum and strengthen will to work on corruption in the conservation and NRM sector

Build more evidence: TNRC made important strides, but the evidence base specifically focused on how corruption harms conservation outcomes and how AC efforts can lead to better results remains thin. Further, some stakeholders interviewed for the TNRC close-out review noted that environmental corruption can be deprioritized vis-à-vis "gun, drugs, and people" corruption, though the convergence of these issues demonstrates that this is a false distinction.

Continue working to shift mindsets: Dealing with corruption is already a part of conservation and NRM work, even when it is not acknowledged. Supporting the use of political economy analysis and related tools can help make this clear to practitioners. AC stakeholders can also continue to socialize the idea that AC work does not always need to involve confrontational approaches, to help alleviate concerns that conservation actors may have related to directly addressing these issues.

> "In terms of risks – that one is tricky and is very case-dependent because the risks can look different with dynamics, cultural norms and relationships in that place. But one of the broadest strategies I could say is just partnership building – it sounds simple and fundamental but when doing something difficult, going alone is hard. Going alone can be dangerous. There is safety in numbers - building up partnerships with other organizations can help with building a coalition and seeing a sea change and more people working in that field makes it so it can change the dynamic." – *TNRC close-out interview*

Target global policy dialogues: In parallel with efforts supporting local and country actors, opportunities exist to strengthen attention to corruption's impact on environmental goals. One important target is to match the momentum in international anti-corruption fora with similar attention in international environmental fora.

Address the realities of risk

One of the biggest concerns raised by conservation actors working on AC efforts is the risk that these activities pose to individuals, especially local staff and partners. Acknowledging these risks and improving strategies to address and mitigate them will help encourage more action. Funding that encourages partnerships across conservation, human rights, and anti-corruption actors would increase possibilities for collaborative and mutually-informed approaches to risk management.

Expand the agenda to include emerging issues

In March 2024, TNRC convened a "capstone" meeting to share learning and, importantly, connect actors to continue and expand work to address the impact of corruption on conservation, NRM, and other environmental objectives. Participants acknowledged TNRC's agenda-setting and educational role, but the gathering also recognized a range of new issues that heighten the urgency for action. Some key points from those discussions are summarized here:

Integrity in climate finance: The massive expected increase in climate mitigation and adaptation funds from public and private sources will create winners and losers and put unparalleled pressure on governance mechanisms at every level. Acting where we can, when we can, including through carbon market readiness efforts, should be the priority. Immediate actions to safeguard fair distribution of costs and benefits and strengthen accountability for appropriate use of those funds are critical to global climate objectives. Join the climate finance working group of the Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum to learn more.

Land corruption: Corruption in land administration, record keeping, tenuring, and concessioning, along with suppression of land rights for Indigenous Peoples and their defenders, is at the root of key problems of deforestation, land conversion, displacement, and migration, among many others. Getting corruption out of land use decisions supports every aspect of sustainable natural resource management and is a key to climate goal. Join the land corruption working group of the Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum to learn more.

Nature crimes: While not a "new" issue, illegal logging, fishing, wildlife trade, and land conversion remain central drivers of environmental harms and are gaining broader international attention. The convergence of these crimes with other criminality, including illegal trade in drugs and arms, heightens the urgency of including a strong corruption lens in this work; as with all crimes, corruption corrodes enforcement and prevention capabilities. Further steps need to be taken to strengthen regulators' attention to corruption risks across sectors and to link nature crime work in specific countries with anti-corruption efforts and anti-corruption authorities where feasible. Data from governments, companies, and citizens is increasingly being made available that can be leveraged to monitor for red flags of corruption and illicit behavior. Join the open data working group of the Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum to learn more.

Illicit financial flows: The massive profits from environmental crime and related corruption fuel the continuation and expansion of environmental harms and the climate crisis. The ability to launder funds and hide profits behind opaque ownership structures augments these incentives. Focusing attention on the financial flows from environmental harms also casts light on the significant contributing role of global financial centers, the destination countries for this "dirty money." Steps to improve transparency of beneficial ownership globally, along with advocacy to target the bottlenecks in public oversight (e.g., sufficient resourcing for financial intelligence units) are needed. Join the follow-the-money working group of the Countering Environmental Corruption Practitioners Forum to learn more.

ANNEX: TNRC KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

EVIDENCE

Introductory overviews

- Understanding effects of corruption on law enforcement and environmental crime

- Building accountable resource governance institutions

- Why is money laundering a critical issue in natural resource corruption?

- Reducing corruption's impact on natural resources – how does a gender lens help?

- A Political Ecology Lens for Addressing Corruption in Conservation and Natural Resource Management

- Corrupting trade: An overview of corruption issues in illicit wildlife trade

- Trade-based money laundering and natural resource corruption

- Targeting profit: Non-conviction based forfeiture in environmental crime

- Examining social accountability as an anti-corruption approach in conservation and natural resource management

- Monitoring, evaluation, and learning for anti-corruption projects: What conservation practitioners need to know

Topic briefs

- Addressing corruption in CITES documentation processes

- Accessing, harvesting and trading in wildlife: A focus on the use of permits, allocation of access rights and role of corruption

- Targeting corruption and its proceeds: Why we should mainstream an anti-corruption perspective into "follow the money" approaches to natural resource crime

- Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in a context of nationalist oligarchy: Lessons learned from Indonesia

- Corruption, informality and social norms

- The conservation-corruption conundrum: Understanding everyday relationships between rangers and communities

- Understanding corruption risks in the global trade in wild plants

- Keeping better company: engaging the private sector to reduce forest sector-related corruption risk

- Enrolling the local: Community-based anti-corruption efforts and institutional capture

- Whistleblower protection: An essential tool for addressing corruption that threatens the world's forests, fisheries and wildlife

- Using wood forensic science to deter corruption and illegality in the timber trade

- Corruption in the fisheries sector: Import controls, transparency, and WWF practice

- Corrupting conservation: Assessing how corruption impacts ranger work

- The international links of Peruvian illegal timber: A trade discrepancy analysis

- Natural resources, human rights, and corruption: What are the connections?

- Traceability systems: Potential tools to deter illegality and corruption in the timber and fish sectors?

- Corruption definitions and their implications for targeting natural resource corruption

- The impacts of infrastructure sector corruption on conservation

- Beneficial ownership transparency and natural resource corruption

- Beneficial ownership in the fishing sector and links to corruption

- Anti-corruption and equitable benefit sharing in Kenya's wildlife and forest sectors: Gaps and lessons

- Beyond the institutional fix? The potential of strategic litigation to target natural resource corruption

- Open secrets: Corruption in free trade and special economic zones as an enabler for illegal wildlife trade

- Community forestry and reducing corruption: Perspectives from the Peruvian Amazon

- Corruption in community-based conservation: A synthesis of lessons

- Internal controls and illegal wildlife trade: A systematic approach to corruption prevention and law enforcement integrity

- Community-based natural resource management as a good governance and anti-corruption method: Lessons from Madagascar

- Natural resource commodity supply chains: Lessons from existing anti-corruption initiatives

- Problem analysis for social norms and behavior change

Practice notes

- Pathways for targeting renewable resource corruption: A summary of evidence

- The conservation mosaic approach to reduce corruption and the illicit sea turtle take and trade

- Building transparency and accountability in Natural Resource Management (NRM): The role of social accountability and civic participation in addressing corruption in the NRM sector

- On the case: Identifying corruption by reviewing wildlife crime court cases in southern Africa

- Where are the weakest links in the illegal wildlife trade enforcement chain? Lessons from corruption risk assessments with agencies in three countries

- Tracking the trade: Increasing efficiency and transparency in Tanzania's timber sector

- How political economy analysis can support corruption risk assessment to strengthen law enforcement against wildlife crimes

- Monitoring wildlife crime cases: A possible approach to reduce corruption in the justice system?

Case studies

- [Increasing citizen engagement in spatial planning to reduce opportunities for corruption in protected areas in Serbia](#)

- [Reducing corruption in the fisheries sector: Lessons from WWF Peru](#)

- [Using legislative advocacy and a transparency electronic system to reduce illegal and unreported fish discards in Argentina](#)

- [Applying behavior change and community-based approaches to address the corruption linked to illegal hunting and trade of jaguars in Guatemala](#)

- [Designing targeted capacity building strategies to improve community forest governance in Nepal](#)

- [Enabling youth as good governance champions of community forests in Nepal](#)

- [Vulnerabilities in Fisheries in Mexico: A Challenge for Sustainability](#)

- [The Escazú Agreement's Anti-Corruption Potential in Colombia](#)

- [Digital capture certificates to close opportunities for corruption](#)

- ["Justina del Mar," a virtual ally to prevent corruption in the artisanal fishing sector](#)

GUIDANCE & TRAINING

Guides

- [Where to start: Combating corruption that facilitates illegal wildlife trade](#)

- [Where to start: Countering corruption behind illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing](#)

- [Where to start: Combating corruption linked to illegal logging and associated trade](#)

- [Where to start: Countering corruption's impact on protected areas and natural resource governance](#)

- [Where to start: Preventing corruption from undermining community-based conservation](#)

- [Where to start: Preventing corruption from undermining legal supply chains](#)

- [Where to start: Countering corruption that undermines climate progress](#)

- [Synthesis: Illicit financial flows](#)

- [Synthesis: Law enforcement and criminal justice](#)

- [Synthesis: Situation analysis](#)

- [Synthesis: Social norms and behavior change](#)

- [Synthesis: Communities and inclusion](#)

- [Synthesis: Supply Chains](#)

- [Synthesis: Open Governance](#)

- [TNRC Guide: Identifying corruption risks along a forest supply chain](#)

- [Anti-corruption programming in conservation and natural resource management: Principles for getting started](#)

- [Corruption risks and anti-corruption responses in sustainable livelihood interventions](#)

- [Who reaps the benefits? Integrity principles for benefit sharing in forest NbS for climate mitigation](#)

- [Visualizing corruption risks in the illegal rhino horn trade supply chain](#)

- [The Open Government Partnership and anti-corruption in conservation: Templates for collective action](#)

- [Conducting a corruption-oriented situation analysis for conservation work: Guidance from experience](#)

- [Red flags for conservation: Infrastructure safeguards for nature](#)

- [Guide to conducting corruption risk assessments in a wildlife law enforcement context](#)

- [How-to guide: Strengthening internal controls to prevent corruption in illegal wildlife trade enforcement](#)

- [Methodological guide for corruption risk assessments in fisheries value chains](#)

- [Translating political economy analysis into theories of change](#)

- [Social norms/behavior change new empirical research: Changing biodiversity corruption behaviors - Research protocol #1](#)

- [Social norms/behavior change new empirical research: Changing biodiversity corruption behaviors - Research Protocol #2](#)

- [Integrating anti-corruption into law enforcement approaches](#)

- [Social norms and behavior change for anti-corruption](#)

- [Integrating anti-corruption into traceability initiatives](#)

- [Transparency and accountability for market-based incentives](#)

- [Designing social norms and behavior change interventions: Guidance resources for conservation practitioners](#)

- [Operational considerations for the integrity principles for benefit-sharing mechanisms in nature-based solutions](#)

- [Corruption as an indirect threat to conservation](#)

E-Courses

- [TNRC eCourse: Introduction to corruption, anti-corruption and natural resource management](#)

- [eCourse: Engaging the financial sector to reduce money-laundering and corruption linked to wildlife trade](#)

- [Spanish eCourse | Acabar con el Comercio Ilegal de la Vida Silvestre](#)

OTHER LEARNING & COMMUNICATIONS

Blog Posts

- Changing corrupt behaviors through an INTEGRITY Framework

- Ten anti-corruption take-aways from Forest Legality Week

- Understanding crime convergence to better target natural resource corruption

- Targeting corruption in environmental crime and natural resource governance: How can 'Thinking & Working Politically' help to unlock political will?

- How can I integrate Thinking & Working Politically into my day-to-day programming on natural resource management?

- Illegal wildlife markets, zoonotic disease transfer and corruption—Connections and what the global community must do about it

- Understanding a political ecology approach: Part I

- Implementing a political ecology approach: Part II

- Connections between IUU fishing and corruption — and how the global community can combat them

- Whistleblower protection: A tool for stopping corruption that threatens the world's forests, fisheries and wildlife

- Female rangers and anti-poaching strategies to stem corruption

- Understanding how corruption is accelerating illegal logging and deforestation during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Five ways of thinking about how to address corruption in conservation and natural resource management

- How data and technology can help address corruption in IUU fishing

- Corruption and anti-corruption at the frontline of forest conservation: Time to address the power structures

- The COVID-19 pandemic, corruption, and the socio-economic impacts on local communities

- Journey to self-reliance 2020: Starting a conversation about data, corruption, and environmental policy

- Uncovering corruption: The role of investigative journalism in combatting environmental crime and prompting accountability

- Corruption in the environment: New perspectives

- Mind the gap: Bridging the anti-money laundering (AML) and conservation communities to better address conservation crime and corruption

- Definitions matter: What do we mean when we talk about corruption in conservation, and what difference does it make?

- Can women rangers help decrease corruption rates?

- What do we know about anti-corruption effectiveness in renewable natural resources?

- Corruption in the wild plants supply chain: Addressing the social, financial, and environmental costs

- Lessons from research: Using trade data to expose illicit financial flows and corruption in natural resource commodities, and broader applications

- Corruption and community-based conservation: Lessons and opportunities

- Conservation, corruption, and civic space

- Sand mafias: Environmental harm, corruption, and economic impacts

- Whose reality counts? Understanding actor perceptions in project development to better target natural resource corruption

- Commodity supply chain traceability initiatives and their anti-corruption potential

- Collaboration Avenues: Bridging the anti-money laundering and conservation communities to better address conservation crime and corruption

- Lessons from the field: Assessing corruption risks that undermine law enforcement action against natural resource crimes

- The unusual impacts of Covid: Reflections on the links between demand, extraction, conservation, and corruption

- Trade discrepancy analysis: A tool to identify environmental corruption and associated illicit financial flows

- The anti-corruption potential of beneficial ownership transparency and implications for natural resources

- Can conservation organizations use big data analytics to tackle corruption in the forestry sector?

- Supporting the implementers of TNRC's pilots and Associate Awards

- Conservation practitioner perspectives on "corruption" and "analysis"

- Six things donors should know about anti-corruption in conservation projects

- Corruption and the challenge to protect human rights and the environment: What can conservationists do?

- TNRC project-based learning: Practitioners' considerations on risk in anti-corruption and conservation

- Making financial investigations into environmental crimes the norm

- Harnessing big data to uncover corruption in the forestry sector

- Good practices for communicating with the finance sector to combat corruption linked to illegal wildlife trade and money laundering

- Strengthen alliances to counter environmental corruption

- Can strengthening internal controls prevent corruption behind natural resource crimes?

- Environmental corruption: Building bridges across conservation and anti-corruption practice to stop environmental corruption from the ground up

- [Using Follow-the-Money Techniques to Detect Environmental Crimes: Potential and Challenges](#)

- [How to engage the finance industry in the fight against cross-border corruption: Tackling money laundering in the wildlife setting](#)

- [Transparency, open data, and participation: Tools for environmentally responsible infrastructure](#)

- [What shapes anti-corruption success and failure in renewable resource sectors?](#)

- [Line of fire: Supporting Indigenous Peoples at the frontline of anti-corruption and environmental defense](#)

- [Mainstreaming anti-corruption in conservation: Dispelling myths and charting a path forward](#)

- [Lessons from building a WWF regional initiative to reduce the impacts of corruption on conservation goals in Latin America](#)

- [Traceability, Technology, and Transformation: WWF's Activities Reducing Fisheries Corruption in the Americas](#)

- [Making the connection: Trade-based money laundering, corruption, and natural resource](#)

- [Lessons learned and quantified from the baseline of a fisheries anti-corruption project in Peru](#)

- [Building transparency, equity, and fairness into Nature-based Solutions](#)

Stories & podcasts

- [Her story: Women targeting natural resource corruption | Nicola Okes](#)

- [Her story: Women targeting natural resource corruption | Shambhavi Poudel](#)

- [Her story: Women targeting natural resource corruption | Daniela Gomel](#)

- [Her story: Women targeting natural resource corruption | Renata Cao](#)

- [Podcast: Rangers at the frontline of corruption and anti-corruption](#)

- [Podcast: Successful conservation is built on trust](#)

- [Podcast: Building state capacity? Anti-corruption and illegal logging in the Peruvian Amazon](#)

- [Podcast: Uncovering corrupt schemes in the forest and the role of investigations](#)

- [Podcast: Corruption in Indonesia's forest sector: No victimless crime](#)