

Introduction to
TRACE Wildlife Forensics
Network

&

African Wildlife Forensics
Network

ObsMICE Meeting, Niamey
30th November 2022



Armand A Biko'o
Coordinator African Wildlife Forensics Network
Armand.bikoo@tracenetwork.org

Structure of the Presentation

TRACE Wildlife Forensics Network (TRACE)

- Mission & Objectives of TRACE
- Illegal wildlife trafficking and its components
- TRACE capacity building model in Africa

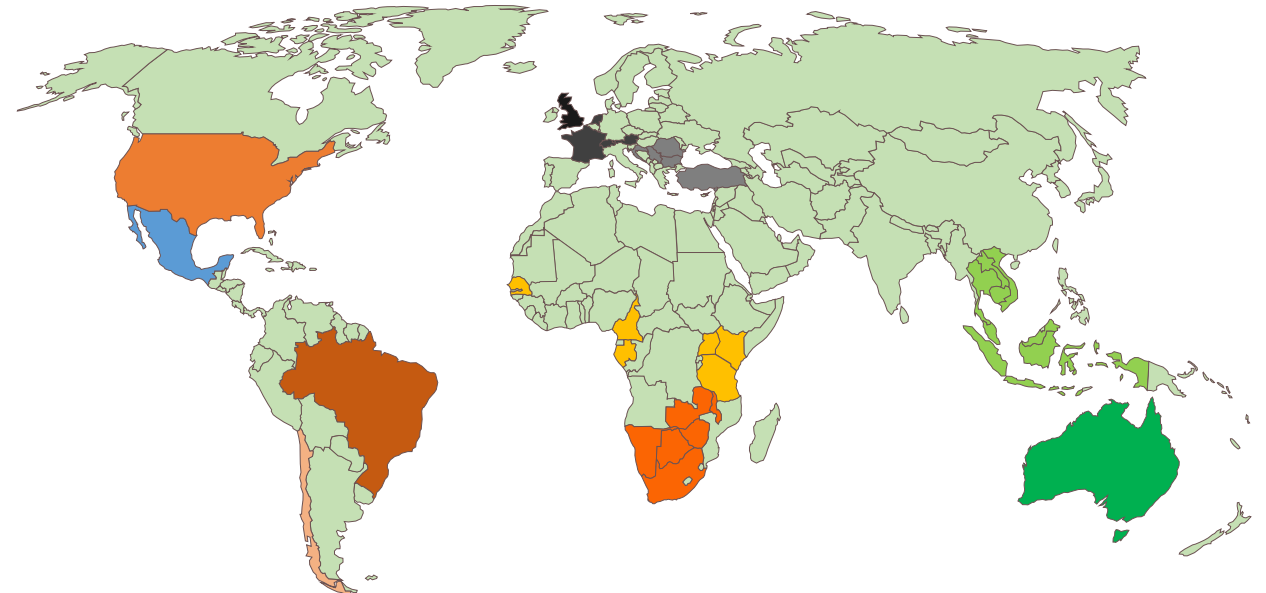
African Wildlife Forensics Network (AWFN)

- Vision and Mission of AWFN
- Geographic coverage
- Selected Activities
 - Lab
 - WCSI
 - Networking
- Membership

- UK based NGO, global remit
- Established in 2006 with UK government support
- Promotes forensic science for wildlife law enforcement
- Supports international governments develop capacity

- Currently operates in 5 Southeast Asian and 12 African countries
- Helped establish 12 wildlife DNA forensic laboratories
- Trainees from >25 countries

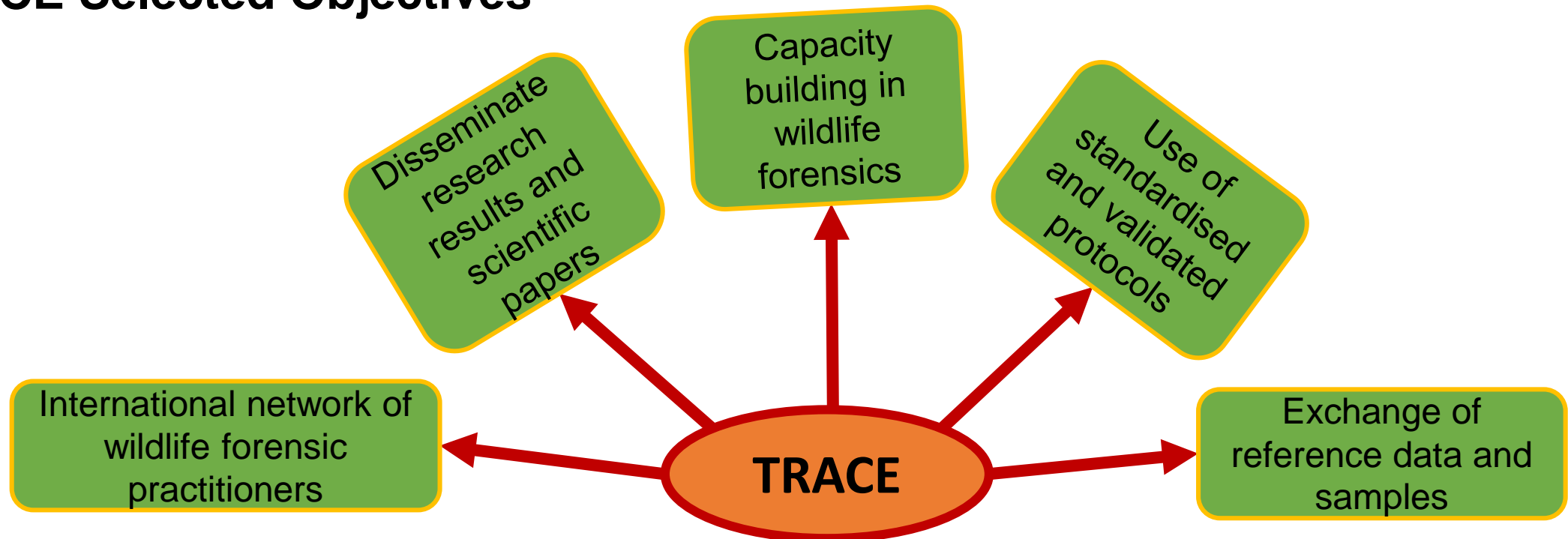
- Work with:
 - UK Government
 - US Government
 - UNODC
 - CITES, UNDP, IUCN
 - Netherlands Forensic Institute



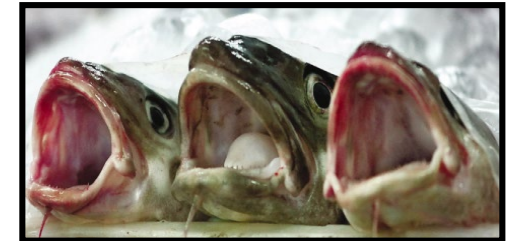
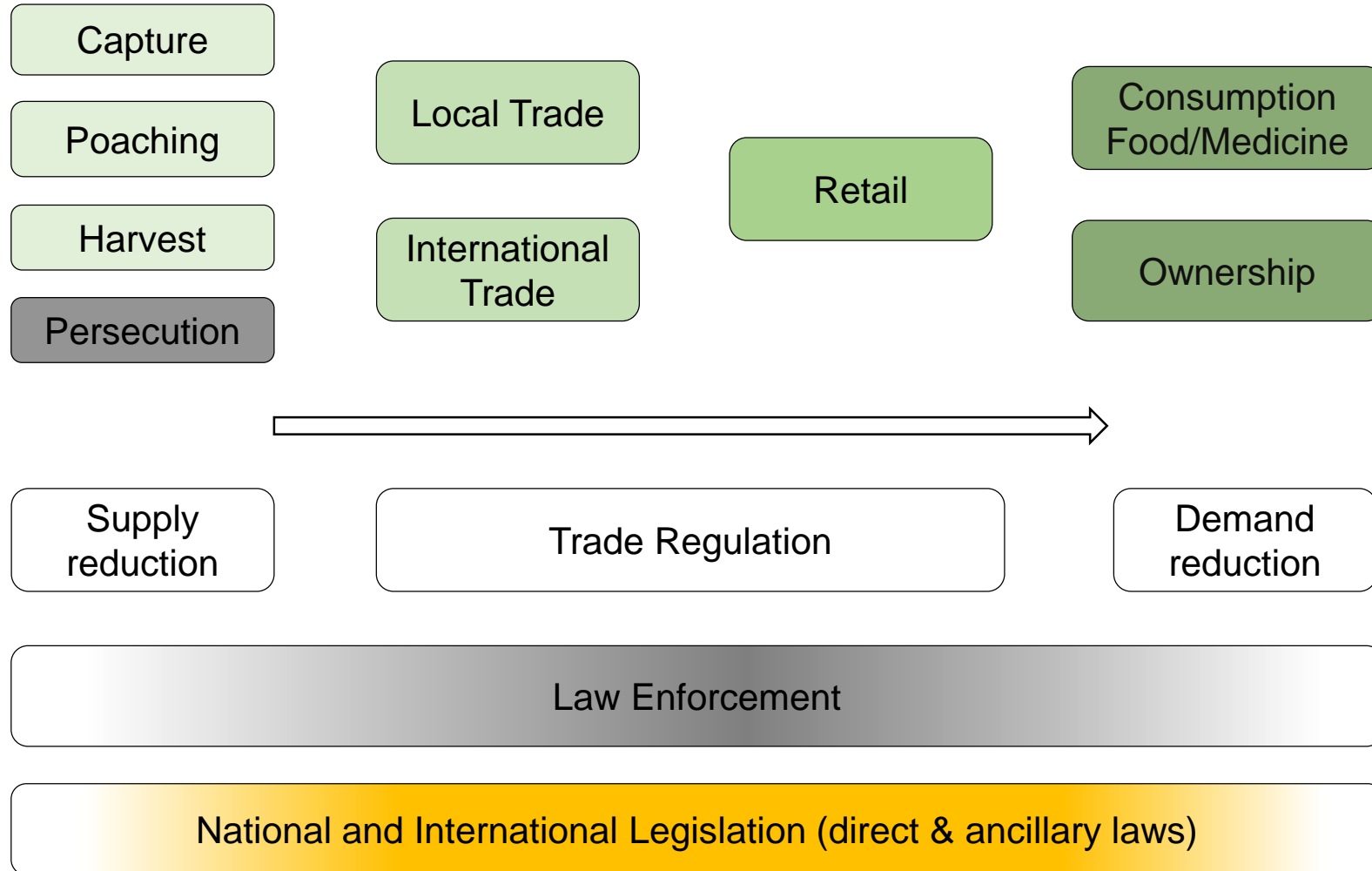
TRACE Mission

To reduce illegal trafficking and persecution of fauna and flora through the coordinated application of scientific techniques in support of wildlife crime investigation.

TRACE Selected Objectives



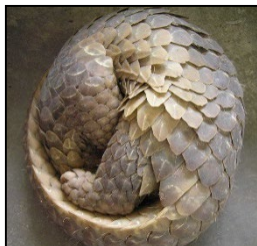
Illegal trafficking



Wildlife Law Enforcement Issues

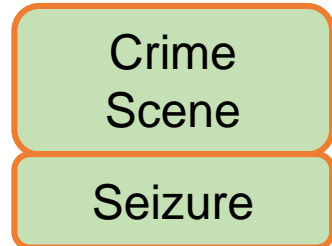
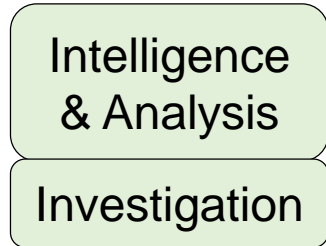
Wildlife crime: Investigative questions and enforcement needs

- Proving a crime has been committed vs identifying the perpetrator
- Identification vs Verification
- Prosecution vs Intelligence
- Species, geographic origin, source, individualization, age, cause of death

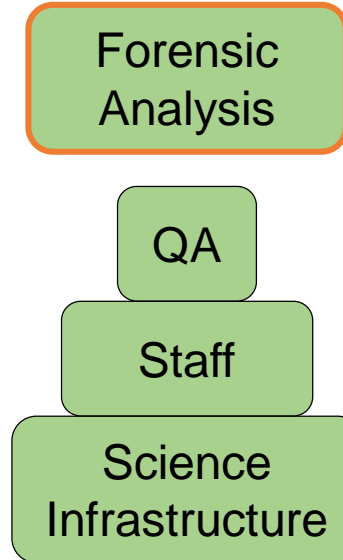


Challenges & Opportunities

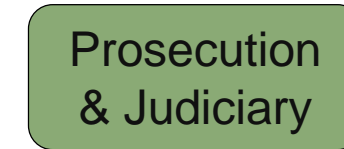
Requires an integrated law enforcement system



Builds on national scientific capacity



A judicial system that is fair and independent



- Potential to increase convictions at all criminal levels
 - Inter-agency collaboration
 - Scientific development
- } Limitation or Catalyst?

Wildlife Forensic Capacity Building in Africa

Approach

Delivery of practical training within national facilities, addressing specific country needs, rather than generic training at international laboratories on other continents.

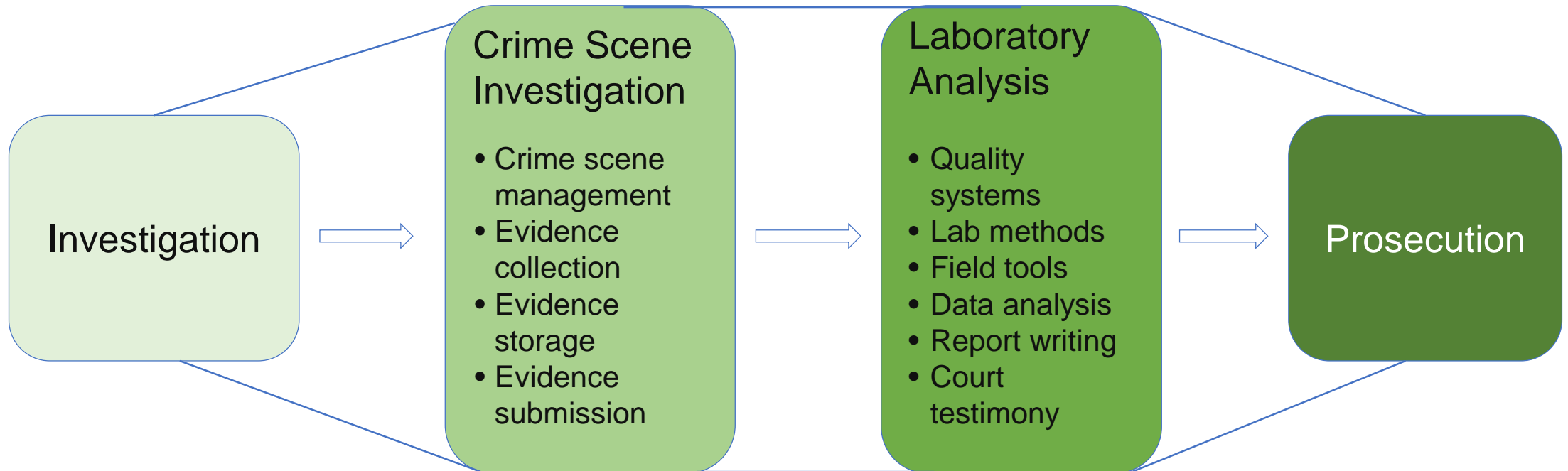
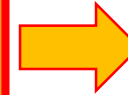


Capacity Building Model

Continental Wildlife Forensic Network Development

- Regional coordination and service provision
- Scientific network development
- Integration with wider wildlife law enforcement initiatives

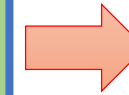
African Wildlife Forensics Network (AWFN)



Standardisation and Quality Assurance

- Harmonisation of existing field and lab methods
- Development of agreed standards

Society for Wildlife Forensics Science (SWFS)



The African Wildlife Forensics Network (AWFN)



Gaborone, Botswana 2016



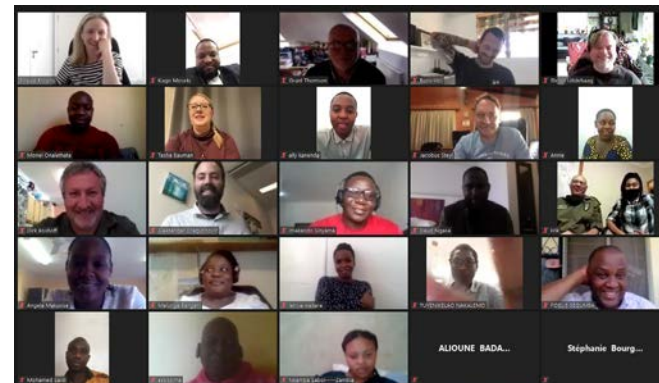
La Haye, Pays-Bas, 2017



Pretoria, Afrique du Sud, 2018



Livingstone, Zambie, 2019



En ligne via Zoom, 2020 et 2021



Mabula, Afrique du Sud, 2022

WHAT IS THE AWFN?

The African Wildlife Forensics Network is a collective of **wildlife crime scene (WCSI)** and **forensic laboratory (WLA)** practitioners, together with wider **wildlife law enforcement stakeholders**.

We work to provide access to forensic science for African wildlife law enforcement agencies.



VISION AND MISSION OF THE AWFN



Vision:

Wildlife law enforcement agencies across Africa have **access to appropriate forensic science and crime scene services** to support criminal investigations

Mission:

- **Develop and facilitate** an active network of wildlife forensics stakeholders
- **Support** access to forensic science and crime scene services across the African continent.



AWFN African member countries



• SADC

- South Africa
- Botswana
- Namibia
- Zimbabwe
- Zambia
- Malawi
- Angola
- Mozambique

East Africa

- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Ethiopia
- Kenya

Central Africa

- Gabon
- Cameroon

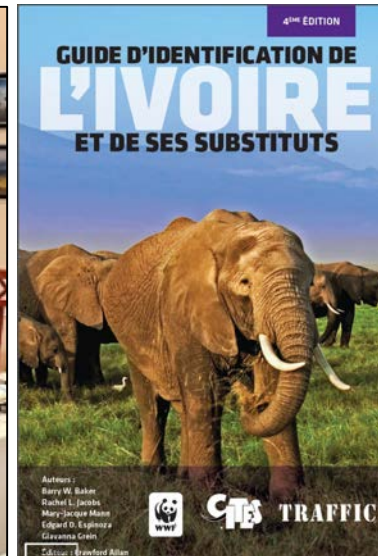
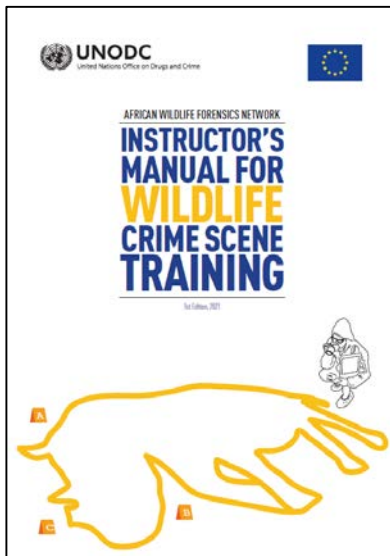
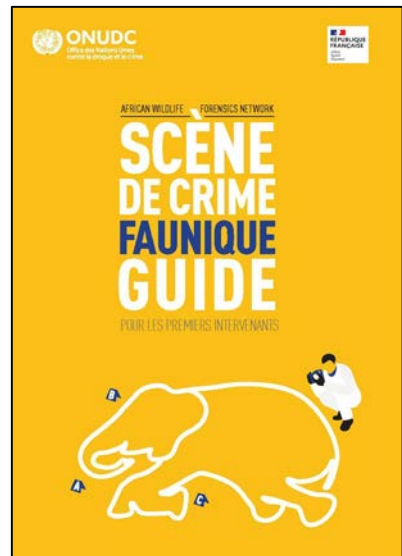
West Africa

- Senegal
- Niger



Selected activities: Wildlife Crime Scene Investigation

- Wildlife Crime Scene Guide
- Training and standards
- Wildlife Crime Scene Training Manual
- Ivory identification training
- Crime Scene and Evidence Management training.



Selected activities: Wildlife Lab Analysis

- Gap Analysis of resources and services
- Quality assurance
- Infrastructure requirements
- Laboratory training
- Resource sharing and access



Selected activities: Networking

- **Main event:** AWFN annual meetings
 - **Last meeting:** June/July 2022, Mabula Game Lodge, South Africa
 - **Next Meeting: 5-11 Novembre 2023**, Mweka Wildlife College, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania
- Wildlife laboratory and crime scene practitioners from across Africa
- Opportunity for national and international collaboration



Selected activities: Networking

- **International Wildlife Forensics Community:** the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science.
- **Inter-laboratory Exchanges:** scientific exchange visits to enable knowledge transfer among members.
- **Resource sharing and access:** transfer of reference samples, reference data, and protocols and to development of common resources.



AWFN: Membership and Governance



- Membership structure with four categories
- Steering committee
- Technical committee

Category 1

**Individual practitioners
and technical experts**

WFLA and WCSI national reps
and international technical experts

Category 2

**National competent
authorities**

Senior officials from national
authorities

Category 3

**Non-government
strategic stakeholders**

NGOs / Academic
institutions involved in PA
management, training,
capacity building

Category 4

**International donors
and partners**

Regional iGOs, Donors,
Large programme managers

African Wildlife Forensics Network (AWFN)



Thank you

