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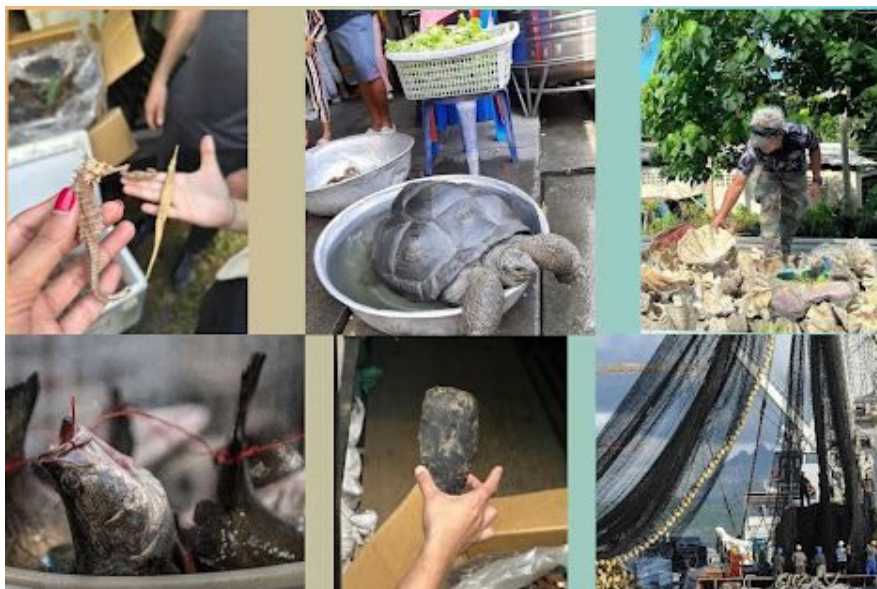
We Continue to Work Toward a World Free of Wildlife and Human Trafficking!

How?

Protecting, Educating, and Rewarding

Here's what we've been doing in 2023 so far

PROTECTING



— TRIPOD Project in Southeast Asia —

In response to relentless hunting of sharks, sea turtles, pangolins, elephants, tigers, orangutans and many other endangered species in Southeast Asia, Freeland and its

Ocean waters between Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia, particularly the Sulus-Celebes seas, have witnessed unprecedented poaching and trafficking of these species, which is often linked to other forms of crime, like kidnapping, drug trade, and terrorism. So, with financial support from the US State Department, and partnership with our police allies in Southeast Asia, ASEANAPOL, **Freeland designed a task force to unplug the powerful syndicates that threaten wildlife and people.**



Going around the region, Freeland and our partners, IFAW and WWF, first convened about 10 enforcement agencies in each of the three countries to discuss the challenge. Then we provided special training in how to identify the underground criminal networks, and how to dismantle them. Freeland's course, "CTOC" (Counter-transnational Organized Crime) is designed for this: it helps officers discover who is pulling the financial trigger, and what parts of the "supply chain" are vulnerable to dismantle. It's like unplugging a powerful vacuum. This is the most efficient way to provide relief to species under threat, rather than arresting low level smugglers, who are easily replaced. The poaching continues because the money keeps flowing. Freeland treats wildlife trafficking syndicates as criminal businesses that can only be stopped if we remove their profits.

We trained **90+ officers from 50 agencies across the 3 countries**. By the end of each training, the agencies had formed national interagency teams. Then we pulled each national team together to meet one another in a neutral location (Thailand), to exchange information on trafficking, and to form a regional task force.



If you are wondering, like we do, what did the officers think of our support, and what are they doing now? We always survey their feedback, and make it anonymous so they can say what they really think. Upon creating their own task force in May, 91% gave us a 9/10 approval, and most of them (71%) **gave us a 10/10!** Then, more importantly, they got onto operational business. We can't tell you yet what that entails, but we hope to tell you in the next newsletter. Suffice to say, the traffickers won't be operating as easily as before.

— South America —

Traffickers target vulnerable ecosystems and communities, especially where law enforcement is weak due to lack of resources and corruption. Freeland's Brazil team has been finding and convening officers across Brazil and their neighbouring countries to train and support them to fend off some of the most powerful trafficking syndicates in the world that threaten exotic birds, reptiles, jaguars and whole ecosystems like the Amazon.

In March, Freeland gathered 18 Brazilian and Argentinian agents to help them train their own colleagues across the 2 countries. Agencies involved included, from Brazil: Federal Police, IBAMA, Agricultural Surveillance, Federal Highway Police - and from Argentina - Federal Police. The event also helped these agencies form better relationships and share information on criminals operating across their jurisdictions.



Then, in June, Freeland convened officers from Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay to share information and cases on cross-border trafficking supply chains, while training them how to break those criminal chains. Before they finished the one week event, officers agreed to form a joint action plan. The “CTOC Brazil course” (Counter Transnational Organized Crime Course - Brazil) and the “CTOC Instructors” were delivered on June 19th-23rd.



The On-the Job OSINT (Open Source Intelligence) Training course was delivered online June 26th-29th, 2023. Participants from the Brazilian Federal Police learned how to use free internet search tools to track criminals on the web.



— Supporting Frontline Rangers —

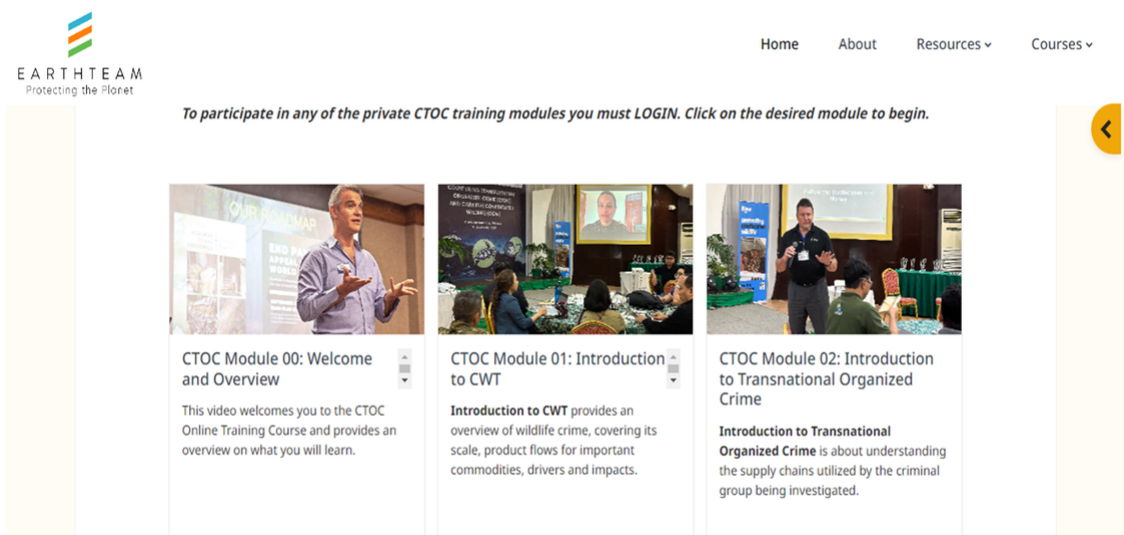
Many people may not realize it, but rangers, guardians of nature, face more threats on a daily basis than urban-based police officers. This is due to armed poaching gangs, zoonotic diseases, and sudden acts of nature, like floods. In Thailand, for example, over 15 to 20 rangers die on duty every year.

Freeland provides support to rangers by providing equipment, emergency funds for their families, and training, which covers anti-poaching and personal safety. Over the past 6 months, Freeland trained **170 rangers in 5 national parks** in Thailand, including: Khao Laem National Park, Dong Yai, Wildlife Sanctuary, Sadej Naikrom, Ta Phraya National Park, and Pang Sida National Park. These parks are home to tigers, elephants and other very rare species.



— Online Learning —

our new online training program. Online learning does not replace in-person support. But it can be very valuable to warm people up for a course, or help them refresh what they learned after. And it is certainly invaluable to the majority of officers and NGO workers who never get the chance to join a course in person. Thanks to our new partnership “**EarthTeam**” **platform**, everyone can now learn wherever they are, provided they have a phone or laptop.



EDUCATING

To end pandemics, we need to address their root causes. COVID-19 was a zoonotic outbreak, as was SARS, HIV, Bird Flu, MERS and many others before them. Viruses were passed from animals to people when the animals were disturbed by destroying their habitat or trading them commercially as pets, food, or lab animals. Our “EndPandemics” campaign sends the message that if we protect nature, nature will protect us. And more specifically, that we need to end the commercial trade in wild animals. Yes, that is a tall order, but one we believe is necessary to avert a new, and even stronger outbreak, and to create a better world.

But In a world that is increasingly full of information flying at us from all directions, it is getting harder to raise awareness and change human behavior. It is, however, practical to **foster** good behavior by targeting youth. So, Freeland is focusing the campaign more on younger generations. For example, in January, Freeland's Deputy Director Ricardo Forrester presented the #EndPandemics campaign to Kings College International School students in Bangkok in partnership with Alicyn Henning and the #dontdroptheball campaign. Students were encouraged to create a student society and to volunteer in organizations working to end pandemics.



In January Freeland contributed to the Brazil Presidential Transition Cabinet's **Environmental Technical Group of Brazil**. Dr Juliana Machado Ferreira, Executive Director of Freeland's office in Brazil presented them with priority actions to strengthen the fight against wildlife trafficking to the Environmental Technical Group of the Presidential Transition Office of Brazil.

Dr. Juliana also delivered the course **Identification of Mistreatment and Legal Procedures** organized by the Center for Animal Studies in partnership with the National Association of Animal Lawyers. The course reveals behaviors and indicators of physical and psychological abuse of non-human animals, in addition to providing guidance on legal procedures relevant to the topic. In February, Dr Juliana was invited by the Biodiversity Division of the Center for Environment, Energy and Infrastructure (EEI) of USAID Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation (DDI) spoke to the SANO Technical Team (South America Network for One Health) during the International Conservation Chiefs Academy in the **Strengthening One Health in South America: Action Workshop**. The objective of the workshop was an exchange of experiences with the conservation chiefs that are dealing with the same issues as Brazil.

— Surviving Together team in Thailand —

Freeland works in national parks in Thailand to build awareness among students and villagers about tigers living in close proximity to their community. Over the past six months, Freeland conducted 14 outreach activities in Schools for Grades 1 to 9 in National Parks in Thailand, where 1088 students were positively impacted, along with 49 teachers and 106 staff members. In addition to that, 13 outreach activities in Communities of National Parks in Thailand were organised, which positively impacted 641 people. Freeland defines "positively impacted" by skill development, increase in knowledge and awareness on local wildlife and co-existence of human and wildlife in reserve areas.



REWARDING

In June, Brazilian environmental enforcement agents seized an incredible 30 tons of shark fins –the biggest haul in global recent history – from two companies that were under their investigation. The fins were being prepared to export to Asia where they are used in exotic foods, including luxury soup. Freeland applauds this incredible success, while lamenting the fate of perhaps 10,000 sharks. **One of the lead agents that led the investigation had been recently trained by Freeland** in a counter-wildlife trafficking course sponsored by the US State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Another NGO, Sea Shepherd, played a cooperative role in the seizure, and called on the Brazil government to ban shark fishing in its waters.

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shark fin consignment

By Peter Frontini and Ana Mano

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Join us in our global efforts to end illegal trade in animals, parts, products, and let's avoid future pandemics!

Help us end human slavery!

Join our EarthTeam

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