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## **FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT WITH UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY**

The Financial Intelligence Authority (FIA) hosted the Executive Director of the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 as part of the activities of the National Wildlife Crime Coordination Task Force (NWCCTF), an umbrella body with the overall command to combat Wildlife crime in Uganda.

It was established with the facilitation of Wildlife Conservation Society, Uganda in 2018 and inaugurated by the Government of Uganda on 11<sup>th</sup> February, 2020 as part of the efforts to combat wildlife crime of both Local and International nature.

The NWCCTF comprises thirteen (13) law enforcement agencies and each member institution brings to the table different technical and technological expertise and networks that are leveraged to efficiently and expeditiously tackle wildlife crime in Uganda. Its goal is to promote cooperation and coordination among the member institutions through information sharing, conducting joint operations and expediting prosecutions aimed at combating Wildlife crime in Uganda.

The NWCCTF was born out of the need to tackle Illegal Wildlife trade that is increasingly becoming sophisticated especially now with free and easy access to the Internet, a major funder of insurgency and the fact that the trade is currently a multi-billion-dollar criminal industry whose annual proceeds to date are estimated at 36 trillion Uganda shillings, the biggest poaching driver among other factors.

The illegal wildlife trade (IWT) is a major transnational organized crime, which generates billions of criminal proceeds each year. IWT fuels corruption, threatens biodiversity and can have a significant negative impact on public health and the economy. To move, hide and launder their proceeds, wildlife traffickers exploit weaknesses in the financial and non-financial sectors, enabling further wildlife crimes and damaging financial integrity. They also rely on corruption, complex fraud and tax evasion.

This is the reason the Financial Intelligence Authority is part of this coordinated response from public sector, private sector and civil society to identify and disrupt financial flows from IWT using FIA intelligence.