

U.S. whistleblower laws carry rewards provisions for those who step forward with valuable information on wildlife trafficking. The laws provide monetary rewards for U.S. citizens, non-citizens, and NGOs. Leveraging this system will revolutionize the detection of crime, radically increase effective law enforcement, and help protect our natural resources.

NWC has a successful track record of promoting and using whistleblower laws to...



Empower individuals to step forward with valuable information on illicit activity incl. wildlife trafficking and more.



Enable whistleblowers to work hand-in-hand with legal counsel and seek justice while maintaining confidentiality.



Help protect our forests and wildlife by creating a cycle of accountability and funding.

The Role of Whistleblowers in Illegal Timber Trade Enforcement

THE PROBLEM:

- The illegal timber trade is decimating forests around the globe, a crime known as illegal logging.
- Illegal logging refers to the international trade of illegally extracted timber, which is often used to make products such as paper, packing, and furniture. Timber can be illegally harvested, transported, processed, bought and sold in violation of national regulations.
- In the global market for illegal timber, the U.S. is the world's largest importer. Surprisingly, licensed companies play a major role in the illegal trade - as most illegally sourced timber is traded openly after being laundered into legal supply chains or unidentified as illegal.
- Our forests are a natural resource that, if destroyed, can take decades or more to return.

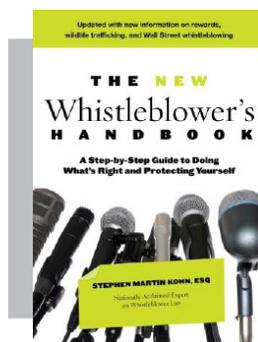
THE EFFECT:

- This illicit activity not only threatens the biodiversity of forests, but also destroys habitats and threatens local livelihoods.
- The illegal felling of trees is also having an adverse economic impact. According to INTERPOL, illegally harvested timber is estimated to be worth between \$51 and \$152 billion USD, annually.

For example, in Oct. 2015 Lumber Liquidators was fined over \$13 million under the Lacey Act for illegal logging.

THE SOLUTION: ACTIVATE WHISTLEBLOWERS!

- U.S. whistleblower laws have rewards provisions for those who step forward with valuable information on illegal logging. The laws provide monetary rewards for U.S. citizens, non-citizens, and public sector organizations whose disclosures lead to successful prosecutions.
- Leveraging this system will revolutionize the detection of logging crime, radically increase effective law enforcement, and help protect biodiversity of habitats around the world.



To learn more about whistleblower law and its application in the wildlife arena, check out *The New Whistleblower's Handbook*: <http://bit.ly/2DdnsC9>

The Legal Powers of U.S. Laws

U.S. whistleblower reward laws can be used to bolster enforcement efforts worldwide.

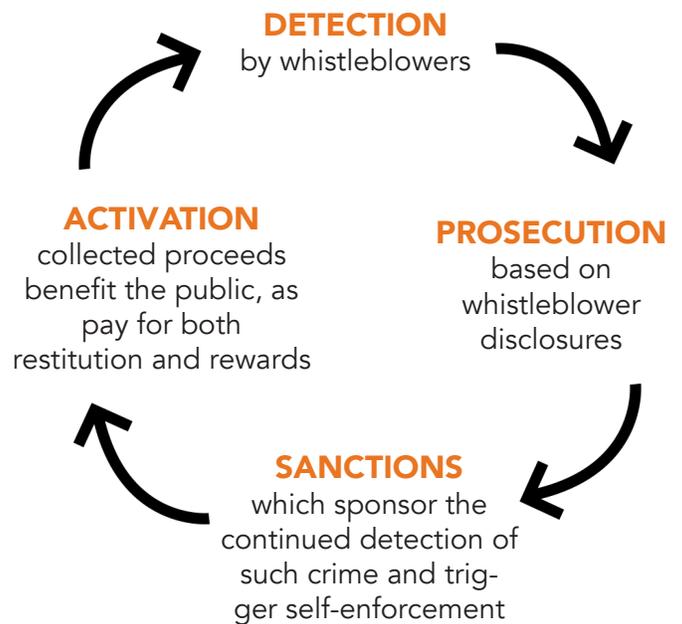
Crucially, a 2008 amendment to the Lacey Act banned the importing, exporting, buying, and selling of illegally sourced plants, and requires companies trading in most wood products to submit formal declarations of the species and origin of harvest. Cargo without accurate declaration can be seized, and companies found to have provided false information in their paperwork can be prosecuted and fined.

Moreover, the False Claims Act (FCA) concerns fraud that results in a financial loss to the federal government, and applies to customs violations on imports into the U.S. Covered customs violations include false statements such as the undervaluation and/or misclassification of goods entering the U.S. Under the FCA, whistleblowers are entitled to between 15% and 30% of sanctions obtained.

Both the Lacey Act and the False Claims Act, as well as other laws such as the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and the Endangered Species Act, have strong whistleblower protection and reward provisions.

Enforcing regulations and requirements regarding the importation of particular types of wood could have a powerful impact on curbing the illegal timber trade.

A Cycle of Accountability



There are viable legal pathways that can be leveraged to combat the destruction of forests and ecosystems. The Global Wildlife Whistleblower Program provides an avenue to utilize our expertise in whistleblower laws, paired with on-the-ground knowledge of partner NGOs and whistleblowers, to combat illegal logging.

Have information? Report it:

www.report-fraud-now.info/contact-nwldef



NWC received a Grand Prize Award in the Wildlife Crime Tech Challenge in 2016 for creating a confidential and anonymous online platform to report wildlife crime. The Challenge was an initiative of USAID in partnership with the National Geographic Society, the Smithsonian Institution, and TRAFFIC.

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