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**AIT Commits to Support the Global Fight against Illegal Wildlife Trade**

**November 2016, Hanoi, Vietnam**

Bytes Beyond Continents: Advancing Evidence-based Environmental Governance, a side event in conjunction with the Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade was held on 18 November in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The event organized by the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), served as an opportunity for representatives from Lusaka

Agreement Task Force; Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Thailand; United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) and University of Washington to deliberate on key tools, technologies and innovative approaches that will best enable governments to join hands in effectively fighting the wildlife and forest crimes.



“To ensure human well-being, the well-being of the planet is indispensable and wildlife conservation is an integral element of this goal,” said Mr. Surendra Shrestha, Vice President for Development of the Asian Institute of Technology. He added that “AIT, through the WEMS Secretariat, can provide a platform for capacity building in Asia and Africa.”

Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, Director of UNOOSA, in her address, emphasized the readiness of the Office to continue supporting capacity building for advancing evidence-based environmental monitoring, including for combating the illegal wildlife trade, through the use of information, space technologies and applications.

The side-event supported the overall objective of the Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade through proposing WEMS as a valuable tool in the fight against illegal wildlife trade. The Asian Institute of Technology and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force signed a Memorandum of Understanding that established the WEMS Secretariat to replicate the information-sharing framework in Asia, promote transcontinental collaboration among the governments in Africa and Asia, and support capacity building for evidence-based environmental governance.

The Wildlife Enforcement Monitoring System (WEMS), developed by the United Nations University, allows government’s autonomy over management of data on wildlife crimes recorded in the system while encouraging regional collaboration through sharing vital information and leading capacity building activities amongst relevant enforcement agencies.

The system is designed to facilitate government institutions to enforce national, regional and international legislations and commitments on eliminating wildlife and forest crimes, as well as serve as a tool to identify patterns and key actors in this global vice, and facilitate implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals.



For more information on the Hanoi Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference, visit: <http://iwthanoi.vn/>

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Or visit: <http://www.wems-initiative.org/>

### **About AIT**

*AIT is a regional postgraduate institute established in 1959. The institute received top honors from Thailand Research Fund this year reaffirming its position as a leading research institute. The mission of the institute is “to develop highly qualified and committed professionals who play leading roles in the region’s sustainable development and its integration with the global economy”.*

### **About AIT Solutions**

*AIT Solutions (formerly AIT Consulting) was established by AIT to support socio-economic and technological development of the region through providing integrated solutions and strategies to its clients/ associates in the fields of Technology, Engineering, Management, Environment.*