

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, OCEANS, AND WILDLIFE  
REMOTE OVERSIGHT HEARING

October 26, 2021

10:00 a.m. ET

Oversight Hearing on “Protecting Human Rights in International Conservation.”

Questions for the Record for Ms. Ginette Hemley, Senior Vice President, Wildlife Conservation, World  
Wildlife Fund - US

Question from Rep. Cliff Bentz, OR

*During the hearing, you indicated that WWF provided all its internal, investigative reports on allegations of human rights abuses in the Congo Basin to the Department of the Interior. Please indicate the date on which and to whom at the Department of the Interior you provided the following reports:*

- a. Report by Diel Mwenge, commissioned by WWF-Cameroon, 2015.*
- b. Report by ASBAK, a Baka civil society organization, commissioned by WWF-Cameroon, describing interviews conducted between March 12, 2017 and April 5, 2017.*
- c. Report by a member of WWF’s staff in Cameroon, describing an investigation conducted in September and October 2017.*
- d. Report assessing the CEFAID complaint mechanism, Cameroon, 2019.*
- e. Report by a UGPNS legal advisor, describing a June 2018 investigation of judicial files at the office of the Boende Military Auditor, Democratic Republic of Congo.*
- f. Report by investigators from ICCN and UGPNS, February 2019, Democratic Republic of Congo.*
- g. Report by CODHOD, a civil society organization in the Democratic Republic of Congo, on an investigation conducted between October 2019 and December 2019.*

In responding to requests in 2019, WWF-US consulted with WWF-International to obtain copies of all its external investigative reports on allegations of human rights abuses in the Congo Basin. None of these reports were written or commissioned by WWF-US. They were reports received from WWF-International in response to our requests; and in turn all of these were provided to the Department of Interior (DOI), including the documents described in a, f, and g, as follows: (a) provided to Daphne Carlson Bremer of USFWS on July 18, 2019 and Margaret Everson of USFWS on December 20, 2019; (f) provided to Daphne Carlson Bremer of USFWS on July 18, 2019; and (g) provided to Don Morgan and Amy Pokempner of USFWS on February 6, 2020.

WWF-International commissioned an Independent Panel and provided the necessary funding and full access so the Panel could conduct a comprehensive review on both a global and local basis. This review included all of the documents described in your question, and thousands of others. In its final report, the

Independent Panel made 79 recommendations to WWF and noted information and documents that informed its conclusions. The final report included descriptions and analyses of documents created or received in local country offices (i.e., the documents described in b, c, d, and e) that WWF-International did not identify during its review of our request.

On November 24, 2020, WWF-US provided the Independent Panel Report to numerous officials at DOI and simultaneously published the report on our website, where it remains publicly available today, along with WWF's management response to the report. While b, c, d, and e were not specifically provided, as described above, descriptions and analyses of them were included in the Independent Panel Report, which was provided. We also continue working with our partners at DOI to provide any other relevant information.