

[World news story: UK Government Funds to combat illegal wildlife trade and protect biodiversity are open now](#)

The British Embassies Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia are pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for funding as part of the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund and Darwin Initiative run by the UK's Department of Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department for International Development (DFID).

Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund

The Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund helps developing countries to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, by addressing demand reduction, strengthening enforcement and criminal justice, and providing local alternative livelihoods. Further information can be found [here](#).

The priority areas we are looking to fund include:

- Developing sustainable livelihoods and economic development, to benefit people directly affected by IWT
- Strengthening law enforcement
- Ensuring effective legal frameworks
- Reducing demand for IWT products

In addition, our Embassies are particularly looking for projects that have a strong regional element, involving action or collaboration across borders. We are also looking to encourage projects that have strong partnerships with governments in the region.

The deadline for the first phase of the bidding process is 21 September.

Darwin Initiative

The Darwin Initiative helps to protect biodiversity and the natural environment in developing countries Further information can be found [here](#).

The objective of the Darwin Initiative is to protect and enhance biodiversity and in doing so, to contribute to sustainable development in developing countries, through projects which address one, or more, of the following themes:

- Protection or enhancement of ecosystems, species or genetic resources through in-situ or ex-situ conservation or remedying environmental damage;
- Integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services within host country development objectives and economic decision making, through institution building, capacity development, strengthening regulatory and policy frameworks or research; or
- Assisting host countries' efforts to meet their obligations under at least one of the international conventions/agreements listed above.

In addition, our Embassies are particularly looking for projects that have a strong regional element, involving action or collaboration across borders. We are also looking to encourage projects that have strong partnerships with governments in the region. We also want to encourage projects that identify synergies with priorities and actions promoted by the Illegal Wildlife Challenge Fund.

The deadline for the first phase of the bidding process is 12 September.

What to do now?

Our regional network want to work with prospective bidders to craft and refine bids to these funds and also to understand who we can help support the aims and activities of the projects. Our network has significant insight in to these issues as well as political reach and access. As priority issues of the UK Government, we would intend to work with the project implementers to help ensure the maximum benefits from the projects are secured.

To improve efficiency and coherence, we have appointed a regional coordinator to give you a one-stop-shop for initial contacts. Any inquiries will be dealt with and you can be sure they will be shared with all the Network. It is possible to contact individual Embassies directly but we recommend, particularly for Cambodia and Laos, that you first work with the regional lead.

It is not compulsory to contact the Regional lead person or Embassy or to submit bids in line with the priorities / goals of our Regional Network. However, our Network has much expertise and skills to offer and we would strongly recommend this.

Contact points

Contact points for the regional lead and various Embassies are:

Regional Lead – Nguyen.ThuyLinh@fco.gov.uk

Vietnam – Nguyen.ThuyLinh@fco.gov.uk

Bangkok – Kanyasorn.Tansubhapol@fco.gsi.gov.uk

Cambodia – Phalla.Chea@fco.gov.uk

[Press release: UK leads final push to make polio history](#)

The UK is leading the final global push to eliminate polio around the world for good, International Development Secretary Priti Patel announced today (Friday, 4 August 2017).

Polio was wiped out in the UK in the 1980s and there are more than 100,000 British survivors today. Globally, the wild poliovirus still exists in Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan, with 8 new cases this year.

It is likely that the last new case of polio will be diagnosed this year, paving the way for the world to be certified polio-free in 2020.

Ms Patel has announced UK support to lead the last push needed to end polio. This will immunise 45 million children against the disease each year until 2020 – that is 80 children a minute.

Britain has had a long standing commitment to making polio the second human disease in history to be eradicated, after smallpox. As a direct result of the UK's support to global efforts, which began in 1988, more than 16 million people are walking today who would have otherwise been paralysed, and the number of people contracting the disease has been reduced by 99.9%.

The UK's support will:

- immunise up to 45 million children against the disease each year until 2020 – that is 80 children a minute;
- save more than 65,000 children from paralysis every year;
- help over 15,000 polio workers reach every last child with life-saving vaccines and other health interventions; and
- help save almost £2 billion globally by 2035, as health care systems are freed up from treating polio victims.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

Polio has no place in the 21st Century. This devastating and highly infectious disease causes painful paralysis and is incurable – trapping the world's poorest people in a cycle of grinding poverty.

The UK has been at the forefront of fighting global health threats, including polio, and our last push towards eradication by 2020 will save 45 million children from contracting this disease.

The world is closer than it ever has been to eradicating polio for good, but as long as just one case exists in the world, children everywhere are still at risk.

Now it is time for others to step up, follow Britain's lead and make polio history.

Paralympian and broadcaster Ade Adepitan, who contracted polio as a baby, said:

The UK has done so much to help eradicate polio and UK aid contributions have delivered great results. The number of people around the world contracting polio has gone from thousands every year to just a few cases. We can see the finish line – and we can't stop now.

The UK has always been a world leader. It can be part of our legacy to be at the forefront of the race to eradicate polio around the world. Let's keep doing what we are doing and make the world a better place for future generations.

We are so close to eradicating polio. We need just one last push to make this disease history and change the world.

This last push will help break the relentless cycle of poverty for millions more children so they can live healthier lives, go to school and then get a job. It will mean more people contributing to their economy, which will help their countries to grow and become more prosperous.

This is good for Britain too: helping people become less reliant on UK aid in the long-term.

As the world becomes more interconnected, it is right that Britain acts to tackle those diseases, which pay no attention to national borders, so that we can stop them spreading and threatening us here at home. For example, defeating Ebola – the deadly epidemic that was only ever a plane ride away – ultimately protected British lives.

- International Development Secretary, Priti Patel, has today set out an additional £100 million (\$130 million) to help end polio for good.
- It is possible that the last case of polio will be in 2017, and it takes three years without a single case to prove eradication; meaning the world could be certified polio-free in 2020.
- Pictures and human stories of DFID supported work in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria are [available on Flickr](#); footage and hi-res

pictures detailing the personal stories of vaccinators and survivors are [available on Google Drive](#); and an [animation, designed for social media use](#), can be found on DFID's Facebook channel. For UK polio survivor and polio expert interviews, contact DFID Press Office.

- On 12 June 2017, during Rotary International's Convention in Atlanta, global leaders recommitted to the importance of a polio-free world, and pledged financial support, totalling US\$1.2 billion against the additional US\$1.5 billion needed to finally eradicate polio.
- With the UK contribution, there is still a \$170 million funding gap – it is time for others to step up.
- The UK's £100 million support will be channelled through the World Health Organisation (WHO) to implement programmes of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).
- The GPEI is a public-private partnership led by national governments with 5 partners – WHO, Rotary International, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Its goal is to eradicate polio worldwide.
- Polio eradication activities are implemented by UNICEF and WHO in partnership with countries and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.
- Today's announcement builds on the British Government's commitment in 2013 to spend £300 million on polio between 2013 and 2018. Since 2013 our support has helped control outbreaks and limit the polio virus to only 3 countries – Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria.
- This is a success story. Less than 30 years ago there were 350,000 cases in over 100 countries. Eradication will need continued intensive surveillance, high immunisation rates and rapid responses to any polio virus identified.

[Press release: £15 million Northern](#)

Cultural Regeneration Fund to boost region's tech, creative and cultural industries

Towns and cities across Northern England will be able to bid for a share of a new £15 million fund to help build a lasting regional legacy from the Great Exhibition of the North, Culture Secretary Karen Bradley announced today.

Projects could include opening a new tech start-up centre or renovating live music venues and should increase opportunities for people to experience, benefit and contribute to culture and creativity.

The Northern Cultural Regeneration Fund will make grants of up to £4 million available to support major culture and tech capital projects. The fund will build on the impact of [next year's exhibition](#) and help pave the way for future investment in the [Northern Powerhouse](#).

The [Great Exhibition of the North](#) will be held in Newcastle and Gateshead next summer. Set to be the biggest event in 2018, the £5 million government-funded exhibition will showcase the best of Northern art, design and innovation.

The immersive free exhibition will engage communities and businesses from across the region, and promote the bustling and thriving area to the world.

[Find out more about the the Exhibition](#)

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said:

This £15 million fund is a fantastic chance for towns and cities to develop inspirational projects that could have a transformative local effect – particularly in communities that have seen less cultural or creative investment in the past.

We want as many people as possible to benefit from the Great Exhibition of the North, and this fund will boost the Northern Powerhouse and help build a lasting legacy across the whole region.

Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry said:

The North is a cultural powerhouse, as well as an economic one, and this £15 million fund will give a boost to the region's vibrant culture and tech sectors.

We've already invested over £3.4 billion for projects to boost local economies in the Northern Powerhouse and this latest funding will help make sure the Great Exhibition of the North creates a legacy for years to come.

The first round of bids will be coordinated by Local Enterprise Partnerships in Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Humber, Lancashire, Leeds City Region, Liverpool City Region, North East, Sheffield City Region, Tees Valley, York and North Yorkshire and East Riding.

The successful projects will be announced in March 2018. A further round of funding may follow if all the available funds have not been committed.

Successful bids will encourage sustainable cultural and creative regeneration in the North of England and benefit areas that have historically had low levels of cultural and creative investment.

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Media enquiries

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Speech: “All Member States must recognise and respect that there can be no ifs, no buts: sanctions agreed in this Council are legally binding”

Thank you Mr President and thank you to Assistant-Secretary-General Zerihoun for your briefing which has made clear this morning that sanctions are a vital part of the Security Council’s arsenal. As article 41 of the United Nations Charter makes clear, they give real effect to our decisions – turning words in this Chamber into tangible actions against those who threaten international peace and security.

They are not our first resort, nor are they a measure that we can ever take lightly, but we know that sanctions work. They helped bring peace and security to countries like Liberia and Sierra Leone. They helped bring Iran to the negotiating table, which led in turn to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. And sanctions continue to play a vital role in the fight against Daesh and Al-Qaeda in Iraq, Syria, and beyond.

All of these examples, Mr President, illustrate not just the efficacy of sanctions, but the importance of using them together with the other tools at our disposal. The Iran Deal was not forged from sanctions alone. Our victory over Daesh won’t be secured through the hard work of the 1267 Committee alone. Sanctions must sit alongside all our other tools; direct political dialogue, mediation, peacekeeping, special political missions.

And just as with all other tools of this Council, it is important that sanctions remain fit for purpose.

So I want to thank you, Mr President, for bringing this issue before the Council again so that we can consider if there are further ways to improve our collective work on sanctions.

All future work on sanctions should build on the great deal of valuable work that has already been carried out by States and stakeholders on this issue. In particular, I want to highlight both the work of the UN Informal Working Group from 2006 and also the High-Level Review of UN Sanctions led by Sweden and other co sponsors. They have produced good recommendations but, as we all know, building the political commitment required for effective follow-up has been challenging.

This issue of political will applies above all when it comes to serious implementation of sanctions. For these measures to be truly effective, it is absolutely essential that all States implement them fully. It isn’t good enough just for the majority of countries to do so; a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

All Member States must recognise and respect that there can be no ifs, no buts: sanctions agreed in this Council are legally binding Chapter VII obligations.

I recognise that even when there is strong political will, implementation can be challenging, not just for States but also for businesses. There is already much good work in this area – outreach from Sanctions Committees, the development of networks and capacity-building, the sharing of information and best practices between states – but a great deal more could still be done, especially on the most important of sanctions dossiers such as North Korea where the number of States reporting on implementation still falls far short of what it needs to be.

That's why, Mr President, we welcome further consideration of your delegation's recent suggestion for a Secretary-General's report on cross-cutting issues related to sanctions. If this report builds on the existing work I have referred to, draws lessons from current sanctions regimes, and offers concrete, practical suggestions on how to improve implementation and effectiveness, then we think this could be a valuable addition to our sanctions work; one that will help set a clear agenda for further improvements, building on the High-Level Review and other efforts.

And Mr President, there is quite simply no clearer reminder of the need for strengthening our sanctions capability than the current situation that we confront in relation to North Korea.

Here we face a State that continues to act in flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions, a State that continues to threaten not just its region but the whole world in its reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons and illegal missiles. Their latest ICBM launch just last week suggests a capability that puts most Security Council members, including the UK, within range. I have said before in this Chamber but it bears repeating today: we as a Security Council must act and we must be prepared to use sanctions to raise the cost for DPRK in pursuing these illegal actions.

Thank you.

Press release: UK maritime forces complete French naval deployment

Two Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopters were also embarked as UK and French maritime personnel trained together across the Asia Pacific region.

Minister for the Armed Forces, Mark Lancaster, said:

From fighting Daesh in the Middle East to jointly operating in Estonia as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, our enduring defence partnership with France is stronger than ever as we work together to tackle global threats.

This deployment has demonstrated the ability of our world class Royal Navy and Royal Marines to operate alongside our French allies and international partners as Britain delivers on its commitment to global maritime security.

The annual French deployment Jeanne d'Arc included port calls at Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Japan, Guam, Australia and Egypt as well as various multinational amphibious exercises.

Throughout the deployment, UK personnel worked closely with international partners to strengthen defence cooperation in the region. British troops participated in the first ever four-part maritime exercise involving France, Japan, the UK and US, where as part of a week-long practice assault, the two Merlins moved 330 troops from the four nations to and from the island of Tinian.

UK troops also met with the Vietnam People's Navy in Ho Chi Minh City to compare national maritime operating procedures and exchange experiences, and during a port call to Egypt, British forces took part in a cross-decking exercise alongside French and Egyptian Armed Forces.

Through the 2010 Lancaster House Treaties, the UK and France are continuing to strengthen an ever closer bilateral defence and security relationship. As well as fighting side by side as allies in NATO and the Global Coalition, the two nations are working together as partners in defence equipment and capability programmes such as the [UK-France Future Cruise/Anti-Ship Weapon programme](#).