

Press release: Foreign Secretary calls on tech sector to help endangered species

Today, Monday 4 June, the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson has brought together leading technology companies together with conservationists to develop new and innovative ways to combat the illegal wildlife trade.

Experts from companies including Google, Amazon Web Services, Cisco and Dimension Data, as well as umbrella body, TechUK and government technology experts from Catapult centres heard what challenges the conservation sector is facing as it combats the illegal wildlife trade, which is worth up to £17 billion a year globally, and is a highly organised, sophisticated criminal industry. The Minister for the Illegal Wildlife Trade, Mark Field, co-chaired the event.

This meeting is the first in a series that will take place throughout the summer in the run up to the [London 2018 Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference](#) in October. Further workshops will bring experts and conservationists together to deliver technological solutions to combat poaching, make it easier to identify illegal wildlife products at borders or to spot animals in danger in the field.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

I've just come back from the Amazon, one of Earth's natural wonders, where both animals and people are suffering at the hands of criminals who are committing horrible wildlife crimes. What I saw has only sharpened my determination to combat the blight of the illegal wildlife trade.

I want to make sure we're using all the great talent we have available to us to fight this problem, so I'm calling on our finest technological brains to help us in the battle to save some of the world's most endangered species.

TechUK's CEO Julian David said:

Whether it is blockchain to support supply chain transparency and assurance or drones, satellites and the internet of things-enabled solutions to monitor activity in national parks and areas of high scientific interest, new tech is revolutionising conservation across the world. techUK and its members are excited to work with the FCO on a sector led approach to combating illegal wildlife crime.

Last month, the government published its Ivory Bill which, when passed, will be one of the toughest bans on ivory sales in the world.

Full list of attendees

- Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson
- Minister of State, Mark Field
- TechUK
- Google
- Amazon Web Services
- Cisco Alliance Dimension Data
- Satellite Applications Catapult
- Digital Catapult
- The Royal Foundation
- Zoological Society of London

Further information

- Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@BorisJohnson](#) and [Facebook](#)
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