

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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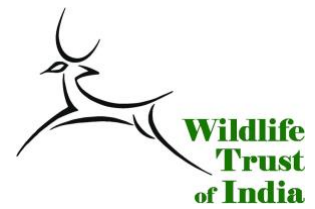
Vivek Menon, Founder, Executive Director and CEO of Wildlife Trust of India won the prestigious Clark R. Bavin Wildlife Law Enforcement Award for the year 2019. The award was presented last evening by Ivonne Higuero, the Secretary General of CITES, at a reception hosted on the sidelines of the Conference of Parties at Geneva.

The award is instituted by Animal Welfare Institute for wildlife law enforcement officers, law enforcement agencies, national and international collaborations, task forces, multi-agency teams, agency administrators, criminal investigators, forensic scientists, attorneys, informants, and others who have gone beyond the call of duty and demonstrated a commitment and dedication to combating wildlife crime.

Through his wildlife career spanning three decades, Vivek Menon has been at the forefront of wildlife enforcement, including going undercover in his early days busting international wildlife trade operatives. His exemplary work in the arena of tracking the illegal ivory trade was documented in a Nat Geo film "Operation Hot Pursuit". He co-founded TRAFFIC India with his mentor the late Ashok Kumar and his early work on rhino poaching (Under Siege; Poaching and Trade of the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros) was published by TRAFFIC-International. This was followed by years of stellar work on controlling the illegal ivory trade and poaching of the Asian elephant documented in the reports "God in Distress", "Signed and Sealed" and the book Tusker, the Story of the Asian Elephant.

With the Indian Government, Vivek Menon has served on several advisory and technical committees of the government including the Project Elephant Steering Committee, Task Force on Elephants and the CITES Advisory Committee. He has attended CITES meetings since 1990 and been a Technical Advisor to the Indian government in several of them.

He has trained enforcement staff of over 50 countries in prevention of illegal wildlife trade, served as a consultant to the Kenya Wildlife Services and helped establish the first elephant reserve of Myanmar.



“The award was an unexpected but very pleasant news to me”, said Menon. “I am humbled to receive it because the essence of the award totally aligns with the conservation and enforcement approaches that I have adopted to make a dent in wildlife crime. We still have a long way to go but I am further enthused to share this stage with the winners. Together we shall continue to inspire one another and aspire to our goal.”

### **About Wildlife Trust of India**

[Wildlife Trust of India](http://www.wildlifetrustofindia.org) (WTI) is a leading Indian nature conservation organisation committed to the service of nature. Its mission is to conserve wildlife and its habitat and to work for the welfare of individual wild animals, in partnership with communities and governments. WTI’s team of 150 dedicated professionals work towards achieving its vision of a secure natural heritage of India, in six priority landscapes, knit holistically together by nine key strategies or Big Ideas.

### **For more information, please contact Wildlife Trust of India:**

For Communication and Media related queries:

Ragini Sinha

[po.communications@wti.org.in](mailto:po.communications@wti.org.in)

9999742271/ 9810707558