**Semi-structured interviews**

*N.B. This questionnaire is intended to be only an outline to show the main themes*

*that will be covered during the interviews. Questions etc may change depending on the specific interviewee.*

*Preliminary questions*

1) Introduction

2) Brief explanation of the research’s aim/ presentation of the Information Sheet

3) Signing of the Consent Form and ask for the possibility to use a voice recorder

*Questions on the criminal activity*

4) How would you describe the impact of the use of the Internet on the illegal trade in endangered plants in the UK?

5) According to your personal experience, what are the main problems/possibilities faced by traffickers due to the use of the Internet?

6) What strategies and approaches do wildlife traffickers use in cyberspace to interact with potential customers and to organise the sale of endangered plants?

7) What routes to market (from the harvesting place – e.g. Madagascar – to the UK) can be identified?

8) What type of intermediaries/facilitators are involved (at the national/international levels)?

9) What strategies the criminal network has pursued to operate in the Internet environment?

10) What types of technical problems have been overcome through the use of the Internet for a successful criminal outcome?

11) Has Internet usage lowered the barriers to entry into this criminal market?

12) According to your personal experience, what type of criminal actors (individuals, loose gangs, organised groups, etc.) are involved?

13) Is the ethnicity of the criminal network maintained in the online stages of the criminal activity?

14) Could you provide me some examples of cases where the Internet played a meaningful role? (cases)

15) Could you indicate some online marketplaces that were used (both in the surface web and in the deep web)?

16) Some criminal groups are effective in changing from one profitable illegal activity to another, depending on changes in risks and opportunities. Do you think the Internet has affected this capacity?

17) Which actors in the criminal network are using more the Internet? For what scope? How are organisational positions affected by the use of the Internet?

18) Which were/are the countries of origin, transit, and destination of the trafficking flow? Did the criminal group have an identifiable geographical base? Do criminals exploit a “digital divide” between countries involved in the criminal activity?

19) How do criminal networks operating via the Internet handle problems concerning access, anonymity, detection, surveillance, trust, and relations with suppliers/customers/victims?

*Questions on its policing*

20) How are (UK/international) law enforcement agencies addressing the challenges posed by the illegal trade in endangered plants?

21) Is the Internet a problem/a resource in countering the illegal trade in endangered plants? Why? To what extent?

22) What instruments are in place for the effective control of borders and for the effective monitoring of online marketplaces?

22) What phases of the criminal activity are easier to control/ to counter more effectively? How? What phases are more difficult to control/to counter? Why?

23) There has been any investigation/prosecution/conviction? If yes, for what crimes? If not, may you provide any apparent reasons for the failure to successfully investigate/prosecute/ convict?

24) What was the starting point for this criminal investigation?

25) On which criminal offences did the investigation focus?

26) Which investigation methods have been used?

*Questions to stimulate again the description of cases (law enforcement operations) that the interviewee knows as privileged observer, and closing of the interview*

27) (Again on) Specific cases emerged in the course of the interview

28) Is there anything else you would like to tell me?