

SEMINAR SERIES

January 8, 2020—11:00 a.m.
Pacific Forum



Stefan Prost

LOEWE-Centre for Translational Biodiversity Genomics
Senckenberg Nature Research Society



Wildlife CSI: Genomic monitoring as a tool to study the illegal wildlife trade

Illegal wildlife trade (IWT) was characterized as the fourth most profitable illegal industry in the world in 2008, worth up to \$21 billion dollars annually. However, now, more than 10 years later, only illegal fishing alone has an annual worth up to \$23 billion. Alarmingly, wildlife trade—legal and illegal—represents one of the most prominent drivers for vertebrate extinction risk worldwide, surpassing climate change by far. Furthermore, a recent investigation showed that about 18 percent of all extant terrestrial vertebrates are being traded today. Effective monitoring strategies are required to better understand and subsequently counteract IWT. In this seminar, Stefan Prost will outline IWT and advances in genomic monitoring that show great promise to improve current monitoring efforts, with a special focus on the application of inexpensive and mobile technologies, which can be used to build up local capacity in areas with high biodiversity loss due to IWT.