

USING DATE TO INVESTIGATE CRIME

TIP SHEET

List curated by **Oxpeckers Investigative Environmental Journalism**
In conjunction with **Roth Communications**

Every journalist can be a data journalist, you just have to know the right questions to ask.

So, before you get started, ask yourself:

- What data is already out there?
- What data will be more difficult to access?
- How are you going to get the data?
- How are you going to use the data?

1. There are lots of databases and organisations who collect the type of data you might need. These are all important sources for data collection, so get to know them and try to collaborate with them.
2. In many instances, crime is cross-border, and can involve a number of people and countries. This can help you to track patterns, trends, routes and specific incidents.
3. This does, however, make tracking cross-border crimes more difficult, but it is an important part of the process.
4. Cultivate good relationships with those who have the data you need, so do your best to work with them and not against them.
5. Data is more about people than numbers, so be sure to humanise your stories, to make them more relatable to your audiences.
6. Treat all data you come across with scepticism, which means that you'll have to research, fact-check and verify everything before you publish it.
7. It helps to understand the process and context in which you're working, including a basic understanding of the law and court process.
8. Avoid confirmation bias, so let the data drive your story and not the other way round—if you pick and choose your data, you may not be telling the whole story.
9. Use multiple sources and databases. Like all journalism, you need to cross-check, fact-check and verify.
10. Visualise—in order to better work with and analyse—your data.

This tip sheet is based on previous training by Oxpeckers Investigative Environmental Journalism.



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USEFUL RESOURCES

#WildEye – Track environmental crime across the globe:

<https://wildeye-global.oxpeckers.org/>

#MineAlert – Track and share mining licenses and applications:

<https://oxpeckers.org/minealert/>

Rhino Court Cases Map – Track developments in rhino poaching court cases across South Africa:

<https://oxpeckers.org/rhinocourtcasesmap/>

Oxpeckers Learning Kit – Resources and learning material shared in the interest of advancing data journalism around the globe:

<https://oxpeckers.org/learning/>

Visualise your data using these free online tools:

- Flourish
- Google Charts
- Tableau Public
- Datawrapper

