

Dear Reader,

The CITES in Southeast Asia e-Bulletin aims to help government agencies, organisations and interested individuals in the ASEAN region to keep updated on **CITES-related issues, events and plans in South-east Asia**. The overall aim is to facilitate and to encourage increased cooperation and information sharing on wildlife trade issues that are important to South-east Asia.

This e-Bulletin is produced by TRAFFIC – the wildlife trade monitoring network of WWF and IUCN.

TRAFFIC and its partners continue to work in partnership with South-east Asian governments – as well as with the ASEAN Secretariat and relevant ASEAN fora – to address wildlife trade, CITES implementation and wildlife trade law enforcement.

You may access previous e-bulletin issues and other resources via the ASEAN Wildlife Trade Initiative's website: <http://www.traffic.org/25/network9/ASEAN>.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with TRAFFIC Southeast Asia should you have any queries or requests for further information on CITES and wildlife trade in South-east Asia.

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Calendar of events:

8-24 February 2009

Forest Rangers Training between Lao DPR and Thailand, Khao Yai National Park, Thailand

Host: Department of National Parks and Wildlife and Plan Conservation (DNP)

24-25 February

Judiciary workshop on wildlife crime and prosecution for Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

19 February 2009

Deadline for submission of documents for the 24th meeting of the Animals Committee

20 February 2009

Deadline to submit to the CITES Secretariat for consideration at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES:

- a) proposals to amend Appendix I or II that concern a species or a population of a species that occurs partly or totally outside of the territory under its jurisdiction, without prior consultation of the other range States; and
- b) amendment proposals made pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14), on Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II .

28 February 2009

Deadline for submission of reports to the Secretariat on tiger-breeding operations

27 February – 2 March 2009
ASEAN Summit, Hua Hin, Thailand

9-22 March 2009
Wildlife Trade Regulation Course, Suvarnabhumi Bangkok, Thailand
Host: Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) and Airports Authority of Thailand

17-21 March 2009
18th meeting of the CITES Plants Committee, Buenos Aires, Argentina

20-24 April 2009
24th meeting of the CITES Animals Committee, Geneva, Switzerland

7 May 2009
Deadline for submission of documents for 58th meeting of the Standing Committee

6-10 July 2009
58th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee meeting, Geneva, Switzerland

19 August 2009
Deadline to submit to the CITES Secretariat for consideration at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES:
a) draft resolutions and other documents; and
b) proposals to amend Appendix I or II that are not concerned by Resolution Conf. 8.21 or Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14).

5 December 2009
Deadline for observer organizations to register to participate in the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES

16-28 January 2010
5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, Doha, Qatar

CITES Notifications and News:

The 174th Party: Armenia

The Secretariat is pleased to welcome Armenia as the 174th Party to CITES.

Armenia is situated in the Caucasus region, between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. It borders Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey, all of which have already joined the Convention.

Armenia is home to over 60 species listed in the CITES Appendices, including snowdrops, cyclamens, many birds of prey, wild cats and sturgeons. CITES trade with Armenia comprises mainly reptile leather products and caviar.

The Convention will enter into force in Armenia on 21 January 2009.

20 October 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/060): Editing of documents for CITES meetings

The Secretariat is reviewing the ways in which it conducts its work and how it can fulfil its functions within the constraints of its resources.

Until now, the Secretariat has edited documents it received from Parties and committee members for meetings of the Conference of the Parties and the permanent committees as well as externally prepared documents for other CITES meetings. This editing has covered, amongst other things, spelling, grammar, typographical errors, clarity (when the language of a document submitted is not the mother tongue of the author), use of United Nations standard geographical denominations, etc.

The purpose of the present Notification is to inform Parties that, as announced at SC57, as a result of the reduced capacity of the Secretariat, it will no longer be able to edit documents that it receives for CITES meetings.

22 October 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/061): Checklist of CITES species

The new edition of the Checklist of CITES species has just been released. This publication, which is in CD-ROM format, replaces the 2005 edition and is in the three working languages of the Convention.

The 2008 edition has been extensively revised and includes the numerous changes to standard nomenclature and to the Appendices adopted at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (The Hague, 2007). The user-friendliness of the CD-ROM has also been optimized and new sections added, such as a Historical summary of annotations.

Copies of this publication will be sent to all Management and Scientific Authorities of the Parties, to the Enforcement Authorities whose details have been communicated to the Secretariat in response to Notification to the Parties No. 2006/065 of 14 November 2006, and to the members of the CITES permanent committees.

1 December 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/065): CD-ROM on the application of the Addis Ababa principles and guidelines within the biodiversity-related conventions

In 2002, a Biodiversity Liaison Group was established to enhance coherence and cooperation in the implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions. This group comprises:

- CBD Convention on Biological Diversity
- CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- CMS Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
- ITPGR International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- WHC Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention)

At its fifth meeting (Gland, September 2006), the Biodiversity Liaison Group decided to develop an interactive CD-ROM on the application of the Addis Ababa principles and guidelines within the biodiversity-related conventions.

The preparation of this CD-ROM is now complete and the Biodiversity Liaison Group is pleased to announce the launch of the first edition. Composed of four sections, it contains information on the application of the Addis Ababa principles and guidelines by the six biodiversity-related conventions, the full text of the principles and guidelines, relevant decisions, recommendations and resolutions, and background documents and other materials, including links to relevant websites.

This collaborative endeavour aims to promote greater awareness and use of the principles and guidelines. It also exemplifies a strategic and collaborative use of data resources by the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions to meet the information needs of their Parties more effectively.

In due course, the information on this CD-ROM will also be made available through the Web. Copies of the CD-ROM are available from the convention secretariats on request.

5 December 2008

**CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/066): Eighteenth meeting of the Plants Committee
Date and venue**

The Secretariat hereby informs Parties that the 18th meeting of the Plants Committee will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 17 to 21 March 2009. The address of the venue will be communicated as soon as it is available.

Parties interested in knowing more about the subjects for discussion may contact either the Secretariat or the Chairman directly at the following address:

Prof. Dra. Margarita Clemente Muñoz
Chairman of the CITES Plants Committee
Dpto. de Ciencias y Recursos Agrícolas y Forestales
Unidad de Botánica Agrícola y Forestal
Campus de Rabanales
Ctra Madrid, Km 396
Edificio Celestino Mutis (C-4)
Universidad de Córdoba
E-14071 CÓRDOBA, Spain
Tel: +34 (957) 21 21 85
Fax: +34 (957) 21 21 85
Email: cr1clmum@uco.es

Registration

Parties that wish to be represented by observers should return the Registration form (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067A1.pdf>) to the Secretariat no later than 1 March 2009.

Observers from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may participate in this meeting at the invitation of the Chairman. The Procedure (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067A2.pdf>) for the admission of observers from NGOs to meetings of the CITES Plants Committee provides information on the requirements for NGOs to receive an invitation from the Chairman. The Invitation request for NGOs form (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067A3.pdf>) should be sent to the Chairman at the address indicated in paragraph 2 above at least 30 days before the meeting, that is by 15 February 2009.

The Secretariat wishes to remind observers from NGOs that they should send to the Secretariat the Registration form, together with a copy of the letter of invitation from the Chairman, at least 30 days before the meeting, that is no later than 15 February 2009.

Participants with access to the Internet are encouraged to use the online registration form that is available on www.cites.org , under Official Documents / Plants Committee / Online registration.

For more information, please go to <http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E066.pdf>

16 December 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/067): Twenty-fourth meeting of the Animals Committee

Date and venue

The Secretariat hereby informs Parties that the 24th meeting of the Animals Committee will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 20 to 24 April 2009. The meeting will take place at the following address:

Centre International de Conférences de Genève (CICG) Rue de Varembe 17 CH-1211
GENEVA 20 Switzerland.

Parties interested in knowing more about the subjects for discussion may contact either the Secretariat or the Chairman directly at the following address:

Dr Thomas ALTHAUS
Federal Veterinary Office
Schwarzenburgstrasse 155
CH-3097 LIEBEFELD-BERN, Switzerland
Tel: +41 (31) 323 81 59
Fax: +41 (31) 323 85 22
Email: thomas.althaus@bvet.admin.ch

Registration

Parties that wish to be represented by observers should return the Registration form (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067A1.pdf>) to the Secretariat no later than 6 April 2009.

Observers from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) may participate in this meeting at the invitation of the Chairman. The Procedure (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067A2.pdf>) for the admission of observers from NGOs to meetings of the CITES Animals Committee provides information on the requirements for NGOs to receive an invitation from the Chairman. The Invitation request for NGOs form (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067A3.pdf>) should be sent to the Chairman at the address indicated in paragraph 2 above at least 30 days before the meeting that is by 21 March 2009.

The Secretariat wishes to remind observers from NGOs that they should send to the Secretariat the Registration form, together with a copy of the letter of invitation from the Chairman, at least 30 days before the meeting, that is no later than 21 March 2009.

Participants with access to the Internet are encouraged to use the online registration form that is available on www.cites.org , under Official Documents / Animals Committee / Online registration.

For more information, please go to <http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E067.pdf>

16 December 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/068): Ecomessage

By Notification to the Parties No. 851 of 18 April 1995, the Secretariat communicated to the Parties the Ecomessage that had been approved by the General Assembly of ICPO-Interpol as the form for reporting on crime involving international trade in and transport of dangerous goods, nuclear waste and specimens of wild fauna and flora. An updated version of the form was distributed with Notification to the Parties No. 966 of 7 March 1997. The Secretariat has encouraged Parties to use this form to report significant incidents of illegal trade and provide information about convicted traders and persistent offenders, as called for in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP14) (Compliance and enforcement).

Several Parties use this form to submit information to both the CITES and Interpol Secretariats, and this provides important sources of intelligence to, for example, enable the preparation of CITES Alerts. The Secretariat encourages all Parties to make use of the form. Go to <http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2008/E068-form.pdf> for the form.

This Notification replaces Notification to the Parties No. 966 of 7 March 1997.

16 December 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/069): Illegal trade in rhinoceros horns

At its 57th meeting (Geneva, July 2008), the Standing Committee agreed that a CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force should be convened to address illegal trade in specimens of this species. A Task Force, consisting of mainland China, Hong Kong S.A.R., Kenya, India, Mozambique, Nepal, South Africa, Thailand, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe, together with the CITES Secretariat, ICPO-Interpol and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, met in Nairobi, Kenya, on 18 and 19 November 2008. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime also participated as an observer.

The Task Force agreed that poaching of rhinoceroses and illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens has reached serious levels in some countries. These activities appear to involve organized and sophisticated criminality. It was noted that a number of individuals appear to have repeatedly engaged in poaching of rhinoceroses, dealing in their horns and the smuggling of specimens from one continent to another. However, it was also noted that information regarding such individuals has not been widely shared, collated centrally or effectively analysed. The Task Force is of the firm opinion that opportunities to bring such people, and their associates, to justice have been missed.

In order to address this, the Secretariat requests that, in future, all seizures of rhinoceros specimens (whether horns or other rhinoceros products), should be reported using the Ecomessage format that was designed by Interpol (see Notification to the Parties No. 2008/068, of 16 December 2008 for further details). Any incidents of illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens should also be reported, as should any rhinoceros poaching incidents where persons are detained or suspected. Completed Ecomessages, providing as much detail as possible about the individuals involved, their associates, travel history, intended final use of the specimens, etc. should be submitted to the CITES Secretariat or to the Interpol General Secretariat, via the relevant Interpol National Central Bureau.

16 December 2008

CITES Notification to the Parties (No. 2008/070): Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

In accordance with Article XI, paragraph 4, of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties, at its 15th meeting, to be held in Doha (Qatar), from 16 to 28 January 2010, may decide on the venue of the 16th meeting, which is expected to be held during 2013. Any Party wishing to host the 16th meeting should announce its offer formally at the meeting in Doha through an official representative duly authorized to do so.

If several States offer to host the 16th meeting, the Conference of the Parties will choose the host country by a secret ballot vote.

The Secretariat invites Parties that might be interested in hosting the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to indicate this to the Secretariat. Following receipt of the expressions of interest, the Secretariat will provide copies of the Memorandum of Understanding that should be signed by the host country and the Secretariat, and of the provisional Statement of Requirements, which is an integral part of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Other Updates on Wildlife Trade and Wildlife:

9 October 2008

New foundation to promote sustainable collection of wild plants (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/10/8/new-foundation-to-promote-sustainable-collection-of-wild-pla.html>)

Barcelona, Spain —An important agreement was signed today between the four founding institutions of the International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP) to endorse global implementation of the standard through the FairWild Foundation.

ISSC-MAP is a standard that promotes appropriate management of wild plant populations used in medicines and cosmetics to ensure they are not over-exploited. Under the new agreement, the FairWild Foundation will help develop an industry labelling system so products harvested using the sustainable ISSC-MAP criteria can be readily recognised and certified. Use of the standard will be promoted throughout the herbal products industry.

ISSC-MAP was developed by a partnership including the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), the IUCN SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG), WWF-Germany, and TRAFFIC, plus industry associations, companies, certifiers and community-based NGOs. The announcement was made at the World Conservation Congress, currently underway in Barcelona.

More than 400,000 tonnes of medicinal and aromatic plants are traded annually, with around 80% of the species harvested from the wild. Almost 3,000 species are traded, many of them over-exploited and in danger of extinction through over-collection and habitat loss. Implementation of the standard will stop more plants being over-exploited and becoming threatened with extinction under IUCN's Red List criteria.

15 October 2008

Tiger and other cat parts on open sale in Myanmar (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/10/15/tiger-and-other-cat-parts-on-open-sale-in-myanmar.html>

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia —Skin and bones, canines and claws from almost 1,200 wild cats were observed in Myanmar's wildlife markets during 12 surveys undertaken by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network. They included parts of at least 107 Tigers and all eight cat species native to Myanmar.

Irregular surveys over the last 15 years have recorded a total of 1,320 wild cat parts, representing a minimum of 1,158 individual animals.

"The cat parts were openly displayed for sale and the dealers quite frank about the illegality of the trade, which suggests a serious lack of law enforcement," said Chris Shepherd, Programme Co-ordinator for TRAFFIC's Southeast Asia office.

People from neighbouring countries are the main buyers of these parts, as reflected by the locations of the markets—three of the four markets surveyed were located on international borders with China and Thailand. Prices were quoted in Thai or Chinese currency, or even US Dollars.

National legislation in Myanmar is imprecise as to how many cat species are totally protected, but at least five are. Native cats comprise Tiger, Leopard, Clouded Leopard, Marbled Cat, Asiatic Golden Cat, Fishing Cat, Leopard Cat and Jungle Cat. Five of them are listed in Appendix I of CITES (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), which bans international trade. Myanmar has been a signatory to CITES since 1997.

"Myanmar has an amazing wealth and variety of wildlife. However, immediate action to close down these markets and prosecute those engaged in the trade of protected wildlife is essential," said Shepherd, adding that national legislation needed to be tightened and better cross-border co-operation with neighbouring countries, particularly Thailand and China was needed.

Myanmar is a member of the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), a partnership that seeks to end illegal cross-border wildlife trade in the region.

The report can be downloaded from the website above.

3 November 2008

Illegal shark fishing compounds global management shortfall (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/11/3/illegal-shark-fishing-compounds-global-management-shortfall.html>)

Cambridge, UK / Canberra, Australia - As the world's demand for sharks continues to grow, shark populations are plummeting. The Asian market for shark fin is the key driver of shark fishing globally and is fuelling illegal fishing and high levels of legitimate shark fishing of questionable sustainability, according to a new report jointly published by the Australian Government and TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network.

Sharks are particularly vulnerable to overfishing because they grow slowly, are late to mature and produce relatively few young. Currently more than a fifth of shark species are listed as threatened with extinction.

The report was launched ahead of this week's United Nations Food and Agriculture

Organization (FAO) meeting on sharks in Rome, which will discuss how to monitor shark fisheries and will consider the effect illegal fishing is having on shark numbers.

In 2000, FAO encouraged member countries to implement management of their shark populations, but seven years later fewer than 20% of members had introduced a plan to do so. Such national measures should include specific actions to tackle illegal shark fishing.

TRAFFIC believes it is imperative to create frameworks to support rapid national action to improve the management of sharks. Countries with developed management systems need to implement measures to address the impacts they are having on sharks. In addition, assistance should be provided to countries with less developed systems to establish monitoring and management of shark fisheries.

The report can be downloaded from the website above.

17 November 2008

Focus on Merbau trade (Source: <http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/11/17/focus-on-merbau-trade.html>)

Singapore—Merbau, a tropical hardwood whose deep red-brown colour makes it popular for interior finishing, paneling, strip and parquet flooring, furniture, veneer, decorative and novelty items, comes under the spotlight today at an international workshop organized by TRAFFIC Southeast Asia to discuss the sustainability of international trade in this valuable timber.

Participants from Australia, China, Germany, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Thailand, representing the CITES Secretariat, national CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, international organizations, trade associations and research institutes are meeting in Singapore to discuss concerns over excessive logging and unsustainable merbau trade leading to over-exploitation.

Merbau includes species of the *Intsia* genus, several of which are traded, including the widespread *I. bijuga* found in Australia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Thailand and Viet Nam and *I. palembanica* from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Thailand.

However, the harvest of these and many other tropical species is poorly documented and a lack of adequate data often contributes to unsustainable forestry management. The workshop aims to change this. The results of a TRAFFIC study into the merbau trade will be presented and participants will discuss ways to manage and meet demand for merbau sustainably.

A TRAFFIC Review of the merbau trade, together with the workshop's proceedings, will be published early in 2009.

Funding for the current workshop, which runs until 18 November, was provided by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the acting CITES Scientific Authority for Germany.

20 November 2008

Marine turtle campaign launched in Viet Nam (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/11/20/marine-turtle-campaign-launched-in-viet-nam.html>)

Ha Noi, Viet Nam—Travelers through Ha Noi this November might see something strange around West Lake: a line of cyclists dressed as turtles making their way through the traffic.

The cyclists, who will be carrying signs about marine turtle conservation, are part of a month-long strategic awareness campaign to alert the public to the conservation threat posed by illegal trade in marine turtles.

In addition to the bicycle road show, banners are being hung along major thoroughfares in Ha Noi, with messages highlighting the wild status of marine turtles and the illegality of purchasing marine turtles and their products.

Technical experts will be on hand to answer questions from passers by about marine turtles, their plight in Viet Nam and what consumers can do to protect them.

The campaign is organized by TRAFFIC and the Department of Capture Fisheries and Fisheries Resource Protection (DECAFIREP) and Ha Noi Fisheries, and funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA).

11 December 2008

Myanmar emerges as ivory trade and elephant smuggling hot spot (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/12/10/myanmar-emerges-as-ivory-trade-and-elephant-smuggling-hot-sp.html>)

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—Around 250 live Asian Elephants have been smuggled from Myanmar in the past decade, mostly destined for “elephant trekking” tourism activities in neighbouring Thailand, a new report by the wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC reveals today.

Meanwhile blatant illegal ivory trade continues in Myanmar, with TRAFFIC surveys of 14 markets and three border markets in Thailand and China finding 9000 pieces of ivory and 16 whole tusks for sale.

Retailers generally displayed ivory and other elephant parts quite openly and rarely hesitated in disclosing smuggling techniques and other illegal activities to TRAFFIC staff posing as potential buyers.

The smuggling of live elephants, ivory and other elephant parts out of Myanmar and into neighbouring China and Thailand occurs in blatant contravention of national laws and CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

No cross-border trade of live elephants has been reported to CITES by either Myanmar or Thailand. Some traders questioned claimed elephants had disappeared from parts of Myanmar, owing to numbers captured for the live trade.

TRAFFIC and WWF call on authorities in Myanmar to work closely with enforcement officers in neighbouring Thailand and China to address the illegal trade in live elephants and ivory.

Both Thailand and Myanmar are also members of the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network, a regional network established to promote cross-border collaboration to tackle illegal wildlife trade.

The report can be downloaded from the website above.

12 December 2008

1000 new species in Greater Mekong (Source: <http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/12/17/1000-new-species-in-greater-mekong.html>)

Ha Noi, Viet Nam—Over one thousand new species have been discovered in the Greater Mekong Region of Southeast Asia since 1997, says a new report by WWF.

Among the most incredible finds documented in *First Contact in the Greater Mekong* are the Lao Rock Rat, thought to have gone extinct 11 million years ago but discovered in a Lao food market; the hot-pink “dragon millipede” that produces cyanide in self-defense; the world’s largest huntsman spider, which has a leg span of over 30 centimeters; and a new species of purple banana from Southern China.

All told, over 500 plants, 250 fish, 80 frogs, 40 lizards, and 20 snakes, as well as 15 mammals, 4 birds, 4 turtles, 2 salamanders and a toad, were found throughout the six countries of the Greater Mekong region, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam and the southern Chinese province of Yunnan.

In documenting such a prolific rate of discovery—an average of two species per week were discovered over the past decade—the report’s findings reaffirm the importance of the Greater Mekong as a biodiversity hotspot and conservation priority. As a result of such high biodiversity, the region is also recognised as a hub for the illicit trade in wildlife. Plants and animals of all sizes and description are poached from their natural habitats, transported across the region to major markets such as China and Viet Nam.

23 December 2008

Malaysia’s Tigers thrown a lifeline (Source: <http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/12/23/malaysias-tigers-thrown-a-lifeline.html>)

Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia—Conservation groups today welcomed the release of the much-anticipated National Tiger Action Plan for Malaysia, calling the Plan an important milestone in Tiger conservation in the region.

The Plan aims to have 1,000 wild Tigers surviving on wild prey in the Central Forest Spine by 2020, through securing key forests areas in landscapes connected with corridors, providing long-term on-the-ground protection of Tigers and their prey, and promoting ecologically sound land-use practices. It prioritizes three core areas; the Belum-Temengor Complex, the Greater Taman Negara Complex and the Endau-Rompin Complex.

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), Wildlife Conservation Society (Malaysia Programme) and WWF-Malaysia are all ready to help implement the 12-year plan alongside relevant government agencies, to help secure and increase the number of wild Tigers in Peninsular Malaysia.

The foundations for the Plan began with a National Tiger Conservation Workshop in 2006 hosted by the Malaysian Government’s Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) in collaboration with MNS, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society (Malaysia Programme) and WWF-Malaysia, under the Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) platform. Other agencies involved in its development included the Department of Forestry Peninsular Malaysia and Department of Town and Country Planning Peninsular Malaysia.

The Plan uses existing government policies and legislative structures relevant to wildlife conservation such as the National Policy on Biological Diversity, National Physical Plan and National Forestry Policy.

Although implementation of some actions has already begun, a key challenge will be implementation at the State level, as the Plan is still a Federal policy document.

23 December 2008

Rare rhino calves found in Indonesian jungle (Source: AFP)

Four calves of the world's rarest species of rhino have been found in remote jungle on Indonesia's Java island, giving hope to efforts to save them from extinction, an official said Tuesday.

"Four Javan rhinos of six to seven months age were seen by scientists on the beach near the jungle during a recent field survey," Agus Primabudi, the head of the Ujung Kulon National Park in West Java, told AFP.

Alerted to the presence of humans, the baby rhinos fled into the park to where two adult rhinos aged roughly 35 to 36, believed to be their parents, were staying, Primabudi said. Primabudi said that the birth of the four calves has given new hope that the Javan rhinos can breed in the wild at levels high enough to keep the local population alive into the future.

"The most important thing we can do is to protect their habitat so that they can breed easily," he said.

The Javan rhino, which is distinguished by its small size, single horn and loose skin folds, is likely the most endangered large mammal on the planet, according to WWF. Roughly 90 percent of the world's 50 or so Javan rhinos live in Ujung Kulon park, an oasis of wilderness on the western edge of one of the world's most densely populated islands. The Javan rhino is classified as critically endangered by WWF and none of the animals currently live in captivity.

7 January 2009

Illegal trade in Malayan Box Turtles continues (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2009/1/7/illegal-trade-in-malayan-box-turtles-continuestraffic.html>)

The Malayan Box Turtle is disappearing across Malaysia despite a ban on its export, finds a new report by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network. The turtles are in high demand in East Asia for their meat and for use in traditional Chinese medicine.

In 2005, an export ban on Malayan Box Turtles was introduced by Department of Wildlife and National Parks (PERHILITAN), the government's wildlife agency in Peninsular Malaysia, and similar exports bans exist in Sabah and Sarawak.

Following the ban, exports of turtles for the pet trade in Japan, Europe and the USA apparently ceased, but the latest TRAFFIC report found widespread evidence of continuing illegal export, mainly to Hong Kong, China and to a lesser extent Singapore.

"A harvest survey at two traders in Selangor, for example yielded 385 Malayan Box Turtles in a 38 day period; multiplying by the number of known illegal suppliers of turtles gives a conservative estimate of almost 22,000 animals illegally exported per year from Malaysia," said Dr Sabine Schoppe, the author of the report.

The vast majority of Malayan Box Turtles illegally exported are adults, which poses a particular threat to this species, which has a slow reproductive cycle, only maturing late, and producing a limited number of eggs.

There are indications from every State in Peninsular Malaysia that populations of the Malayan Box Turtle are over-exploited or even locally extinct. According to local people, Malayan Box Turtles are rarely observed in the wild compared to only 5–10 years ago. The Asian Box Turtle was listed as Vulnerable to extinction by IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, in 2000.

To help restore populations of Malayan Box Turtles, TRAFFIC recommends a total harvest ban or the strict implementation by PERHILITAN of the existing export ban for one generation to allow numbers to recover; conduct a non-detrimental finding on the Malayan Box Turtles, improvement of trade control measures, such as development of a bribe-proof CITES permit system; better international co-operation between government agencies in the region for controlling illegal wildlife trade, particularly at border crossings; and regular inspections and appropriate law enforcement actions taken against traders, markets and pet and aquarium shops trading illegally by relevant government authorities.

The report can be downloaded from the website above.

7 January 2009

Asian, US police meet on tackling wildlife crime (Source:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20090107-asian-us-police-meet-tackling-wildlife-crime>)

Police investigators from Southeast Asia, China and the United States met in Bangkok Wednesday to share strategies for tackling the illegal international trade in tigers, leopards and pangolins.

Big cats prized for their skin and body parts and pangolins, or scaly anteaters, which are used in cooking, are under particular threat from organised trafficking gangs in Asia. Investigators from Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia and Vietnam joined representatives from China and the United States for a three-day workshop on curbing the crime.

"Concerted and coordinated joint actions are required to address the illegal exploitation and trade," said Chumphon Suckasaem, a senior officer with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Wildlife Enforcement Network.

Chumphon said the trade had already taken its toll, "threatening to irrevocably damage Southeast Asia's ecosystems."

But he said more than 100 arrests connected with major wildlife crime had been made since mid-July 2008. "Compared to the past the police are more interested in the wildlife issue... it's stronger than it was before," said Colonel Subsak Chavalviwat of Thailand's wildlife police department.

Subsak admitted there remained difficult cultural barriers in countries such as China, where there is still a strong demand for big cat parts.

"Sometimes it's difficult but I'm confident so I'm going to keep doing it and keep trying," he said.

"It's saving the animals, saving the forests and saving the humans because if the biodiversity is good then we are living in a good environment for humans' health," he added.

Pangolins are the most traded species in Southeast Asia, with Chumphon estimating 30,000 specimens had been confiscated by authorities between 1998 and 2007.

The World Wildlife Fund estimated last year that there were only around 3,500 tigers left in the world.

8 January 2009

Private farms play part in tiger trade (Source:

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/9304/private-farms-play-part-in-tiger-trade>)

Some private tiger farms in Thailand are probably a part of the region's illegal tiger trade which sends most of the endangered animals to China, according to the Asean Wildlife Enforcement Network (Asean-Wen).

Chumphon Suckasaem, of Asean-Wen, a network of wildlife officials, police and customs officers from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations, said most tiger carcasses confiscated from wildlife traffickers by police come from private farms here in Thailand.

"Finding tigers in their natural habitat is not easy because very few are left in the wild," he said. Thai forests have about 2,500 tigers. Tiger meat is in high demand in China. The animal is transported from many Southeast Asian countries with Bangkok and Laos serving as transit points.

Tiger carcasses seized in Prachuap Khiri Khan on Monday were suspected to be captive tigers kept at a private farm. Authorities use DNA testing to differentiate domesticated tigers from those from the wild. They can also tell by the animal's physical appearance if they come from the wild or a breeding farm. Captive tigers have fewer scars or wounds. The surface of their paws is also smooth as they do not have to fight or survive in the jungle.

Under Thai wildlife protection laws and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Cites), the trade in tigers is illegal, no matter whether the animals are domesticated or come from the wild.

Mr Chumphon said tiger farms were required by law to report to wildlife authorities about any tigers which are born or die at their premises so a record can be kept of numbers at each location. However, the monitoring system is still inadequate.

Mr Chumphon was speaking on the sidelines of a three-day workshop on the illegal wildlife trade for 70 officials from Asean-Wen member countries.

9 January 2009

Rare gibbon faces extinction (Source: The Jakarta Post)

The Indonesian Primatological Association warned Thursday that Indonesian could lose the unique Owa Jawa (Javanese Gibbon) in less than a decade unless serious action is taken to protect the species.

A 2008 survey found only 2,000 Javanese Gibbons (*Hylobates moloch*) still lived in Java's forests, mainly in Ujung Kulon National Park, Tangkuban Perahu Mountain, Ciremai Mountain and Papandayan Mountain, almost half as many as the 4,500 reported in 2004.

"The threats to the Javanese Gibbon include habitat degradation and fragmentation, and the trapping of their young to be kept as pets," Made Wedana from the Indonesian Primatological Association told The Jakarta Post on Thursday.

The survey was conducted in December 2008 in 63 areas throughout West and Central Java. The study found only 300 Javanese Gibbons in Ujung Kulon National Park and said the species stands a 50 percent chance of extinction within the next 10 years, or three generations.

The survey blamed dwindling forest areas in Java for the drastic decrease in the gibbon population, and said surveyors found animal traps and Javanese Gibbons being kept illegally for sale. Only 5 percent of the Javanese Gibbon's former habitat now remains due to progressive and vast deforestation.

Made said the grey-colored primate, which has a loud and distinctive voice and eats fruit bugs and leaves, requires the safety of a heavy forest canopy for survival. "The current scarcity of this gibbon demonstrates the critical condition of Java's forest," Made said. "I think we have to be more concerned about our forests, not only to save the Javanese Gibbons but to ensure human survival," Made said. "The Javanese Gibbon is not as popular as the Orangutan, but we have to protect them or these creatures will entirely disappear."

Recent Notable Seizures:

Pangolin smugglers held (Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/10/20/nation/2321350&sec=nation>)

Muar, Malaysia, 20 Oct 2008: Marine police here detained two men and seized 42 pangolins during an operation in the Malacca Straits on Sunday. The men, aged 24 and 46, were caught when two marine police patrol vessels intercepted a high-powered boat about 3.5 nautical miles off Parit Jawa at around 12.50am. Initial investigations revealed that the men, from Serom and Parit Bakar, brought the pangolins from Bengkalis in Sumatra for sale to certain parties here.

Poachers in Apo Reef elude arrest (Source:

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/inquirerheadlines/regions/view/20081021-167523/Poachers-in-Apo-Reef-elude-arrest>)

Camp Nakar, Lucena City, 21 October 2008: Two speed boats from a ship believed to be of foreign origin and suspected to be poaching in the world renowned Apo Reef off Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro, eluded arrest from government forces Thursday, a regional military spokesperson said Saturday. The government troops, however, were able to recover 12 sea turtles, 10 of which were already dead. Two of the turtles had deep wounds and are being kept by park officials. As government forces approached, the two unidentified speed boats sped off toward Palawan, leaving behind a two-kilometer long illegal fishnet embedded 22 meters deep.

Exotic animals in jungle cabin seized (Source:

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10538985)

Kuantan, Malaysia, 23 Oct 2008: Malaysian marine police have seized 1272 protected animals believed to be bound for the cooking pot in countries including China, Thailand and

Hong Kong. The live animals, which were packed into 72 plastic containers and 40 wooden crates, were discovered in a jungle cabin in the central Pahang state. The animals - 1244 clouded monitor lizards, 17 water monitor lizards and 11 pythons - are all protected and believed to be worth \$250,000. They were handed over to the state wildlife department.

45 poachers nabbed in Tubbataha Reefs (Source:

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view/20081022-167879/45-poachers-nabbed-in-Tubbataha-Reefs>)

Puerto Princesa City, Philippines, 22 Oct 2008—Rangers guarding the Tubbataha National Marine Park arrested 45 suspected poachers from Cebu after they tried to bribe the guards deployed in the park in exchange for allowing them to illegally collect a threatened species of shell, the Philippine Daily Inquirer learned Wednesday. According to park manager Angelique Songco, the poachers proceeded directly to the ranger station upon arriving in the area Monday and tried to offer the rangers P100,000 bribe to allow them to gather samung (sp. *Trochus niloticus*), a protected species of shell sought for its ornamental value.

Pampanga home yields endangered animals (Source:

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/regions/view/20081029-169029/Pampanga-home-yields-endangered-animals>)

Manila, Philippines, 29 October 2008—Nearly 30 threatened species including a Palawan bear cat, a Philippine eagle owl and an Oriental small clawed otter were turned over Tuesday to the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) after they were rescued by authorities from a man who reportedly kept them as pets in his home in Pampanga province.

Armed with a court warrant, the National Bureau of Investigation's Anti-Organized Crime Division swooped down on the man's home in Magalang, Pampanga on Thursday to rescue the animals. Various penalties and imprisonment face the pet owner if he is found guilty of violating the Wildlife Conservation Act. Among the threatened species rescued from the home were 11 Nicobar pigeons, 10 white-breasted sea eagles, an Oriental small clawed otter, Philippine bear cat, Philippine hawk eagle and Philippine eagle owl. Lim explained that threatened species were classified as vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered.

10000 smuggled turtle eggs seized (Source: New Strait Times, Malaysia)

Sandakan, Malaysia, 4 November 2008 – The marine police have cracked their biggest case of turtle eggs smuggling this year with the seizure of some 10000 eggs from the Philippines. Four smugglers were unloading the eggs, worth about RM28000 from a speedboat on Sunday night when a team of policemen arrived at the scene at 815pm. On seeing the policemen, the smugglers panicked and escaped in the boat, leaving 20 sacks of eggs on the beach. Initial investigations have revealed that a syndicate obtained the eggs from several islands in the Philippines.

Bangkok market home to illegal wildlife trade (Source:

http://www.iar.org.uk/globalnews/articles/2008/11/bangkok_market_home_to_illegal_wildlife_trade_573.html)

Bangkok, Thailand, 7 November 2008 - Bangkok's popular Chatuchak market is home to an illegal trade in endangered animals, according to the AFP news agency. Undercover police officers arrested two smugglers in the largest market in Thailand, after they were caught attempting to sell three Madagascar Ploughshare tortoises, which are so rare that there are only an estimated 300 remaining in the world. In addition, the raid on the market uncovered a trafficker selling slow lorises, which is an endangered primate that lives in south-east Asian

forests.

Ebony Smuggling to Malaysia Foiled (Source:

<http://www.sinarharapan.co.id/berita/0811/10/sh08.html>)

Palu, Indonesia, 10 November 2008 - Central Sulawesi Provincial Police (Polda) has foiled the smuggling of approximately 4 cubic meter of Ebony form Malei Village, western coast of Balaesang Tanjung Sub-district, Donggala Regency, Central Sulawesi, to Tawau Malaysia. The shipment was intercepted in Makassar Strait on Sunday (9/11) at 3.00 am Wita, based on a tip from local. Police then conducted a three-day investigation before seizing the illegal timber. Police said the modus operandi was to submerge the timber 2 meters deep in water, then to take and transport the timber using small boats to take to an awaiting ship in the middle of the sea. The timber was transported little by little.

Raid nets RM3mil in exotic wildlife (Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/11/13/nation/2528184&sec=nation>)

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 13 November 2008 - More than RM3mil worth of live and dead animals were seized when the Wildlife and National Parks Department raided two locations in Johor last week. Among the animals were 7,000 clouded monitor lizards, 1,000 owls, pangolins, crested serpent eagles, pythons, mousedeer, Malayan porcupine and wild pigs. Bear parts were also found in the raid. A 49-year-old man was charged in a magistrate's court in Tangkak on Nov 7 and is out on a RM19,000 bail.

Perhilitan uses Internet to stop wildlife trader (Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/11/21/nation/2605751&sec=nation>)

Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, 21 November 2008 - Going where it has never gone before, the Wildlife and National Park Department (Perhilitan) trawled the Internet and struck pay dirt — it found a man offering to sell protected wildlife. On Sunday, four Perhilitan officers from Shah Alam staked out the USJ toll plaza parking lot in Puchong. The man was waiting for the “buyer” when they closed in on him. When officers inspected his car, they found seven Ball pythons, four Burmese pythons, one Green Tree python, one Carpet python and two Blood pythons.

Python-packed cars seized in Cambodia (Source: <http://ki-media.blogspot.com/2008/11/python-packed-cars-seized-in-cambodia.html>)

Cambodia, 24 November 2008 - Two wildlife smugglers transporting hundreds of live turtles and pythons jammed into the backs of cars have been arrested by Cambodian officials. The drivers were apparently heading to neighbouring Vietnam to sell the animals—many of them rare—to the region's illegal wildlife markets. The smugglers were stopped in Kâmpóng Chhnăng Province in central Cambodia while heading east toward Vietnam. In the two vehicles' trunks, officials found 1,069 pounds (485 kilograms) of live wildlife, including three species of turtles—yellow-headed temple turtles, Malayan snail-eating turtles, and Asiatic softshell turtles—that are listed as either endangered or vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species. The loot also included king cobras, reticulated pythons, and Burmese pythons. The animals, thought to have come from protected areas in Battambang Province in western Cambodia, were released into a protected area near Tonle Sap Lake in the country's central region, according to Wildlife Alliance.

Another pangolin smuggling attempt foiled (Source:

<http://www.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/11/26/nation/20081126151243&sec=nation>)

Muar, Malaysia, 26 November 2008 - Marine police here detained three men and seized 65 pangolins and one tortoise during a raid at a house near Bukit Pasir at about 10pm Tuesday. The men, including two orang asli, aged between 28 and 39, were believed to be members of a syndicate involved in smuggling exotic animals into the country. Muar marine police base commanding officer Asst Supt Mohamad Pouzi Abdul Rauf said the pangolins were estimated to be worth more than RM72,000.

Fishermen's catch of the day — 44 pangolins (Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/12/4/nation/2712461&sec=nation>)

Muar, Malaysia, 4 December 2008 - Two fishermen were detained for trying to smuggle 44 pangolins from Indonesia into the country. The men, aged 50 and 22, were caught after a marine police patrol unit stopped their fishing trawler in the waters off Sungai Balang near here at 9.30pm on Wednesday. Muar marine police base commanding officer Asst Supt Mohamad Pouzi Rauf said the patrol unit, headed by Sjn Abdul Rahman Hassan, was on surveillance duty in the sea when they spotted the two fishermen, a former soldier and a son of another ex-serviceman, acting suspiciously. Upon searching the vessel, the marine police team found some 37 sacks of pangolins hidden inside. The men, engaged by a trawler operator in Parit Jawa, admitted getting paid to bring in the animals from Indonesia, he told reporters at the marine jetty here yesterday.

Man Held For Keeping Wildlife Parts in Freezer (Source:

<http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsindex.php?id=379464>)

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 19 December 2008 -- When officers of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks and the police called on a 60-year-old man in Jinjang Selatan today, they were not interested in the chicken wings he had in his freezer. They went for the 46.82 kg of wild boar meat, four civet cats, 430 gall bladders of wild animals, three pieces of python skin, a pangolin hide, a bear's claw and a suspected genital organ of a wild animal -- all worth about RM20,000. The man, believed to be the owner of the freezer located next to a market, was hauled up for keeping the wildlife parts without a licence from the department.

130 smuggled pangolins seized (Source:

http://www.straitstimes.com/print/Breaking%2BNews/SE%2BAsia/Story/STIStory_316412.html

Bangkok, Thailand, 19 December 2008 - THAI customs officers said on Friday they had rescued 130 pangolins and arrested one man attempting to smuggle the endangered animals out of the country. Customs officers intercepted a truck in Thailand's central Prachuab Khirikhan province late on Thursday night and found the pangolins, or scaly anteaters, trapped in 26 cases. The mammals are usually exported to China via neighbouring Laos, for cooking. Customs officials estimated the pangolins, brought up by truck from southern Songkhla province, were worth 650,000 baht (S\$27,200). The Thai driver was arrested and charged with possessing and smuggling endangered wildlife, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

676 lizards seized at KLIA complex (Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2008/12/21/nation/2867184&sec=nation>)

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 21 December 2008: The Wildlife and National Parks Department (Perhilitan) foiled an attempt to smuggle out 676 clouded monitor lizards during a cargo inspection at the KL International Airport (KLIA). Perhilitan legal and enforcement director Dr Sivananthan Elagupilay said the lizards, of the *Varanus bengalensis*, were found hidden under several boxes of fish at the KLIA Cargo Complex on Thursday. Also seized were python meat and skin, and civet meat.

Vietnam customs seize five tons of frozen pangolin meat (Source:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/msid-3873473,prtpage-1.cms>)

Hanoi, Vietnam, 22 December 2008 - Vietnam customs officials said on Monday they had seized about five tons of frozen pangolin meat, a protected species whose trade is illegal. The 270 boxes of pangolin meat were found Friday in northern Quang Ninh province, said an official at the Cai Lan port customs office, asking not to be named. Officials suspected the cargo was on its way to China, she said. Another source at the port's customs office, who also asked not to be named, said the meat came from 1,481 pangolins.

2 weeks' jail and fined for having protected animals (Source:

http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/NST/Thursday/National/2436484/Article/pppull_index.html)

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 24 December 2008 - A 65-year-old market trader was slapped with a RM5,000 fine and sentenced to two weeks' jail by the magistrate's court yesterday for illegal possession of protected animals. Yap Kum Weng pleaded guilty to five charges of unlawful possession of the scales of a pangolin (*Manis javanica*), wild boar meat (*Sus scrofa*), the skin of a blood python (*Python curtus*), the skins of two reticulated pythons (*Python reticulates*) and four dead civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*) at his shop lot in Kepong Baru market at 9.30am on Dec 19.

Thai police seize four tiger carcasses (Source:

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/1/7/nation/20090107140242&sec=nation>)

Thailand, 7 January 2009 - Thai Police have seized four tiger carcasses said to have been smuggled in from Malaysia, in the resort town of Hua Hin. Bangkok Post reported on Tuesday that the Police have arrested two Thai men in connection with the smuggling. The dead tigers, with their heads cut off, weighed 250kg and were found on Monday in a truck passing through Hua Hin in the Prachuap Kiri Khan province. Police said the dead tigers were believed to have come from Malaysia and were being transported to China.

Hanoi's Environmental Police record largest-ever seizure (Source:

<http://www.traffic.org/home/2009/1/19/hanoi-environmental-police-record-largest-ever-seizure.html>)

Hanoi, Viet Nam, 19 January 2009—Hanoi's Environmental Police have made their largest-ever seizure of wildlife products following the confiscation of more than two tonnes of bones from a store in Dong Da district, Hanoi, on 10 January. Environmental Police first stopped a man transporting a set of tiger bones and ten kilograms of serow bones and horns by motorbike in Ba Dinh district. Following investigations, they raided the end destination of the products, a store belonging to Ms Nguyen Thi Thanh Tam, and discovered another set of tiger bones, six frozen pieces of tiger skin, seven bear paws, 16 bear gall bladders, six porcupine stomachs and 69 bags of bones from various wild animals. Her testimony led to a third and final arrest of a man manufacturing the tiger bone gel found in Ms Tam's warehouse.

Navy Impounds 32 Foreign Vessels in Papua Region (Source: The Jakarta Globe)

Indonesia, 19 January 2009 - The Indonesian Navy has seized 32 foreign ships in Papuan waters since the beginning of the month for crimes ranging from illegal fishing to the transportation of illegally harvested timber. Thirty-two ships have been captured and detained during the month by patrols coordinated at the main naval base in Jayapura [the capital of Papua Province], Navy spokesman First Adm. Iskandar Sitompul said. Iskandar said that most were from Malaysia, the Philippines, China and Thailand. Most of the crew members were

Indonesians, he said. He said that investigations had already been launched into all the cases and hoped that prosecutions would be filed in the near future. He said that the seized ships were being held at a number of naval bases, including Jayapura, and Sorong and Manokwari in West Papua.

Thailand seizes 270 pangolins (Source:

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Asia/Story/A1Story20090130-118198.html>)

Bangkok, Thailand, 30 January 2009 - THAI customs on Friday seized 270 pangolins and arrested a man who was attempting to smuggle the endangered animals out of the country, an official said. Customs officers intercepted a truck headed towards Bangkok in central Prachuab Khirikhan province on Thursday morning and found the pangolins, or scaly anteaters, hidden in plastic baskets, senior customs official Rakop Srisupa-at told AFP.

The mammals are usually exported via neighbouring Laos to China, where they are eaten as an expensive delicacy. Srisupa-at estimated the pangolins were worth 1.4 million baht (\$60,000).

NB: This e-bulletin does not take any responsibility for the accurateness of the reported seizures as all information is taken as presented, from the media.

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