

THE TRAFFIC REPORT



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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION KEY TO STOPPING ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

ASEAN-WEN is an initiative to create the world's largest wildlife enforcement network. It is supported by a project funded by USAID and managed by TRAFFIC and WildAid. This report from Southeast Asia explains why ASEAN-WEN is so vital to the future existence of many endangered species.

Hundreds of pangolins in blue canvas bags lay atop each other in the back of a truck, the journey ahead, long and uncomfortable. Loaded in southern Malaysian, they were making their way north, through Thailand, heading for China. This truckload, like the many before it, will be killed for their meat and scales, believed to have medicinal properties. The Malayan Pangolin (*Manis javanica*) is totally protected in Malaysia, yet it is the most heavily traded mammal in the region. In addition to demand for use of meat and blood as food and scales as traditional medicine ingredients, the pangolin's skin is tanned to make a wide range of leather products.

The over-exploitation of wildlife species like pangolin is a worldwide

problem. Wild animals and plants are traded in large quantities for use as meat, pets, traditional medicine ingredients, trophies, luxury goods and for zoos. While much of the trade is legal, lack of comprehensive management interventions and under-resourced government law enforcement agencies continue to push many species closer towards extinction. Southeast Asia is particularly vulnerable to unscrupulous traders with its rich biodiversity that embraces many rare and endemic species.

Species such as pangolin, Roti Island snake-necked turtle, humphead wrasse, orchids and orangutans are treasures of

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The ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network brings together the efforts of ten nations in Southeast Asia to help combat the illegal trade in endangered species of wildlife. Here an enforcement official in Thailand uncovers an illegal shipment of the Malayan pangolin.

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Photo collage: (l. to r.) scarlet macaw, Howard Buffett; bull shark, WWF/Sylvia Earle; hawksbill turtle, Anja G. Burns; American black bear, Howard Buffett; fishhook cactus, J. Atchley; tiger, WWF/Martin Harvey.

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The Malayan pangolin (*Manis javanicus*) is traded in large volumes mainly for its scales, which are ground to make traditional medicines.

Southeast Asia's biodiversity; but their popularity as pets, food and medicine is devastating wild populations as these species and their parts are in high demand through both legal and illegal markets. For example, earlier this year in Thailand, forestry officials seized around 250 pangolins and 64 rare black swamp turtles. Acting on a tip-off, authorities inspected 60 containers of what were supposed to be red-eared turtles on a Thai Airways International flight from Penang, Malaysia, transiting in Bangkok en route to Laos.

In addition, as economic development and purchasing power has risen within Southeast Asia, so has demand for species found outside the region. Many pet stores in Malaysia stock Indian Star Tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*), which are native to India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. In mid-September 2006, Indian Customs officials seized almost 1500 Indian Star Tortoises heading for Malaysia and a 33-year-old Malaysian ornamental fish trader was arrested.

Over the years, the criminals involved have become increasingly sophisticated in circumventing the law. Usually, smuggling efforts are far better resourced than law enforcement agencies charged with regulating and policing the wildlife trade. However, the 10 Member Countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have marked a clear commitment to turning the tables on this imbalance. In December 2005, Ministerial representatives launched the world's largest wildlife law enforcement coalition, known as the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) to facilitate law enforcement co-operation and intelligence-sharing between national government agencies and their international counterparts.

The launch of this regional network came on the heels of the ASEAN Statement on CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) in 2004, which identified a list of commitments that would be accomplished through the *ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora 2005-2010*.

While each nation operates within its jurisdiction, increased co-ordination with other countries in the region is essential to eradicate international smuggling. The ASEAN countries have also identified capacity building as a need to improve

overall enforcement actions.

Generous support for the development of the network has been provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department of State's Regional Environmental Office in Bangkok has supported the initiative since its inception. The support of USAID has been essential in strengthening the network and reflects the United States' commitment to supporting other nations in stopping illegal wildlife trade. Technical support and facilitation is also provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Department of Justice and the CITES Secretariat.

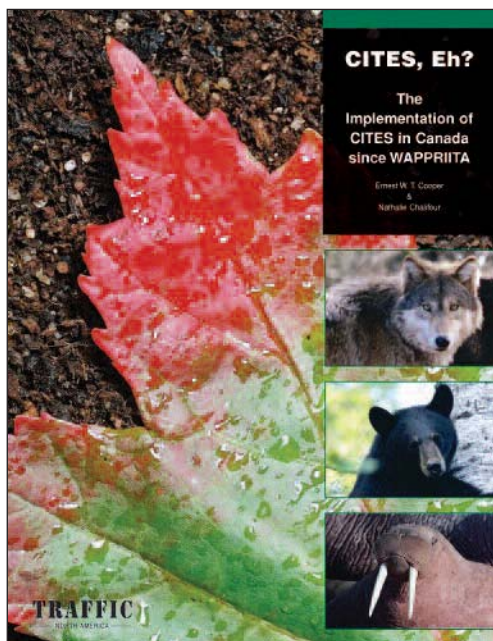
In line with the goals of ASEAN-WEN, TRAFFIC has been focusing much of its training work on international airports in Southeast Asia — major hotspots of the wildlife trade — to improve interception of illegal wildlife cargoes. Many more such workshops are scheduled for the coming year. Other efforts are being made to address illegal trade within countries as well. In August 2006, an enforcement training course was held in Bangkok for the police and wildlife enforcement officers by the ASEAN-WEN Support Project.

An illustration of the impact of effective training is the seizure of 15 endangered Radiated Tortoises (*Geochelone radiate*) in early September 2006 in Bangkok, arriving from Madagascar. Radiated Tortoises are listed on Appendix I of CITES, which prohibits commercial trade in the species. The tortoises were hidden in the luggage of a Madagascar national arriving at the Don Muang International Airport. Also seized were almost 200 chameleons, of unidentified species.

The enforcement team was motivated to act upon learning from TRAFFIC just 10 days earlier about endangered reptile species (including the Radiated Tortoise) sold openly in Bangkok's Chatuchak weekend market. "This is what it is about: Action. We want to see training efforts translate policies into real action on the ground to combat illegal wildlife trade," said Chris Shepherd, Senior Program Officer for TRAFFIC Southeast Asia.

(Adapted from a feature by Loretta Ann Soosayraj in WWF Malaysia's *Green Heart*)

LOOKING BACK AT CITES, Eh?



In May 2005, TRAFFIC North America published *CITES, Eh? A Review of Canada's Implementation of CITES Under WAPPRIITA*. This report provided an in-depth analysis and evaluation of Canada's implementation of CITES. This was the first comprehensive review of Canada's implementation of the Convention since Canada brought the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (WAPPRIITA) and Wild Animal and Plant Trade Regulations (WAPTR) into force in 1996. The report explored Canada's administration and enforcement of CITES and identified those areas needing improvement. The ultimate goal of the report was to ensure that CITES is implemented in Canada with maximum effectiveness.

The report noted that most basic needs of the Convention were being met, and that in some areas, the Canadian government was doing an exemplary job of implementing CITES. In particular, comprehensive and effective domestic legislation for the enforcement of CITES had been developed, and CITES export permits were being issued in an efficient manner. However in other areas Canada's execution of CITES was found to be weak. For example:

- Canada did not have a basic overall policy for CITES implementation.

- Canada continually failed to meet CITES reporting requirements and as such was failing to fulfill a fundamental obligation of the Convention.
- Canada's enforcement of CITES was not sufficient or consistent across Canada.

In total, the report made 34 recommendations to improve inadequacies in Canada's CITES program, which in most cases were linked to insufficient human and financial resources directed at administering and enforcing the Convention. CITES did not appear to be a priority for the Canadian government as a whole or for Environment Canada, the department charged with ensuring that the Convention is effectively implemented.

Since May 2005, there have been significant developments:

- In April 2006, Environment Canada hosted a national meeting of CITES authorities (including TRAFFIC) to discuss revitalizing the Canadian CITES program. The purpose of the workshop was to assess the current program, identify future resource needs, and examine CITES in various ways from the day-to-day business perspective. The desired outcome was a more effective Canadian CITES Program with a cooperative vision for the future.
- In October 2006, Environment Canada began in earnest with drafting the strategic plan for CITES implementation in Canada.
- All outstanding CITES annual reports have been submitted to the CITES Secretariat. The 2004 and 2005 reports were submitted months ahead of the deadlines required by the Convention.
- Environment Canada's Wildlife Enforcement section has been re-

organized into the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate (WED) with significant changes to the reporting structure. The new Director is moving to resolve the gaps in CITES enforcement.

TRAFFIC was impressed with the positive response to the report received from the Canadian government. It is clear that the Canadian CITES authorities are keen to improve CITES administration and enforcement in Canada, as is TRAFFIC. Good progress has already been made and TRAFFIC is committed to assist these efforts so that Canada's implementation of CITES will not only continue to improve, but will become a positive example to the rest of the world.

(Contributed by Ernie Cooper, TRAFFIC North America)

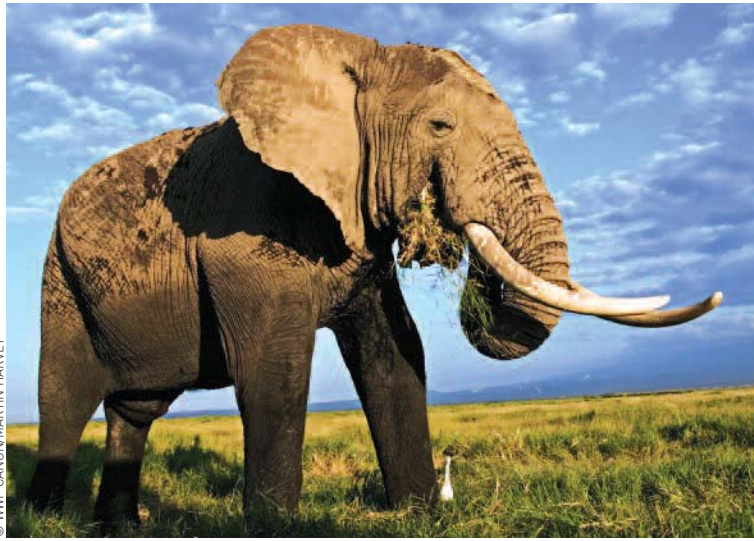
The CITES, Eh? report is available on TRAFFIC North America's website: <http://www.worldwildlife.org/trade/pubs.cfm>

EYE ON ENFORCEMENT: COMBATING THE SURGE IN AFRICAN ELEPHANT IVORY SMUGGLING

There has been a major surge in seizures of African elephant ivory en route to Asia over the past year. Approximately 21,500 kilograms of elephant ivory have been seized worldwide between September 2005 and October 2006.

Between May and July 2006, nearly 12 tonnes of ivory was seized in Hong Kong and Taiwan, which represents potentially 1800 elephants. This, combined with reports of extensive poaching of elephants in Chad in August 2006, raises questions about why the surge is happening now and how can it

| AFRICAN ELEPHANT IVORY SMUGGLING | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Location of Seizure | Ivory seized, approx. (kg) | Country of Origin | Date |
| Philippines | 6,000 | Zambia | 2005 Sept |
| Philippines | 800 | Kenya, Uganda (2 shipments) | 2005 Oct/Dec |
| Hong Kong PRC | 6,500 | Cameroon (2 shipments) | 2006 May |
| Taiwan | 5,200 | Tanzania (2 shipments) | 2006 July |
| Japan | 3,000 | Indonesia (transit) | 2006 Oct |
| TOTAL | 21,500 | | |



In 2005 and 2006, several large shipments of elephant ivory were discovered by enforcement officials in various ports in Asia. TRAFFIC is helping train enforcement officials on detection methods so as to stop this alarming trend.

be stopped? There have also been reports of large-scale poaching in parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo in late 2005. Some of the ivory is destined for China, where economic growth has seen a growing demand for luxury items like ivory carvings. There is speculation that this current surge in trade is because China's legally registered stockpiles of ivory are dwindling.

During the July seizures in Taiwan, two shipments were intercepted a few days apart with over two tonnes and three tonnes respectively, totaling more than 1200 tusks and large sections of ivory tusks. In May, a seizure in Hong Kong from Cameroon snagged nearly five tonnes of ivory. The shipments have been leaving mostly from Cameroon and Tanzania and the ivory is often cleverly concealed within shipping containers, some with secret compartments. The shipments have in some cases been in transit via the Philippines and some shipments were possibly destined for that country. There were allegations of corruption in the Philippines after the shipment of six tonnes of ivory that was seized in September 2005 "disappeared" from a Customs warehouse in May 2006. The Philippines Department of Environment and Natural Resources filed criminal complaints in October 2006 against 21 persons, including 13 personnel of the Bureau of Customs, for their involvement in the theft of seized elephant tusks.

TRAFFIC has been training law enforcement officials to detect ivory shipments and improve their wildlife trade controls in many countries in Asia and Africa. Tip-offs received by TRAFFIC concerning this trade emergence have been provided to enforcement agencies investigating this alarming problem. Interpol and the CITES Secretariat

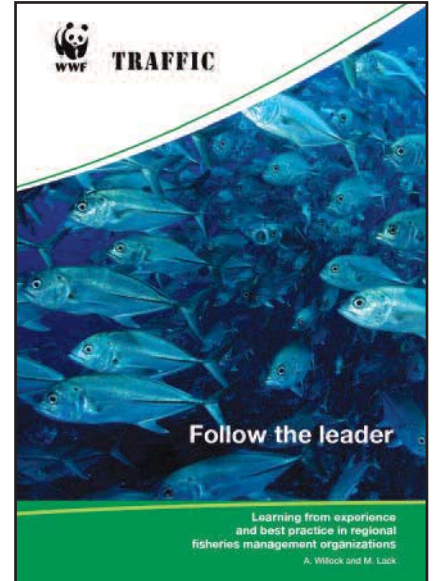
are working to give warning to enforcement agencies in the source, transit and destination countries to intercept these shipments and break the crime networks responsible when tips and leads emerge. Research is ongoing in Africa regarding the sources of the elephant ivory being seized, as it is clear that it is not all originating from the countries of export.

(Contributed by Crawford Allan, TRAFFIC North America)



Enforcement officials have discovered large illegal shipments of elephant ivory, like this one discovered in Taiwan. The shipments are sometimes concealed within secret compartments in shipping containers.

FOCUS ON FISHERIES: RFMO'S NEED TO IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES



Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) are the main mechanism developed by States to regulate fishing on the high seas — areas beyond national laws. But even with 16 active RFMO's around the world, many fish stocks have collapsed or are on the brink of commercial extinction. The TRAFFIC report, *Follow the Leader: Learning from experience and best practice in regional fisheries management organizations*, released in May 2006, discusses some of the problems faced by RFMOs such as the Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission or the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization. The report illustrates both effective and ineffective practices that are being employed, while also outlining how RFMOs can be more strategic and streamlined for bigger results.

For example, in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, some dissatisfied member States have ignored agreed-upon quotas and unilaterally set their own, while within the RFMO responsible for Southern Bluefin tuna, some countries regularly and knowingly exceed their quotas. Alarming, several States are still not joining up to RFMOs and are undermining the efforts of responsible countries. Over the last decade, the management of high seas stocks has been challenged by the expansion of bottom-trawling into deep

water to target new stocks. With most RFMOs slow to adopt management measures for these fisheries, many deep sea fish populations, such as orange roughy, have collapsed.

The report recommends that States should sign the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement and the associated Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas. Additionally, the report highlights the precautionary and ecosystem management approaches and advocates that existing and new RFMO's implement these principles.

(compiled by Jill Hepp TRAFFIC North America)

DID YOU KNOW?

Demand from wealthy tourists from the United States, Europe and Asia for shahtoosh wool is driving poaching of the endangered Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*), locally known as chiru. Shahtoosh shawls, which are well known in the fashion world for their exceptional quality, are made from chiru wool and are sold for thousands of dollars per shawl on the black market. Shahtoosh, which means "the king of wools," is obtained by hunting and killing chiru, which live almost exclusively in the remote Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau. A single shawl requires wool from three to five dead chiru. In 1900, around one million antelopes lived in the wild; today, there may be as few as 50,000. There are well-known substitutes for shahtoosh, including pashmina, which is made from cashmere wool sheared from domestic goats.

(Contributed by Sarah Janicke, WWF U.S.)



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NEWS FROM MEXICO

CONSERVATION OF THE MORELET'S CROCODILE



© GAEL ALMEIDA/TRAFFIC NORTH AMERICA

In 2006, representatives from Guatemala, Belize and Mexico met to discuss the sustainable use status of Morelet's crocodile, (*Crocodylus moreletii*)

During 2006, the Mexican Government undertook several actions regarding the sustainable use of the Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*). In April, representatives from Guatemala, Belize and Mexico met in Mexico City for a tri-national workshop regarding the conservation and sustainable use of the Morelet's crocodile. The purpose of the three day workshop was to provide updates on the

conservation efforts that each country has developed for the species. Discussion focused on developing a regional plan for the conservation and sustainable use of the species. At the end of the workshop, representatives of the three governments signed an agreement that described their intent to initiate a long term regional strategy in 2006, which would allow for the sustainable use of this species in the three countries.

Following this workshop, the Mexican Government made a formal petition to IUCN — The World Conservation Union to de-list the crocodile from the IUCN Red List. This petition was based on the results of recent population assessments, which indicate a significant recovery of the populations and suggest that that the species is no longer at risk of extinction. In 1982, the species was listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List but in recent years the listing has been downgraded to 'Least Risk/Conservation Dependent.'

(Contributed by Gael Almeida TRAFFIC North America)

MEXICAN PRIMATE SPECIES FACE AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

There are numerous factors involved in the decline of wild populations of primates in Mexico, habitat destruction and illegal pet trade being two of the most important. Forest clearing is still a serious threat because tropical forests in Mexico are being deforested at a mean annual rate of nearly 559,000 ha per year. Selective logging and illegal pet trade are often linked. As mahogany becomes scarcer, loggers search out other commercially important wood species and unfortunately, many of the other timber sources now targeted by loggers also happen to be primary food sources for primates. In addition, the paths and roads cleared by loggers allow poachers easy access into primate habitats.

Illegal trade poses a great threat to Mexican primates because it generally goes on undetected by authorities. It is thought that poachers chase and harass small groups of monkeys in very small forest patches, until animals are forced to descend from trees. Then, females carrying babies are killed, and surviving infants are sold at the edge of roads, or to animal dealers who will deliver the



© STEVEN MORELLO

In Mexico, primate species such as the Howler Monkey (*Alouatta pigra*) are at risk because of habitat loss and also because they are captured from the wild and illegally sold as pets.

infants to other markets or to specific customers.

In Mexico, live trade of monkeys is a very profitable activity for the intermediate and final dealers, because a baby howler or spider monkey may be eventually be sold for more than the national monthly minimum wage of \$1200 pesos (around \$109 USD). Even if local poachers only obtain a quarter of what the animals are eventually sold for, it is still a profitable activity for them and poachers that sell a few of the animals can make the equivalent of the national monthly minimum wage. In addition, local poachers may consume the meat of adult animals or use the carcasses for other purposes, such as fishing bait.

Hunting and trade not only reduces the size of wild populations, it also modifies the demographic structure (age/sex structure) of the population, which is highly detrimental to large-bodied primates such as spider monkeys or howler monkeys, due to their low fecundity rates. By targeting females—the most sensitive reproductive element—natural populations are put at risk.

Unfortunately, information on the impact of illegal trade of primates in Mexico is nonexistent, and there are very few quantitative field studies that evaluate the effect of selective logging and hunting in rural communities. However, government seizures data may

help reveal the alarming magnitude of illegal trade in Mexico. For example, between 1995 and 2000, a total of 398 live native spider monkey and howler monkey specimens (*Ateles geoffroyi*, *Alouatta palliata* and *Alouatta pigra*), were confiscated by the Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA). The seizures data represents an unknown proportion of the total illegal trade, as much of the illegal trade is believed to go undetected.

Even though Mexican primates are protected by legislation (NOM-ECOL-059), there are still gaps in scientific understanding and specific government programs focused on the protection of Mexican primates are lacking. Additionally there is an urgent need to carry out formal research to determine the current population status and the impact of illegal trade, before additional protection measures can be devised. The recent addition of Article 60 to the General Law of Wildlife, which prohibits the commercial use of primates, including the importation of exotic specimens, has also raised concerns. The consequences of this decision will certainly exert greater demand for native primate species in the pet market. The conservation status of Mexican primates needs to be reviewed by CITES and IUCN. In the meantime, poachers and loggers are inflicting serious damage upon wild populations.

(Contributed by Rosalía Pastor Nieto, *Baknikité / Ecología y Hábitat AC.- México*)

NEWS FROM CANADA

FOCUS ON NORTHERN ABALONE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abalones are snail-like mollusks found in coastal waters around the world. All of the approximately 100 species of abalone are within the genus *Haliotis*. The Northern or Pinto abalone (*Haliotis kamtschatkana*) is found along the Pacific Coast of North America, from northern Alaska to Baja California, in patchy distributions on exposed and semi-exposed areas from low intertidal to subtidal depths. Most abalones in British Columbia are found at depths shallower than 10 m. They are a small species of abalone, reaching up to 165 mm in length. Abalones cling to rocky substrate

with their large muscular foot. This fleshy foot is highly valued for food use and is a delicacy in many cuisines.

The species was legally harvested until 1990 when Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) implemented a complete ban on collecting the species. It was subsequently listed as a threatened species and was legally protected under the Canadian *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*. Any harvesting of the species is illegal and in violation of both the *Fisheries Act* and *SARA*. Northern abalones are also listed as endangered under the IUCN Red List and are included on British Columbia's Provincial List of threatened or endangered species.

In Canada, Northern abalone populations have continued to decline despite legal protection. Many sources attribute this decline to illegal harvesting. Abalones command high market value and adequate enforcement is difficult on Canada's rugged west coast. Recovery for this species has been difficult because abalones are relatively slow growing, taking up to three to four years to mature and reproduce.

However, DFO officers have been working hard to stop the illegal harvest and trade in the species and have made numerous arrests of abalone poachers and seizures of abalone. The biggest occurred in February 2006 when poachers were caught with approximately 11,000 specimens—the largest abalone seizure in British Columbia. Examples of other seizures and prosecutions in recent years include:

- November 2004, an operator of a Vancouver seafood company was fined \$50,000 (CAD) for buying and selling abalones.
- October 2005, an individual was fined \$35,000 (CAD) for illegal possession of 196 abalones, illegally harvested from the North Coast of British Columbia.
- April 2006, security at Prince Rupert airport tipped off Fisheries Officers that they suspected that a woman had boarded a Vancouver-bound flight with a cooler containing abalone. At Vancouver International Airport, the woman's cooler was inspected and revealed 34 abalone, and a substantial amount of money, all of which was seized.
- May 2006, the Royal Canadian Mounted

Police seized 34 abalone and arrested an individual for allegedly selling abalone at a mall in Prince Rupert, British Columbia.

Hopefully vigorous enforcement and stiff penalties will eventually stem the tide of poaching and allow the species to finally recover. TRAFFIC actively supports the scientific and enforcement activities directed at saving this species and participates in the [Northern] Abalone Recovery Implementation Group.

(contributed by Tanya Shadbolt, TRAFFIC North America).

NEWS FROM THE UNITED STATES

COURT FINE USED TO FIGHT ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

As the saying goes, 'crime doesn't pay.' And in this case, it actually cost the criminal quite a bit of money.

In April 2006, an Oregon woman, Deborah Walding was convicted for offering to sell an endangered ocelot, which is a violation of the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Walding was sentenced to 10 months detention and was ordered to provide a \$25,000 community service payment to TRAFFIC. As few as 70 ocelots are known to remain in the wild in the United States, most of them on the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge in south Texas. These nocturnal cats are endangered throughout their range in Texas and Central and South America, mostly due to habitat destruction and illegal trafficking in pelts. They are protected by national and international laws.

Walding was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Michael Mosman, who said he hoped the sentence would send a message deterring others who illegally sell exotic cats and other rare wildlife. He also stated, "These are serious offenses that lead to the decline of species in the wild." Assistant U.S. Attorney Dwight Holton prosecuted the case.

TRAFFIC will be using the payment to provide support to wildlife enforcers and to research emerging trends in wildlife trade. Crawford Allan, Acting Director of TRAFFIC North America commended the enforcement action and said "As long as there is profit there will be illegal trade in wildlife. Wildlife crimes need to be brought to court and

the judiciary needs to respond in this way, with penalties that significantly impact the profits and liberty of wildlife criminals. Without this strong deterrent effect, black markets for wildlife will flourish."

(USFWS News Release; 10 April 2006; compiled by Jill Hepp TRAFFIC North America)

FOCUS ON FUR TRADE IN NORTH AMERICA

According to the International Fur Trade Federation, in 2005 global fur sales had risen for the seventh consecutive year, reaching a total of \$12.77 billion USD. Approximately, 15% of furs sold come from animals taken from the wild and Canada and the United States supply a significant portion of these pelts. A recent review of the current trends of the North American wild fur trade was undertaken to determine if there were any emerging compliance problems or if trade was becoming unsustainable as a result of the increase in trade in furs.

Sales in Canada and the United States have followed the international trend and increased in recent years. Trapping of wild furbearers in Canada

has remained fairly constant since 1998, but harvesting in the United States has decreased from 6,096,783 pelts in 1996 to 2,284,604 in 2003. Mexico has very limited furbearer populations and therefore limited trade. Examining the trade data from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and CITES, indicates that the numbers of pelts in trade from North America are well below the amount of harvested pelts and there is minimal amount of illegal activity. The scale of trade in Mexico is small with only 353,709 fur products exported between 1998 and 2005 which in comparison with Canada or United States reveals the trade to be quite small. This includes one shipment of over 350,000 pieces of fur trim, however there is a noticeable amount of illicit trade that should be addressed. This initial examination of secondary sources suggests the fur industry appears to be well regulated in Canada and the United States, with little recorded illegal activity and is not over harvesting from wild sources.

(contributed by Tanya Wyatt, PhD Candidate, University of Kent, School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research)



Ocelots (*Leopardus pardalis*) are protected in the United States by the Endangered Species Act. In 2006, a woman in Oregon was convicted of offering to sell an endangered ocelot and was ordered to provide a \$25,000 community service payment to TRAFFIC North America

STAFF NEWS

TRAFFIC North America is pleased to have Linda Downing join our team as a Senior Administrative Assistant in the Washington, D.C. office. Linda is a native of Nicaragua and has a B.B.A in Marketing from Marymount University.

Enforcement Successes in the NEWS

TRAFFIC North America continues to monitor reports of wildlife trade news, events and prosecutions in North America and around the globe. A sampling is presented here to highlight trends in wildlife trade and conservation.

PRISON SENTENCE FOR MAN CAUGHT WITH LOGGERHEAD TURTLE EGGS



Sea turtles, such as the Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) are often illegally targeted for their meat and eggs. In Mexico, it is illegal to sell any products made from sea turtles.

On June 22, a Mexican, Adán Hernández Covarrubias was found guilty of the possession of 800 marine turtle eggs and sentenced to 3 years in prison

and a fine of \$59,627 pesos (around \$6,000 USD) fine. Hernández and two other persons were detained last April in Mexico City Central Market while unloading 6,000 Loggerhead Turtle (*Caretta caretta*) eggs. Loggerhead turtles are an endangered species that nests on the Pacific coast of Mexico. It is believed that the eggs were probably collected in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico. The sentencing of the two other detained persons is still pending. This detention was possible because of the coordinated work between the General Attorney for Environmental Protection (PROFEPA), the Secretary of Marine and the Federal Agency of Investigation. (www.profepa.gob.mx; 22 June 2006)

STING OPERATION IN CHARCO CERCADO, MEXICO

On June 15th, PROFEPA carried out the second sting operation of 2006 in Charco Cercado, San Luis Potosi, one of the largest wildlife trade hotspots in Mexico. During this operation, some 1,000 vehicles were inspected and approximately 70 wildlife items were

seized. There were 25 specimens of birds and snakes that were healthy enough to be released back to the wild. Officers also seized several different types of cacti species, along with six mockingbirds, two coyote puppies, and one recently hatched Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*).



Wildlife products such as cactus and reptile skins are often available in roadside stalls in places such as Charco Cercado, San Luis Potosi. PROFEPA and other enforcement agencies in Mexico are working to curb the illegal sale of wildlife.

This sting operation is part of an ongoing program that seeks to eradicate illegal wildlife trade in Mexico by combating the supply of these products and closing black markets. This sting operation was carried out by PROFEPA in collaboration with the government of the state of San Luis Potosi and the Federal Police.

(www.profepa.gob.mx; 15 June 2006)

INTERNET WILDLIFE TRADER SENTENCED

A Pennsylvania man who sold more than \$200,000 worth of endangered species' parts, hides and mounts through his website and retail shop in Port St. Lucie, Florida, was sentenced to 25 months in prison by a federal court in Miami in April. McMaster operated a website known as Deadzoo.com and a retail store, Exotic & Unique Gifts. He admitted to selling federally protected wildlife parts, including tiger, snow leopard and jaguar skins as well as a gorilla skull and baby tiger mounts

between 2003 and 2004. Special agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began investigating McMaster's illegal wildlife trade in November 2003, after an agent in Illinois received an unsolicited email message from McMaster offering "cat skins" for sale. The agent eventually purchased two Bengal tiger skins for \$15,300; a snow leopard skin for \$7,000 and a clouded leopard skin for \$4,500. In addition to his own website, McMaster offered to sell protected wildlife using other websites such as eBay and Taxidermy.net. McMaster was charged in December 2005 with two felony violations of the Lacey Act, a federal wildlife protection law, and two misdemeanor violations of the Endangered Species Act. McMaster pleaded guilty in federal court in January 2006.

(U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 20 April 2006)

FISHING FOR TROUBLE

Three Lake Huron commercial fishermen and their company have been ordered to pay a massive \$485,000 (CAD) for deliberately and systematically falsifying fishing reports and for taking more than their allocated quota of whitefish (*Coregonus dupeaformis*) from Lake Huron. William Jackson and his firm, which operates three gillnetting tugs and a retail/wholesale store in Southampton, Canada, fished Lake Huron under licenses issued annually by the Ministry of Natural Resources. All commercial fishing licenses have allocated quotas set for different species and for different areas of the lake. Commercial fishermen must submit accurate daily catch reports and then this information is used to determine total catches in comparison to allocated quotas, and to calculate royalties due to the government. The investigation began in the spring 2004 when discrepancies were noted between the fishing locations reported and through observations by a conservation officer with the Upper Great Lakes Management Unit. Acting under the authority of a warrant, the officers had a tracking device placed on one of the tugs. It confirmed that whitefish were being caught in one zone and then reported as being from another. Search warrants provided evidence revealing more than 15,454 kg (34,000 lb) of whitefish had been taken over the quota

in 2003 and more than 88,181 kg (194,000 lb) in 2004.

(Canada Ministry of Natural Resources News Release, 24 May 2006)

RARE REPTILES DISGUISED AS STUFFED ANIMALS



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Both the Indian Star Tortoise (pictured above) and the Burmese Star Tortoise are listed on Appendix II of CITES and require a valid export permit to legally import these species.

In March 2006, a licensed animal importer Jonathon Sawyer was sentenced to 15 months in prison and two years of supervised release for illegally importing and exporting rare reptiles. The case started in 2003 when undercover agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delivered a package from Thailand marked "stuffed animals" to the Washington home of Sawyer. The package had been inspected by customs agents in Alaska who found it did not contain stuffed animals but instead four live Burmese Star Tortoises and two Green Tree Monitor Lizards. Both are species whose trade is restricted by international and U.S. law and Sawyer failed to obtain the required permits to bring them into the United States. Sawyer, a licensed animal importer and exporter, was aware of the regulations and how to present animals to customs and knowingly violated the law. Sawyer eventually admitted that he had shipped reptiles worth almost \$30,000 from the United States to a supplier in Thailand on seven different occasions between 2002 and 2003 including 20 Corn Snakes, 100

Leopard Geckos, one Albino Leopard Gecko, 14 Rhino Iguanas, and 98 Emperor Scorpions in boxes labeled "Stuffed Toy Animals." Authorities also arrested the man responsible for shipping the reptiles from Thailand when he made a trip to Florida in July 2003. Wee Soon Chye was sentenced in Florida to 37 months in prison for his smuggling with Sawyer and others in the United States.

(U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service News Release 10 March 2006)

TORONTO COMPANY CONVICTED FOR UNLAWFULLY IMPORTING CAVIAR

In November, Caviar Centre Inc was convicted by the Ontario Court of Justice — Criminal Division, for unlawfully importing sturgeon caviar into Canada from Turkey without a CITES permit. The company, one of Canada's premier caviar import and wholesale operations, was handed a fine of \$3,000 and ordered to forfeit the 126 kilograms of seized caviar with a retail value estimated at \$305,000.



© WWF CANON EDWARD PARKER

As of 2004, governments that are parties to CITES agreed to a universal caviar labeling system in order to help governments, traders and consumers distinguish legal caviar in trade from illegal caviar. In addition, any international shipments of sturgeon caviar must be accompanied by relevant CITES permits.

It is alleged that the caviar in question originated in the Caspian Sea Region where sturgeon populations are in a precarious state. The conviction concluded an investigation undertaken by Environment Canada officers in late 2004 and early 2005. The convicted company attempted to import caviar using falsified CITES permits.

(Environment Canada News Release, 14 November 2006)

ROUTINE CHECKS UNCOVER TIGER PARTS AT BANGKOK AIRPORT

Thai Police detected and confiscated illegal wildlife parts, including the remains of six Tigers, during an inspection of cargo at Bangkok's Don Muang Airport in June.



Tigers face immense pressure due to habitat loss and poaching for their skins and for use in traditional medicines. Estimates suggest that there are less than 5,000 tigers left in the wild.

The cargo had been transported from Hat Yai, a Thai city near the Malaysian border, to Bangkok in the cargo section of a Thai Airways flight. Economic Police officers routinely check cargo for any possible contraband trafficked in from other countries and this time revealed three boxes of animal skulls and bones. Investigations continue into who was responsible for the smuggling and where the illegal wildlife parts originated. If discovered and convicted under Thai law, the traffickers face up to five years imprisonment or a fine of four times the value of the contraband, which in this case would total about \$80,000. Tigers are totally protected under Thai legislation, and listed in Appendix 1 of CITES, prohibiting all commercial international trade in the species.

(TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and WildAid Press Release 8 June 2006)

TONS OF FROZEN PANGOLINS DETECTED IN HONG KONG

In July, Hong Kong Customs officers at Kwai Chung Custom house seized 4,400 kilograms of frozen pangolin carcass, worth about HK\$890,000. The

consignment was labeled as assorted frozen fishes and was shipped from Indonesia to Hong Kong in a 40-foot container on July 16, for re-export to mainland China. After inspection at the cargo examination compound, Customs officers found frozen pangolin carcasses hidden under frozen fish inside the container. Pangolins are listed on Appendix II of CITES and a zero annual export quota has been established for specimens removed from the wild and traded for primarily commercial purposes. Under the Hong Kong Import and Export Ordinance, any person found guilty of "importing unmanifested cargoes" is liable to a maximum fine of HK \$2 million and imprisonment for seven years. Similarly, the Animals and Plants (Protection of Endangered Species) Ordinance states that any person found guilty of trading endangered species for commercial purpose is liable to a maximum fine of HK\$5 million and imprisonment for two years.

(Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government News Release, 22 July 2006)

HUMPHEAD WRASSE SEIZURE ON SULAWESI ISLAND



The most desirable size for humphead wrasse in the live reef fish trade are "plate-sized," generally between 20-60 cm. Harvesting humphead wrasse at this size often means that the fish has not yet had a chance to reproduce which puts the next generation in jeopardy. A CITES export permit is required for international trade in this species.

An attempt at smuggling humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*), occurred in June 2006 when 36 of the fish were seized at Manado airport, on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island. They had been destined for Hong Kong restaurants, where one kilogram of the rare fish fetches \$80-

\$130. In 2005, the species was added to Appendix II of CITES. Illegal trade is a growing concern and in north Sulawesi, where catches are prohibited, authorities carried out three seizures in five months. A total of 693 Napoleon fish, mostly still alive were seized.

(Cyber Divers News Network article, 15 July 2006)

SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION EFFORTS EFFECTIVE IN MEXICO

The 2006 campaign for the protection of Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*) breeding sites in



The Kemp Ridley sea turtle is the smallest of all eight species of sea turtles and is also unique in that it nests during daylight hours in large groups.

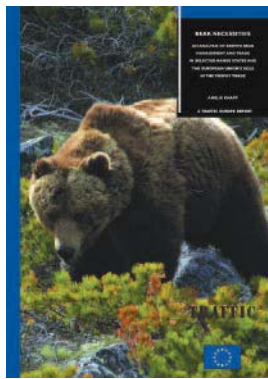
the Gulf of Mexico concluded during the first week of November. PROFEPA announced that this campaign focused on protecting and monitoring the births of Kemp's Ridley Turtles, which increased by 24% in 2006 from the previous year. PROFEPA dedicates human and financial resources during the months of March through November to protect the nesting sites from poachers because Kemp's Ridley Turtle nesting sites are found only in the Gulf of Mexico. Mexican law prohibits the use of sea turtles, a person can be convicted for nine years in prison if found with eggs or products from any species of sea turtle.

(www.profepe.gob.mx)



The following reports were published in 2006 and 2007 by the TRAFFIC Network. Reports can be found at www.traffic.org.

A review of the trade in Aloe ferox, with a focus on the role of the European Union. Amelie Knapp. TRAFFIC Europe Report for the European Commission, Brussels, Belgium. August 2006.



Bear Necessities. An analysis of Brown Bear management and trade in selected range States and the European Union's role in the trophy trade. Amelie Knapp. TRAFFIC Europe Report for the European Commission, Brussels, Belgium. April 2006.

Catching on? Trade-related measures as a fisheries management tool. M Lack. March 2007.

Confronting Shark Conservation Head On. M Lack and G Sant. December 2006.

Conservation Implications of Allocation under the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. Willock A and Cartwright I. WWF Australia and TRAFFIC Oceania. November 2006.

Conservation of Spiny Dogfish Squalus acanthias: A Role for CITES? M. Lack. December 2006.

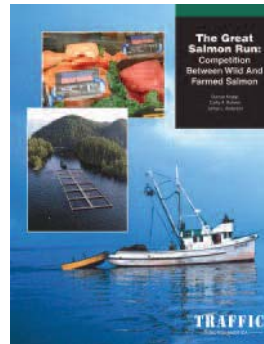
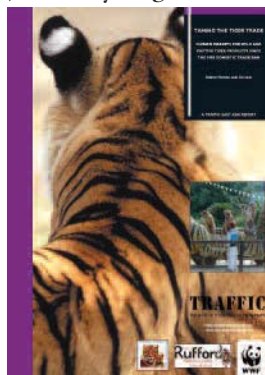
Follow the Leader: Learning from experience and best practice in regional fisheries management organizations. A Willock, M Lack. May 2006.

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Proceedings of the International Expert Workshop on Wildlife Detector Dogs 3-5 March 2006, Bad Schandau, Germany. Felgentreu B (Ed). WWF Germany and TRAFFIC Europe, Frankfurt am Main. November 2006.

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Below are some dates and events that may be helpful to watch for as the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP14) to CITES draws near. Please consult the official published deadlines from the CITES Secretariat or relevant Management/Scientific Authority for exact dates.

| Date | Event | Details |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Jan 4 to May 4 2007 | Canada Review of Foreign Proposals | Foreign proposals Received: SA reviews Species Proposals; MA reviews proposals for Resolutions/SA & MA determine tentative Canadian positions/Copies of foreign proposals and tentative positions sent to Canadian Authorities/List of proposals and tentative position sent to public/Public and Canadian Authorities invited to public hearing |
| April 2007 | USFWS Public Meetings | USFWS will also publish announcements of public meetings approximately 2 months prior to COP14, to receive public input on positions regarding COP14 issues |
| ~1 month prior to NAR Meeting | Canada Public Consultation on Foreign Proposals | Public consultation on Foreign Proposals/Proposed Canadian position on each proposal announced/Summary of proceedings to public |
| April/May 2007 | North America Regional Meeting | North American Regional meeting |
| May 1 2007 | CITES COP Registration | Approved observer registrations must be sent to Secretariat one month prior to COP14. |
| June 3-15 2007 | COP 14 | The Hague, Netherlands |

To obtain information on specific CITES notifications, please contact the CITES Secretariat, United Nations Environment Programme, 15, chemin des Anemones, Case Postale 456, 1219 Chatelaine, Geneva, Switzerland. Email: cites@unep.ch Web Site: www.cites.org

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