

Asian Wildlife Trade Bulletin

News from the Asian Wildlife Trade Initiative
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Traditional Chinese medicine experts speak against captive breeding of tigers

Over 40 Traditional Chinese medicine experts from China's top universities, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and traditional medicine associations spoke out against the captive breeding of tigers as a means of conservation at a recent gathering in Shanghai.

Supported by TRAFFIC, the meeting discussed the conservation and sustainable use of medicinal wildlife resources, with particular focus on the possible re-opening of the domestic tiger trade in China. The meeting, entitled "Medicinal animal resource conservation and sustainable use," took place at East China Normal University on Oct 28, 2006. The meeting marks the seventh gathering of the Traditional Medicines Advisory group (TMAG), a forum formed by TRAFFIC, China's CITES Scientific Authority, and experts throughout China's traditional medicine community to discuss key issues with regard to conservation and sustainability.

'Captive breeding centers such as the Hengdao River Breeding Center*, established in 1986, were set up for commercial purposes," said Dr. Yang Qisen of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. "However, when the Chinese government banned trade of tigers in 1993, the center claimed their aim was to conserve wild tigers. I believe conserving wild animals by captive breeding is not possible. Many areas of China no longer have suitable habitat for tigers, such as for the South China tiger.'

Dr. Ma Qiang of the Chinese Academy of Forestry stated that if China reopened its trade in tiger products, 'it would not be possible to distinguish whether tiger products were from captive sources or from the wild. This could stimulate more poaching of wild tigers, and result in devastating consequences for world's remaining wild tiger population.'

(to be continued on page 2)



Medicines containing tiger parts may become available if China re-opens the domestic tiger trade. At a recent TRAFFIC forum, traditional Chinese medicine experts said that this could have devastating consequences for the world's remaining wild tiger population. © WWF-Canon / Wil LUIJF

Dear Partners,

Asia's trade in wildlife is one of the world's most pressing threats to biodiversity. To meet the complex and daunting challenges of achieving legal and sustainable wildlife trade in a continent of rapid development and great socio-economic diversity, TRAFFIC is unique in its ability to partner with others and to broker conservation solutions to address the challenges of wildlife trade.

Our work in Asia has resulted in better policy in the control of flagship species, strengthened law enforcement along key trade routes, improved management of legal trade via provision of science-based decision making, greater collaboration between government agencies in the region through bilateral and regional dialogues, and greater participation by consumers in keeping trade legal and sustainable.

But much work still needs to be done as Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Central Asian Republics, Mongolia and Russia increasingly provide wildlife resources to supply the demands of East Asia's increasingly affluent consumers.

Through this quarterly newsletter, we hope you enjoy learning about how TRAFFIC is working to transform Asia from a threat to nature to a protector of nature. With the continued trust and support from donors, members, local partners, governments, scientists, media and consumers, together we can find a way forward.

Steven Broad
Executive Director
TRAFFIC International

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

Prof. Zhou Caiquan of West China Normal University believes that the use of tiger bone is not necessary, 'TCM practitioners have found that bones from sailong, a kind of mole found in the Tibetan Plateau, is more effective than tiger bones. This effective substitute could make the TCM tiger trade obsolete.'

Prof. Su Hualong from the Chinese Academy of Forestry Science, however, believed that tigers could become extinct without captive breeding programs. "To save wild tigers, in addition to the tiger trade ban, integrated measures to save wild resources must be implemented, including habitat restoration and enlargement, the removal of snares, ensuring tiger prey are sufficient, and raising public awareness," he concluded.

Since the 1993 ban, the stated objective of tiger breeding centers is to breed tigers for eventual reintroduction to the wild, which has not yet been successfully carried out anywhere. Captive populations of tigers in China have now exceeded 4,000 animals. The Chinese government is considering limited trade of tiger bone for use in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM).

'An open dialogue and active participation of Chinese medicine practitioners in conservation helps dispel the myth that TCM is contradictory to conservation,' said Prof. Xu Hongfa, Director of TRAFFIC's China program, "With this kind of leadership, TCM can play a role in promoting a healthy ecosystem, and not contribute to species extinction and illegal wildlife trade.'

* The Hengdao River breeding center, located in Heilongjiang province in northeast China, is one of China's two largest tiger captive breeding centers. Its captive population is estimated at over 1,000.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Promoting government action to protect the region

Taiwan government renews commitment to keep tiger bone out of traditional Chinese medicine

A TRAFFIC project aimed at stopping the resurgence of the tiger trade in Taiwan from Southeast Asia has resulted in a renewed commitment not only by the traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) community but by the Taiwan government to keep tiger bone out of traditional medicine.

The project, which sought to gain support from Taiwan's TCM trade associations for conservation efforts by increasing understanding of the trade impact on wild tiger populations, organized a dialogue meeting with stakeholders on June 20, 2006, in Taipei. Thirty representatives from TCM trade associations around the island and six government officers attended the meeting.



Government authorities in Taiwan are reproducing and distributing a TRAFFIC poster on tiger conservation to Taiwan's 16,000 TCM retailers. © TRAFFIC East Asia - Taipei

awareness activities,' said Joyce Wu of TRAFFIC - Taipei.

As a result of the dialogue, the Taiwan government issued an official notice to re-inforce the ban on tiger bone trade and use, as well as called for the assistance of TCM traders to stop the use of tiger medicines.

Government authorities also agreed to both produce more copies of a poster on banning the tiger trade developed by TRAFFIC and distribute them to Taiwan's 16,000 TCM retailers. TRAFFIC originally produced 2000 copies of the posters, which gives TCM retailers a clear explanation on why tiger bone is not for sale. The posters have also been translated into Bahasa Indonesia to raise awareness of the acute problems facing the Sumatran tiger in Indonesia.

For more information, contact Joyce Wu at ycjoycew@ms57.hinet.net

Asia's regional trade networks

Promoting conservation of Amur River sturgeon in Russia

Recent TRAFFIC research on the status of Kaluga sturgeon (*Huso dauricus*) and Amur Sturgeon (*Acipenser schrenckii*) has revealed that the amount of sturgeon harvested annually in the Russian part of the Amur River exceeds the amount legally allowed by the Russian government by several times. The illegal fishing and trade of Amur sturgeon and Kaluga caviar and meat is responsible for the over-fishing, which has led to the continuing demise of wild populations.

The Amur River, one of the world's longest rivers with a

Participants discussed the conservation impact of the tiger trade, include a briefing on a major tiger bone seizure in 2005. This was crucial for TCM traders to understand the connection between the seizure and the TCM trade, and its impact on wild tiger populations. 'Instead of blaming TCM traders for tiger bone smuggling, we wanted to engage in an open dialogue and seek their help in providing ideas and opportunities for

length of 4,400km, is shared by Russia, China, and Mongolia. The river once supported over 120 fish species, including the Kaluga and Amur sturgeon. The two species are endemic to the Amur Basin and have been commercially fished for more than 100 years. They are harvested chiefly for caviar - the unfertilised eggs, or roe, of the females and one of the most valuable of wildlife commodities.



A recent TRAFFIC survey revealed that sturgeon harvested annually in the Russian part of the Amur River is several times the amount legally allowed by the Russian government. © TRAFFIC Europe - Russia

However, a lack of adequate fisheries management and law enforcement, together with increased levels of illegal fishing and trade have led to a dramatic reduction of the river's sturgeon resources in recent decades. In the early twentieth century, the catch decreased by over 30 times, and between 1987 and 2002, the annual sturgeon catch in the Amur River fell from 530 tons to 37 tons, mainly due to over-fishing and water pollution.

TRAFFIC surveys included interviews with fishermen, government fish inspectors, poachers, traders, and enforcement agency staff, including from the Customs and Prosecution Offices. A market survey was also conducted.

A study of sturgeon catches discovered an absence of second-time spawners in the catch of Kaluga, revealing that almost all Kaluga sturgeon entering the river to spawn are caught. While juvenile fish from two fish hatcheries have been released into the river, the numbers are small and have not impacted Amur sturgeon populations.

Widespread poaching is the main reason for over-fishing of Amur River sturgeons. The quantity of sturgeon harvested annually by poachers in the Russian part of the Amur River is many times more than the allowed catch. For example, in 2002, a maximum of an estimated 800 kg of Amur River sturgeon caviar could be harvested legally. However, the total quantity of caviar that received official veterinary certification by the Veterinary Services was 2173 kg.

TRAFFIC found that illegal poaching is highly organized and there are indications that local government administrations and/or law enforcement agencies are involved in the illegal trade and may co-operate with poachers.

Most illegal Amur River sturgeon products are consumed domestically. Both meat and caviar are sold openly in markets, shops, through advertisements and even on the Internet. Most of this trade takes place in the region, though Kaluga caviar can be purchased in Moscow through the Internet.

These illegal products are also smuggled abroad, often to China and Japan from where they may then be transported to other destinations such as the US or Europe. According to the Far-Eastern Customs Directorate, reports of attempts to illicitly export illegal sturgeon products are on the rise.

'TRAFFIC will provide the information it has gathered to the relevant regional and national government bodies and will offer concrete and measurable actions to address the diminishing Amur River sturgeon population and to stem the illegal harvest. TRAFFIC will also be putting forward suggestions for measures at the international level and to the CITES Secretariat,' said Alexey Vaisman of TRAFFIC Russia, 'The next step would then be to encourage an effective means of implementing these recommendations and help ensure that the sturgeons in the Amur River have a future'.

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Consumers as partners

Connecting wildlife to our lives: Reaching consumers in Viet Nam

The individual actions of consumers are important, and informed purchasing decisions requires the public to have accurate information. In countries such as Viet Nam, where a recent TRAFFIC survey revealed that nearly 50% of Ha Noi residents have used wildlife products, raising public awareness is key to achieving legal and sustainable wildlife trade.

Viet Nam, with a population of over 80 million people, is also home to many rare fauna and flora that dwell throughout its diverse landscapes, including over 75 endemic animal species. Several wildlife species that are endangered throughout Asia can be found in Viet Nam, including the Javan rhino and the Asian elephant. Nevertheless, a burgeoning wildlife trade, alongside habitat destruction, is threatening to destroy this rich biological heritage.

As the first step in a long-term WWF/ TRAFFIC communications campaign to reach consumers in Ha Noi, TRAFFIC conducted a survey in 2005 on the attitudes and behavior of Ha Noi residents toward consumption of wildlife. The outcomes of this survey have not only helped inform the campaign, but will also serve as a basis for other communications and awareness activities in Ha Noi.



Winners of a TRAFFIC campaign involving Ha Noi high school students who developed ideas for a television public service announcement on illegal consumption of wildlife. © TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Greater Mekong

The ongoing campaign by WWF and TRAFFIC has already succeeded at reaching a variety of target audiences. A number of activities have been organized for high school and university students, journalists have been given specialized training sensitizing them to wildlife trade issues, and public service announcements produced by students revolving around the anti-wildlife consumption slogan “Don’t trade the natural world for human demands” are currently being aired on Vietnam Television through March 2007. A famous Vietnamese composer was hired to compose the background music for PSA’s, as well as the theme song for the campaign itself.

Other activities have included the preparation of a press release highlighting the impacts of illegal wildlife trade and unsustainable wildlife consumption, and outlining the ways in which the WWF/ TRAFFIC campaign aims to address these issues. This together with coverage of the campaign activities has resulted in over 60 media reports both in Ha Noi and throughout the country.

In addition, a range of communications materials have been produced and sent to local journalists, relevant government agencies, the Youth Union, National Union of Students, secondary schools involved in the project, as well as conservation organisations including FFI, IUCN, Birdlife, UNEP, and the Wildlife Trade Network in Vietnam.

Many other activities are planned aiming at reducing the unsustainable consumption of wildlife products in Ha Noi, and more recently funding was secured to extend the campaign until 2009.

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Promoting government action to protect the region

Strengthening law enforcement to combat illegal trade of Asian big cats in southwest China

A joint TRAFFIC and China CITES MA workshop aimed at addressing the illegal trade of Asian big cats through promoting the enforcement of CITES regulations in southwest China took place on November 28-29, 2006, in Dujiangyan, Sichuan province.

Over 30 participants attended the workshop, including front-line policemen, market monitoring officers, customs enforcers, and officers from local forestry bureaus.

‘Participants said they were unaware of the crisis facing many endangered species,’ said Yang Qin, Program Coordinator for the TRAFFIC China, ‘The workshop helped them understand how their work is key to stopping illegal wildlife trade.’

Mr. Meng Xianlin, Director of China National CITES MA, gave a general introduction of CITES and how China implements this international treaty. His presentation emphasized illegal trade in tiger and leopard skins, as well as ivory. TRAFFIC introduced the results of a recent survey on tiger and leopard bone products in China.



Policemen, market monitoring officers, customs enforcers, and local forestry bureau officers in southwest China learn how their work is key to stopping illegal wildlife trade at a recent TRAFFIC workshop. © TRAFFIC East Asia China Programme/ Yang Qin

‘Before the workshop, I had little knowledge on species identification and relevant national laws, as well as little support from other organizations to help us effectively implement monitoring methods,’ said one participant from the State Administration for Industry & Commerce, ‘The workshop provided some easy and practical training, and the chance for better cooperation with other stakeholders in the future.’

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Promoting government action to protect the region

Tackling illegal wildlife trade in Mongolia

A training seminar for staff of Mongolia's Customs and Inspections Agencies on illegal wildlife trade took place in Ulaanbaator on December 4-6, 2006. The training was sponsored by the US State Department, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and TRAFFIC.

The training included intercepting common smuggling techniques; conducting undercover investigations and surveillance; conducting vehicle and cargo inspections; evidence handling; and disposal and disposition of seized wildlife.

Many species of Mongolia's wildlife are now under imminent threat of national extinction due to the demand for wildlife products such as saiga antelope horns, red deer antlers, bear parts, skins and furs, and birds of prey. The illegal wildlife trade has caused significant decreases in wildlife species in Mongolia (many by 75-90% in just the last 15 years).

Through the training, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and TRAFFIC East Asia hope to improve the skills of Mongolian Customs and Inspection agents to undertake wildlife protection and enforcement and more effectively meet Mongolia's obligations in preventing illegal wildlife trade under CITES.

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Demand for wildlife products such as saiga antelope horn has caused significant decreases in wildlife species in Mongolia. © WWF-Canon / John E. NEWBY

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Groundbreaking project promotes international co-operation to tackle unsustainable wildlife trade across China's borders

A ground-breaking TRAFFIC project has led the way for increased collaboration between China and countries throughout Asia. China's rapidly developing economy is increasingly generating demand for wildlife, thus China's wildlife trade has become significant not only within China but across its borders, having a big impact on the wildlife of neighbouring countries. Tigers, Tibetan Antelopes and Saker Falcons are just a few examples of the many species under threat due to cross-border trade. Therefore, the effective control of China's wildlife trade increasingly relies on collaboration between China and its neighbours. TRAFFIC, in collaboration with UKFCO (the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office), has initiated high-level dialogues and joint enforcement actions between China and countries such as India, Nepal, Viet Nam and the Russian Federation, addressing cross-border wildlife trade for the first time.

The first international dialogue took place in August 2005 in Urumuqi, Xinjiang province, China. This multilateral dialogue on wildlife trade - the 'CITES Silk Road seminar' - included 50 officials from 12 countries including India, the Russian Federation, the Central Asian Republics, and Mongolia, resulting in official recommendations distributed to all parties.

This was followed up with cross-border visits between the Chinese and Indian CITES Management Authorities in May 2006, and another with India and Nepal Government delegates coming to China in June 2006. The June 2006 meeting laid the foundation for joint CITES action,

focusing on Tigers (Asian big cats) & Tibetan Antelope.

In addition to supporting international dialogues, dual-language materials for CITES enforcement and education at key borders between China and its neighbours have been developed and distributed. For the Russia/China border, identification booklets in both Chinese and Russian on how to identify timber and the status of wildlife trade between the Russian Federation and China were published April 2006. The information has been distributed through WWF China forest workshops, and will be an important part of an upcoming China-Russia-Mongolia enforcement workshop to be held in late 2007.



A TRAFFIC poster in Vietnamese and Chinese promotes CITES enforcement at key border points between China and Vietnam.



CONTENTS

- 1 Groundbreaking project promotes international co-operation to tackle unsustainable wildlife trade across China's borders
- 2 Building law enforcement capacity in key trade hubs in Asia
- 3 Lifting Tiger trade ban a catastrophe for conservation
- 3 Building consumer awareness amongst Taiwan's tourists
- 4 TRAFFIC assesses methods to link biodiversity conservation and livelihoods in Lao PDR, Cambodia
- 4 Senior CITES Secretariat officer John Sellar meets with NGOs and government authorities in Beijing
- 5 TRAFFIC works to improve wildlife enforcement in India

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

For China's border with Viet Nam and with the Russian Federation, tri-language (Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese) awareness posters were published in June 2006 and distributed the following month at the Greater Mekong CITES meeting in Kunming. The posters included information on endangered wildlife being traded across the borders, such as bear paws, musk, ginseng, deer antlers, antelope horns, orchids, freshwater turtles, pythons and more.

Currently in the works is a shared wildlife trade seizure database for CITES Management Authorities of the Greater Mekong Subregion, including China. A working version of this database has been completed and meetings for review and comments by CITES authorities in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, and China for its ongoing development have been held. However, specific implementation plans have yet to be developed in part due to concern by CITES authorities over cost implications for staff training and maintenance.

'Promoting regional collaboration with CITES is the key to achieving our goal of sustainable management of biodiversity and improved environmental governance in the long-term,' said Dr Craig Kirkpatrick, Director of TRAFFIC East Asia. 'However, more work still needs to be done in terms of training front-line enforcement officials, and cross-border visits to reinforce relationships that encourage further information exchange.'

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Promoting government action to protect the region's biodiversity

Building law enforcement capacity in key trade hubs in Asia

International trade hubs, such as airports and seaports, are key transit points in the movement of illegal wildlife, often in very large volumes. Wild fauna and flora is collected from around a region and is funnelled through these transit hubs before being distributed to the global market. As part of TRAFFIC's strategy to increase the frequency of successful interdiction of illegal wildlife trade cargoes, a multi-year training and capacity building initiative is being carried out. In recent months, supported by a grant from the US Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, TRAFFIC has provided training in important hubs where trade is flowing between producer and consumer regions, such as Singapore, Malaysia, Viet Nam and China (Kunming and Guangzhou).

TRAFFIC's experience in Asia has shown that enforcement personnel from a variety of agencies, including CITES authorities, Customs authorities, police and the port authorities themselves, are often poorly equipped and lack the capacity to carry out their basic responsibilities in an efficient manner regarding wild animals and plants. By promoting interagency co-operation and improving the capacity of front-line officers charged with detecting and intercepting illegal trade in airports

and seaports, TRAFFIC aims to encourage these agencies to work together more effectively for law enforcement.

The training sessions aim to build capacity in the understanding of wildlife regulations, species identification of CITES Appendix-I and Appendix-II species, and improving inspection processes and related skills – as well as gathering information on the needs of various agencies to deal with the challenges of controlling wildlife trade.

High volumes of trade in reptiles, birds, and forest products such as orchids and agarwood are common throughout the region, as well as specialized demand for high-profile wildlife products derived from Tigers, elephants, and marine turtles. Connecting the supply and demand nexus between Southeast Asia and China has been a major focus in improving producer-consumer co-operation in wildlife trade matters, and is part of TRAFFIC's support to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN). In China, training events have been held in Kunming (September 2006) and Guangzhou (April 2007) and delivered by a TRAFFIC training team in collaboration with China CITES Management Authority regional offices for Guangzhou and Kunming.

Workshops have revealed that awareness of illegal wildlife trade amongst front-line enforcement officers remains generally low, as does comprehension of CITES, to which all target countries are Parties. Other important feedback has been that the capacity to monitor and administer legal trade controls alongside detection of the illegal trade requires further improvement in technical capacity. For example, at a recent training session in Guangzhou, more than half of the participants had never heard of CITES and almost all had never been trained in wildlife trade issues.

Besides holding training courses in China, a major consumer country, TRAFFIC has also been conducting a series of capacity-building workshops for enforcement officers stationed at major trade hotspots in Southeast Asia. Between October



Markets like Qingping in Guangdong province are renowned for trade in wildlife such as freshwater turtles, of which three-quarters of the 90 species found in Asia are considered threatened or critically endangered. TRAFFIC is training enforcement personnel to improve detection and interception of illegal trade in Guangdong and other trade hubs in Asia. © Timothy Lam/TRAFFIC.

2006 and March 2007, TRAFFIC has conducted four training events in Viet Nam (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City - November 2006), Malaysia (February 2007) and Singapore (March 2007). Altogether 174 officers attended the workshops from a range of CITES, Customs, fisheries, wildlife, cargo and checkpoint agencies.

Key issues raised as further needs by workshop participants include:

- lack of species identification skills for border control officers;
- an urgent need for co-operation between different agencies in wildlife trade cases;
- guidance on proper handling of confiscated specimens by border officers;
- lack of standard protocols for the investigations and subsequent prosecution of wildlife criminals.

There was a unanimous request for more regular training courses in CITES as well as species identification, without which it is difficult for the border control officers to carry out their CITES obligations and duties. TRAFFIC will continue to conduct such workshops in Southeast Asia (including Cambodia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines and Viet Nam) until December 2007.

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Promoting government action to protect the region

Lifting Tiger trade ban a catastrophe for conservation

Any lifting or easing of the current Chinese ban in Tiger trade is likely to be the death sentence for the endangered cat species, a new TRAFFIC report says.

The report *Taming the Tiger Trade: China's Markets for Wild and Captive Tiger Products* Since the 1993 Domestic Trade Ban warns that Chinese business owners who stand to profit from the tiger trade are putting increasing pressure on the Chinese Government to overturn the 1993 ban. This would allow domestic trade in captive-bred Tiger parts for use in traditional medicine and for clothing to resume.

The Chinese ban has been essential to prevent the extinction of Tigers by curbing demand in the country that was historically the world's largest consumer of Tiger parts. In compliance with the Resolutions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the ban has virtually eliminated the domestic market for Tiger products in traditional medicines.

"In the early 1990s, we feared that Chinese demand for Tiger parts would drive the Tiger to extinction by the new millennium. The Tiger survives today thanks in large part to China's prompt, strict and committed action," said Steven Broad, Executive Director of TRAFFIC. "To overturn the

ban and allow any trade in products from captive-bred Tigers would waste all the efforts that China has invested in saving wild Tigers. It would be a catastrophe for Tiger conservation."

The report resulted in wide international media coverage of China's Tiger trade. One thousand copies of the report have been distributed to key partners in China and abroad, and will be widely distributed at the Fourteenth Conference of Parties to CITES, to be held in the Netherlands in June 2000.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Consumers as partners

Building consumer awareness amongst Taiwan's tourists

Travelling abroad is becoming increasingly popular in Taiwan, with tourists purchasing souvenirs made from wild animals and plants. To raise awareness amongst tourists that many wild animal and plant species are becoming rare and endangered and are under strict protection, TRAFFIC has developed a short video and brochure aimed at increasing awareness of wildlife trade issues.

The brochure offers consumers information on species including primates, Tigers, bears, rhinos, musk deer, birds, tortoises, sea turtles, crocodiles, snakes, lizards, seahorses and their products, which are protected by law and which require permits for import and export. One hundred thousand copies of the brochure will be distributed to travel agents and airlines throughout Taiwan.

The 60-second video has been produced using 3D animation. It illustrates in a humorous and simple way how people can help wildlife by not buying certain endangered wildlife products when traveling abroad. The film will be shown by airlines on international flights departing Taiwan as well as distributed to high schools in Taiwan.

For more information, contact Joyce Wu at ycjoycew@ms57.hinet.net



One hundred thousand copies of a TRAFFIC brochure aimed at raising awareness of wildlife trade issues amongst tourists are being distributed to travel agents and airlines throughout Taiwan.

TRAFFIC assesses methods to link biodiversity conservation and livelihoods in Lao PDR, Cambodia



Two new TRAFFIC reports offer an overview of the trade of natural resources in Lao PDR and Cambodia.

As a contribution to the IUCN Mekong River Basin Wetland Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use Programme (MWBSP), TRAFFIC conducted field studies in two demonstration sites located in Lao PDR and Cambodia to investigate trade in natural resources. In addition, the field studies sought to identify economic, ecological and social factors that influence local patterns of trade in natural resources.

The findings have been published in two separate reports which offer an overview of the trade of natural resources, including fish, wildlife (terrestrial and aquatic vertebrates aside from fish), and non-timber forest products in Lao PDR and Cambodia.

‘The studies undertaken in the provinces of Attapeu, Lao PDR and Stung, Cambodia represent an innovative approach aiming to explore patterns of natural resource extraction and trade and the potential importance that this trade has for meeting the subsistence needs of local communities,’ said Sulma Warne, Co-ordinator of TRAFFIC’s work in the Greater Mekong subregion.

The information revealed the types of resources being traded, trade routes, trade dynamics (e.g. networks, prices, volumes), trends in trade over time and regulations and current management practices. In terms of trade patterns, the research identified that market access is a key determinant of trade patterns. This emphasises the growing concern that ongoing road improvements in Attapeu and Stung Treng are facilitating an expansion of trade in natural resources from the demonstration sites.

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Senior CITES Secretariat officer John Sellar meets with NGOs and government authorities in Beijing

In anticipation of CoP14 to be held in the Netherlands beginning June 3, 2007, senior CITES Secretariat officer, John Sellar, met with Chinese authorities and international NGOs on March 29, 2007, to learn more about the current situation of trade in Tigers and elephants in China.

Participants included representatives of China’s State Forestry Administration, the China Wildlife Conservation Association (CWCA), the China Arts and Crafts Association (CACA), the China CITES Scientific Authority and CITES Management Authority, as well as representatives of TRAFFIC, Conservation International (CI), and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW).

At the meeting, TRAFFIC gave a presentation on its recent Tiger market surveys in China as well as distributing the recently published TRAFFIC report *Taming the Tiger Trade: China’s Markets for Wild and Captive Tiger Products Since the 1993 Domestic Trade Ban*.

CI discussed their public awareness projects in Tibetan communities, and IFAW presented information from a recent survey of illegal products for sale in China’s Tiger farms. A representative of CACA spoke about China’s ivory carving industry.

Discussions included consideration of why Japan may be approved to buy ivory stockpiles, while China may not. Some participants emphasized that ivory carving is a long-time Chinese tradition dating back thousands of years. Following this theme, participants also discussed whether or not the use of Asian big cat skins in Tibetan clothing is a tradition or a fashion trend, along with possible solutions for dealing with privately owned Asian big cat skins.

After the meeting, Mr. Sellar travelled to the Tibet Autonomous region to see first-hand China’s trade in Tiger skins and to Guilin to visit one of China’s Tiger farms.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org



Trade in elephant and Tiger products, such as this Tiger skin used to trim traditional Tibetan clothing, was the main subject of discussion during a recent visit to China by the CITES Secretariat. © TRAFFIC

Promoting government action to protect the region

TRAFFIC works to improve wildlife enforcement in India

Lack of adequate capacity has been perceived as a major handicap for India's Forest Department and other enforcement agencies engaged in curbing wildlife crime and illegal trade across the country. To address this challenge, on March 12, 2007, TRAFFIC India organised a one-day workshop in Delhi to assess the training needs of wildlife enforcers.

Participants included representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the State Forest Department, the Customs Bureau, the Central Bureau of Investigation, State Police, Army and other enforcement agencies.

As a first step, the workshop aimed to assess the training needs for various levels across enforcement agencies. The next step will be to develop appropriate training modules and an enforcement handbook for field practitioners that addresses the present scenario of wildlife crime and illegal trade in the country and surrounding regions.

The workshop was chaired by Sri Vinod Rishi, former Director General of the Wildlife Preservation, Govt. of India and Director of the Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy. Ravi Singh, Secretary General and CEO of WWF India gave an overview of WWF India, while Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India, introduced TRAFFIC India and the objectives of the workshop.

Participants discussed linkages of wildlife criminals and the role of various agencies to check such offences. The need for various enforcement agencies to work together was emphasized.

The workshop resulted in the identification and prioritisation of various subjects and areas to be taken up for future training aimed at various organisations to improve their capacity to fight wildlife crime. The workshop will also help in the development of a Wildlife Enforcement Handbook presently being undertaken by TRAFFIC India.

For more information, contact Samir Sinha at ssinha@wwfindia.net



A TRAFFIC workshop in Delhi assesses the training needs of wildlife enforcers in India. © TRAFFIC

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Issue 3, April 1 - September 30, 2007



Elephants, Tigers and Sharks: A Glance at CoP 14

Conservationists descended upon The Hague this past June for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP 14) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Delegates addressed several issues impacting Asian wildlife trade.

African elephants dominated much of the conference discussions. Prior to the CoP, a limited sale of ivory from three southern African countries was given formal approval. During the meeting, Zambia and Chad presented a compromise document, which was passed, on behalf of all African elephant range States, allowing an increase in the one-off sale of ivory to include ivory from stockpiles in Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This sale will be the only exception to a nine-year suspension on all ivory sales. Japan was approved as a buyer for the one-off ivory sale, while China was not. China and Thailand were again identified as two of the most globally significant domestic markets driving the illicit trade in ivory.

In regards to marine life, two shark species—Spiny Dogfish and Porbeagle—failed to make CITES Appendix II, which places strict conditions on trade. Currently, international trade of the two

dramatically declining populations is largely uncontrolled.

A notable conservation success was the decision to reject the raising of captive Tigers for trade in Tiger parts and reduce the size of large-scale commercial Tiger farms “to a level supportive only to conserving wild Tigers”.

Three countries with wild Tigers—India, Nepal and Bhutan—were joined by the USA in calling on China to phase out the country’s privately run “Tiger farms,” which house almost 5 000 animals. TRAFFIC and WWF, along with a coalition of other organizations, have offered to support China in stepping up law enforcement and shutting down its Tiger farms.

“A legal market in China for products made from farmed Tigers would increase demand and allow criminals to ‘launder’ products made from Tigers poached from the wild,” said Steven Broad, Executive Director of TRAFFIC.

The conference ended with TRAFFIC applauding some conservation decisions, while urging greater conservation efforts to promote wildlife trade sustainability.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

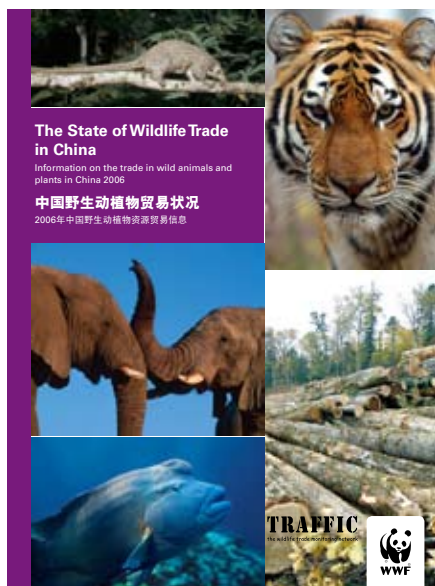
CONTENTS

- 1 Elephants, Tigers and Sharks: A Glance at CoP 14
- 2 TRAFFIC reveals the state of China's wildlife trade
- 3 Awareness and enforcement: wildlife trade on the Chinese-language internet
- 4 Travelling exhibit brings message of biodiversity conservation to Viet Nam
- 5 Two years later, Tiger bone smuggler brought to justice
- 6 Tiger seizure in Ha Noi the first of its kind
- 7 New TRAFFIC officer appointed to Russian Far East



Over the course of 12 days, delegates adopted more than 100 formal decisions strengthening wildlife trade regulations, several of which impact Asian wildlife trade. (c) James Compton, TRAFFIC.

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network



A recent TRAFFIC report gives a snapshot of the state of wildlife trade in China in 2006 © TRAFFIC East Asia

TRAFFIC reveals the state of China's wildlife trade

TRAFFIC has published a snapshot of the state of wildlife trade in China in 2006.

The report, in English and Chinese, is the first in an annual series on emerging trends in China's wildlife trade, and provides up-to-date reviews of work being carried out to prevent illegal and support sustainable trade in China.

"*The State of Wildlife Trade in China* provides an overview of wildlife trade over the past year and examines what impact China's consumption is having on globally important biodiversity 'hotspots', and what emerging trends there are in wildlife trade," said Dr Xu Hongfa, Co-ordinator of TRAFFIC's China Programme.

The lead story is on the illegal trade in Tigers and other Asian big cats, whose bones are in demand for traditional medicines and whose skins are sought after for costumes and decorations. Another key article examines trade in live reef fish through Hong Kong and southern China, the world's largest importers of such fish. The dramatic increase in China's wood imports over the last decade, largely driven by the country's rapid economic growth, is also examined. The future of China's yew trees (genus *Taxus*), which are under threat from the unsustainable harvest of bark and needles for the production of anti-cancer medicines, comes under scrutiny.

Other articles examine the pangolin trade in China through a review of recent seizures, the on-going challenges presented by the illegal elephant ivory trade, the China Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network—established in 2006, China's international collaboration to keep wildlife trade legal and sustainable through linking with regional initiatives such as ASEAN-WEN, development of China's conservation community and TRAFFIC East Asia's conservation awareness initiative in partnership with Ogilvy (China).

State of Wildlife Trade in China: Information on the trade in wild animals and plants in China 2006 is available at www.traffic.org. Its production was generously funded by WWF-Netherlands.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Awareness and enforcement: wildlife trade on the Chinese-language internet

Illegal wildlife trade is currently gaining ground on the Chinese-language internet, where many websites openly advertise threatened wildlife products. Virtual markets now allow buyers and sellers to connect with ease and speed. While wildlife law enforcement has made gains in policing physical markets, the internet presents many new challenges.

To address the growing need for effective internet monitoring related to wildlife trade, TRAFFIC has released a study based on broad-scale surveys of Chinese-language websites for species protected under CITES. The report seeks to promote future efforts to keep online trade legal and sustainable.

The study surveyed popular auction websites, Yahoo and eBay, in addition to several independent websites with wildlife trade themes in mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Auction and theme websites in all three markets were monitored for eight months, with auction websites monitored weekly, then later biweekly. Due to a smaller frequency of change, theme websites were surveyed monthly. Keywords were used to find advertisements for wildlife commodities.

Over the course of the study, surveyors identified 4291 unique advertisements for wildlife products. Auction sites from mainland China yielded the highest number of advertisements, followed by Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Many websites surveyed also openly advertised threatened wildlife products, including those derived from numerous high profile species, such as elephants, rhinoceroses, Tigers, and marine turtles. Animals representing a wide range of species could also be ordered from auction sites live or whole.

"Internet service providers and websites need to take greater responsibility for keeping wildlife trade legal," said Joyce Wu, Programme Officer for TRAFFIC East Asia.

The report recommends wildlife authorities develop strategies to police virtual markets, make greater efforts to bring web-based markets under the same regulatory structure as physical markets, and alert internet shoppers to the growing use of the internet for illegal wildlife trade.

For more information, contact Joyce Wu at ycjoycew@ms57.hinet.net



Many Chinese-language websites openly advertise threatened wildlife products. Image from reptileparadise.com



An interactive travelling exhibit entertains and educates students about the importance of wildlife conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources.

© Nguyen Dao Ngoc Van

Travelling exhibit brings message of biodiversity conservation to Viet Nam

TRAFFIC and WWF have launched the second phase of a DANIDA-funded "A Matter of Attitude" campaign to raise awareness and change attitudes towards the illegal and unsustainable consumption of wildlife and wildlife products in Viet Nam.

A travelling exhibit will visit 23 secondary schools in Ha Noi, bringing the message of biodiversity conservation and wildlife trade to the younger generation.

First launched in September 2006, the exhibit has already visited more than 25 Ha Noi secondary schools.

"Ideally, an important exhibit such as this should not be restricted to just a few schools in and around Ha Noi, but circulate to each and every school throughout the country as an extremely effective means of educating the youth today about the importance of safeguarding Viet Nam's natural resource base for future generations," said Eric Coull, Representative, WWF Greater Mekong.

The exhibit represents a culmination of meticulous research and collaboration involving environmental educators, conservationists, architects, artists, and graphic and audio-visual designers, including The Bronx Zoo of New York.

Employing a variety of interactive and exciting audio visual displays, the exhibit seeks to entertain and educate students about the importance of wildlife conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Student volunteers from several universities and high schools in Ha Noi have been recruited and trained to guide schoolchildren through each of the displays.

Sulma Warne, TRAFFIC's Greater Mekong Programme Co-ordinator, has hailed the exhibit as a "unique and exciting experience that will change the way children think about the consumption of wildlife and wildlife products."

"Today's young generation represents tomorrow's future, hence the shaping of their attitudes towards sustainable wildlife consumption is of the utmost importance," he said.

For more information contact Judith Le at jle@traffic.netnam.vn.

Two years later, Tiger bone smuggler brought to justice

A Taiwan resident was convicted in August 2007 of wildlife trade offences stemming from a 2005 seizure of Tiger bones, pangolin scales, and ivory in Taiwan. After pleading guilty, the

smuggler was fined TWD300 000 (USD9000) and sentenced to one year, two months in jail with three years probation.

Under Taiwan's Wildlife Conservation Act, the illegal export and import of protected wildlife carries a charge of six months to five years imprisonment, and/or a fine of TWD 300 000 – 1 500 000.

"The custodial sentence will act as a deterrent to this kind of unacceptable behaviour," said Craig Kirkpatrick, Director of TRAFFIC East Asia. "However, TRAFFIC would like to see far stiffer financial penalties imposed for serious offences such as this."

In the largest ever single seizure of Tiger bone in Taiwan, and one of the largest in Asia since 2000, Kaohsiung Customs authorities confiscated over 140 kg of Tiger bones, including 24 skulls, in a shipment from Jakarta, Indonesia, on 4 July 2005. Also seized were 400 kg of pangolin scales and five pieces of carved ivory weighing 1 kg.

"Increased and improved enforcement is critical to saving Sumatran Tigers," said TRAFFIC Southeast Asia's Senior Programme Officer, Chris Shepherd.

Action should be taken against the markets, trade hubs and retail outlets, especially in northern Sumatra. More specialised anti-poaching units also need to be urgently established.

Indonesia, once home to three sub-species of Tiger—Javan, Balinese and Sumatran—now only has between 400 and 500 Tigers left in the wild in Sumatra. Both Java and Bali Tigers have gone extinct.

For more information contact Joyce Wu at ycjoycew@ms57.hinet.net



A Taiwan resident was recently convicted for his involvement in a shipment of 140 kg of Tiger bones, from Jakarta, Indonesia, to Taiwan on 4 July 2005. © Joyce Wu / TRAFFIC East Asia - Taipei.

Tiger seizure in Ha Noi the first of its kind

On 4 September 2007, Ha Noi police, working in conjunction with the Viet Nam Forest Protection Department, seized two dead Tigers during an early morning raid on a residential property in Ha Noi. The animals, weighing approximately 250 kg each, were located in two freezer containers.

According to reports in *Thanh Nien* newspaper, authorities also discovered organs and tiger meat scattered throughout the apartment, as well as paws from five bear species and monkey bones.

This is the first report of its kind in Viet Nam's capital.

"The arrest is encouraging news and testament to Viet Nam's increasing capacity to combat illegal wildlife trade," stated Nguyen Van, Senior Project Officer, TRAFFIC Greater Mekong Programme.



Ha Noi police recently seized two dead Tigers that suspects say were to be used to make medicinal balm. © Kay Thanh Long at Thanh Nien Online.

“However, this is only the tip of the iceberg as it is not uncommon for illegal trade in wildlife to go undetected and unreported.”

Suspects said the animal products were being used to make medicinal balm. Balm made from tiger and monkey bone is believed to treat an assortment of ailments including: rheumatism, insomnia and lack of appetite.

A search of another affiliated apartment yielded four elephant tusks weighing 62 kg (more than 1.2 meters in length), a whole stuffed tiger, eight bull heads with horns attached, two stag heads, and several bags containing monkey and horse bones.

Authorities are working to confirm the origin of the tigers, which are believed to have come from Myanmar.

The police took four people into custody. The suspects confessed to conducting a three-year long medicinal balm operation and are currently awaiting trial.

For more information contact Judith Le at jle@traffic.netnam.vn.

New TRAFFIC officer appointed to Russian Far East

TRAFFIC has appointed a new Programme Officer to oversee the expansion of its Russian Far East program. Natalia Pervushina, who previously served at the Far Eastern Customs Directorate in Vladivostok, will oversee the monitoring of wildlife trade markets in the Amur-Heilong region. Natalia will be working closely with regional environmental authorities as well as TRAFFIC's Asian affiliates. She recently participated in the International Workshop on the Enforcement of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) in Harbin, China.

Increased numbers of wildlife seizures in the Russian Far East region dictate the necessity and importance of a TRAFFIC presence in the region. In the fourth seizure of Siberian Tiger parts this year, Customs agents in the Primorsky province found 480 bear paws, a Siberian Tiger pelt and bones, and 20 kg of wild ginseng. Earlier incidents in January, February and July also produced three Siberian Tiger skins, over 360 kg of bear paws and 531 Saiga Antelope horns. All seized wildlife products—excluding the saiga horn—came from the Russian Far East.

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Issue 4, 1 October – 31 December 2007



South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative (SAWTI) launched

TRAFFIC, in collaboration with South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), is building the foundation for SAWTI, aimed to enhance government action and collaboration on wildlife trade issues in the South Asia region, covering Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The Honorable Environment Minister of South Asian countries at the 10th Governing Council of SACEP decided to incorporate this specific programme for combating illegal trade in wildlife and its products as a response to the growing threat of poaching and illegal trade to wild species, both flora and fauna, in the region.

SAWTI is built on the 2004 Kathmandu

wildlife trade workshops, during which delegates from the participating countries identified priority actions to be taken at national and regional levels to mitigate illegal wildlife trade and to enhance wildlife trade regulations, in a region where trade is threatening the long-term survival of some of the world's rarest species, such as the Great Indian Rhinoceros, Tiger and Tibetan Antelope. This programme aims to follow along the lines of the ASEAN Wildlife Trade Initiative.

SAWTI will have its first regional workshop in Kathmandu, Nepal 31 January - 1 February 2008.

For more information, contact Dilpreet B Chhabra at dchhabra@wwfindia.net.



TRAFFIC and other organizations are working to build the foundation of the South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative (SAWTI), aimed to enhance government action and collaboration on wildlife trade issues in the South Asia region. © Samir Sinha

CONTENTS

- 1 South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative (SAWTI) launched
- 2 WWF Russia signs agreement with Russian Customs Academy, Vladivostok
- 3 TRAFFIC information leads to seizures in Gansu and Qinghai provinces, western China
- 4 Strengthening law enforcement to tackle the illegal trade in Asian big cats in western China
- 5 Trans-border training programme to curb illegal wildlife trade in India and Nepal
- 6 China and the global forest products trade: Trade of legal and sustainable wood in China
- 7 Reports on use of wildlife in traditional medicine in Cambodia and Vietnam to be launched
- 8 TRAFFIC India launches consumer awareness campaign

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On traffic.org

Indonesia tightens tortoise trade regulations

Tiger, Tiger: future not so bright

South Asia commits to regional co-operation in controlling wildlife trade

Turtle identification guide launched

Cross-border intelligence-sharing leads to major seizure in Thailand

ASEAN officials review cross-border co-operation in combating wildlife crime

Illegal wildlife trade flourishing on the Chinese-language internet

Illegal pet trade threatens freshwater turtles and tortoises—TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC launches traditional Chinese medicine textbook

Guide to Kalimantan's protected species launched

Has the yew tide turned?

Tri-nations meeting on CITES

Russian Salmon figures don't add up—TRAFFIC / WWF

How to separate the wood from the ramin trees

Wildlife conservation campaign launched in China

WWF Russia signs agreement with Russian Customs Academy, Vladivostok

WWF Russia and the Vladivostok branch of the Russian Customs Academy (VB RCA) recently signed a new Memorandum of Understanding in an effort to further strengthen wildlife conservation in the region. The agreement, which follows up on a similar agreement signed in 2001, promotes co-operation between the two organizations and aims to combat illegal wildlife trade across the Russian Federation's border.

The signing of the MOU in November 2007 in Vladivostok marks the establishment of a close partnership between WWF Russia, Amur Branch and VB RCA. This was the first time that such an agreement had been co-ordinated by TRAFFIC-Natalia Pervushina, programme officer for TRAFFIC in the Russian Far East oversaw both the signing and implementation.

The MOU calls for an overall co-operation on capacity building of Customs agency staff, including information exchanges, training workshops and collaboration on reports. A detailed implementation plan is expected to be signed in March 2008.

TRAFFIC and WWF will provide training support at the VB RCA Centre for Wildlife Protection, which serves as a wildlife protection education centre within the Customs Academy for students and Customs officers.

The Customs office also regularly calls in TRAFFIC/WWF experts for advice

when wildlife seizures occur along the Sino-Russian border. Since July 2007, TRAFFIC/WWF have participated in 11 independent expert evaluations of confiscated wildlife products, including the two largest wildlife seizures ever to take place in the region. The seizures took place in August 2007, and included 20 kg of wild ginseng, 480 bear paws, one set of Tiger bones and one Tiger skin. Both seizures took place in Khanka Lake in Primorsky province, one of the most vulnerable border points along the Sino-Russian border. All seized products were destined for China. The bear paw and Tiger seizures were further investigated by the Russian Government with assistance from TRAFFIC representatives from the Russian Federation and China.

These seizures indicate high levels of illegal wildlife trafficking in the Russian Far East and the need to enhance co-operation and information exchange between governments in the region. Recent collaborative efforts have included a workshop on CITES Enforcement in Northeast Asia, which was held in Harbin, China, on 16 – 19 October, 2007, where TRAFFIC facilitated discussions between representatives from the governments of China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation (see *Tri-nations meeting on CITES* for more information).

For more information, contact Natalia Pervushina at npervushina@wwfrfe.ru



Russian enforcement officers along the Sino-Russian border with 480 bear paws and a tiger skin seized in August 2007. © WWF Amur

TRAFFIC information leads to seizures in Gansu and Qinghai provinces, western China

Findings from recent market surveys conducted by China Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network members in western China were reported by TRAFFIC to national and local authorities last October-November as part of TRAFFIC's on-going efforts to aid the clamp down on illegal wildlife trade hotspots in China. As a result, local Forest Police in Lanzhou city, Gansu province, arrested a wildlife trade dealer and seized illegal elephant and other animal products. In addition, local forest police in Xining, Qinghai province arrested two dealers selling ivory and rhino horn products.

This marks the first time that government officials in China acted on information provided from an NGO to crack down on illegal wildlife trade.

In October-November 2007, the Network conducted market surveys in nine cities in Tibetan areas of Yunnan, Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu provinces. TRAFFIC notified the China CITES Management Authority and local forest police about the survey results, resulting in the two seizures. In Gansu, a total of 90 ivory products were seized, weighing 38.27kg. Also in Gansu, six Saiga Antelope horns and one fox pelt were confiscated, and 12 suspects have been detained. The two dealers in Qinghai have been prosecuted.

Follow-up surveys in the curio markets and traditional Chinese medicine shops and traditional medicine shops in Lanzhou, Gansu province after the seizure found that ivory, Saiga horn and musk products were no longer available, with dealers saying that the local government was strictly prohibiting trade.

"With China's enforcement agencies stretched to the limit, the aim of the China Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network is helping enforcement officials by adding 'eyes and ears' on the lookout for illegal trade," said Xu Hongfa, Director of TRAFFIC's work in China. "This is a good example of how TRAFFIC's work to support the enforcement of laws against illegal wildlife trade can assist government action to combat wildlife crime."

Established in 2006, the Network is an expanding group of volunteers, ultimately to be located throughout China. The Network's goals are to provide information to enforcement officials so that government agencies can respond quickly to wildlife crime; an "early warning" system for emerging issues in China's wildlife trade; and to inform and test the measures enacted by China's policy makers.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Strengthening law enforcement to tackle the illegal trade in Asian big cats in western China

To help address the illegal trade in Tigers and other Asian big cats, particularly between China and South Asia, TRAFFIC



Frontline wildlife law enforcers visit the Customs office at the Hekou border crossing between China and Viet Nam to learn about area's seizure cases. © TRAFFIC East Asia

is working to strengthen enforcement actions in ethnic Tibetan regions of China (where there is demand for skins of Asian big cats for use adorning ceremonial clothing) through networking and capacity building. Over 60 frontline wildlife law enforcers from the Forest Police, Customs, industry and commerce and the CITES Management Authority participated in a training workshop held in Kunming, Yunnan province, on 20-24 November 2007. The event, organized by China's CITES Management Authority, with support from TRAFFIC and IFAW, involved participants from 10 provinces in western China (including Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan, Sichuan, and the Tibet Autonomous Region – all provinces with substantial Tibetan populations) and South China, with Forest Police making up the majority of participants. The workshop was designed to address weaknesses in enforcement by Forest Police, with a focus on Tiger wildlife trade issues in Tibetan areas of China.

Participants learned about Customs enforcement experiences with CITES specimens (including treatment of seizure data), and visited the Customs office at the Hekou border crossing between China and Viet Nam, to learn about the many successful seizures by the Customs department there.

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org

Transborder training programme to curb illegal wildlife trade in India and Nepal



A TRAFFIC/WWF workshop trains Forest Department and other enforcement agencies from India and Nepal on the legal and technical aspects of wildlife enforcement, such as the use of metal detectors to locate leg traps in the forest. © TRAFFIC India

TRAFFIC India along with WWF-India and the Uttar Pradesh State Forest Department organized a trans-border training programme in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve on 13-15 December 2007. The main aim of the programme was to enhance the skills of the Forest Department and other enforcement agencies working to curb illegal wildlife trade and also foster closer co-operation amongst such agencies on both sides of the Indo-Nepal border.

The participants included officials from India and Nepal. From India, there were representatives from the Forest Departments, Customs, SSB (Seema Suraksha Bal), Police and the Special Task Force and from Nepal there were officials from the Army and the Wildlife Department. Training focused on the legal and technical aspects of wildlife enforcement, including the use of metal detectors to locate leg traps in the forest.

For more information, contact Dilpreet B Chhabra at dchhabra@wwfindia.net.



China is the world's largest hardwood log importer, with 22% of its imports coming from Africa. Logs at Nanxun Timber Trade Port, Zhejiang, China © Liu Xueyan, TRAFFIC China

Reports on use of wildlife in Traditional Medicine in Cambodia and Vietnam to be launched

TRAFFIC will launch three reports on the use of wildlife in traditional medicine (TM) in Cambodia and Viet Nam in March 2008. The reports seek to help improve understanding of the use of wild plant and animal resources in traditional medicine and enhance management and regulation of traditional medicine networks to promote conservation and sustainability.

The first report, *An Overview of the Use of Wild Plants and Animals in Traditional Medicinal Systems in Cambodia*, is a preliminary examination of the use of Cambodia's wildlife in TM systems. It examines the use of animals and plants in Traditional Khmer Medicine (TKM) and briefly discusses the use of these resources to supply other TM systems, such as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Traditional Vietnamese Medicine (TVM).

The second report, *A Preliminary Investigation into the Use and Trade of Medicinal Plants in Cambodia*, focuses on an often overlooked aspect of wildlife trade, but one that has enormous consequences for not only the biodiversity of the country but also the delivery of traditional healthcare practices.

The third report, *An Overview of the Use of Plants and Animals in Traditional Medicinal Systems in Viet Nam*, investigates the use of flora and fauna in traditional medicine in both northern and southern Viet Nam.

"Traditional Medicine systems in Cambodia and Viet Nam are important components of both national healthcare systems, and are often the only means of healthcare delivery for rural communities," said Thomas Osborn, TRAFFIC's Forest Trade Officer. "Understanding which animal and plant species and products are used and traded, and their underlying trade mechanisms, can provide a useful tool to further assess the sustainability of such trade, and provide an 'early warning' for species that are threatened by trade."

TRAFFIC conducted field studies for the reports from 2005 to 2007. The three reports will be released in two publications—one focusing on Cambodia and the other on Viet Nam.

For more information, contact Judith Le at jle@traffic.netnam.vn



TRAFFIC will launch new reports on the use of wildlife in Traditional Medicine in Cambodia and Vietnam in March 2008.

China and the global forest products trade: Trade of legal and sustainable wood in China

Illegal logging and the international trade in illegally logged timber is a major problem for many timber-producing countries in the developing world. Consumer countries contribute to these problems by importing timber and wood products without ensuring that they are legally sourced.

China is now the second largest timber consumer in the world and faces a widening imbalance between supply and demand. The rapid expansion of manufacturing for both domestic consumption and exports in a nation with very limited per capita forest resources is fuelling a significant rise in timber imports. Between 1997 and 2005, China's total forest product imports more than doubled in value and more than tripled in volume, from 40 million to 134 million cubic meters (round wood equivalent).

On 1-2 November, IUCN-The International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Chatham House and Forest Trends held a workshop in Beijing aimed at fostering a constructive discussion about the international trade of sustainable and legal forest products between producer and consumer countries. The workshop provided an opportunity for key Chinese stakeholders and regional partners to share research conclusions to help ensure that international and local organizations are familiar with each other's work and can work constructively to develop solutions that may be practical in China. More than 60 participants from forestry companies, the State Forest Administration, NGOs and the Chinese Forestry Academy took part in the workshop.

TRAFFIC focused its inputs to the workshop with a presentation on timber trade links between China and Africa, based on the TRAFFIC report *Forestry, governance and national development: Lessons learned from a logging boom in southern Tanzania*, which documents alarming levels of corruption, illegal logging and exports of forest products from Tanzania. The presentation highlighted China's huge influence on global timber markets, as the world's largest hardwood log importer, with 22% of its imports coming from Africa. TRAFFIC's presentation outlined unsustainable harvesting practices in Africa, and its causes and consequences, which have led to environmental degradation and the loss of commercially viable hardwoods in many areas. Recommendations based on the TRAFFIC report were also presented.

For more information on the workshop proceedings, see http://www.illegal-logging.info/item_single.php?item=event&item_id=126&approach_id=8

For more information, contact Caroline Liou at caroline@wwfchina.org



TRAFFIC India launches a new consumer awareness campaign with the release of the leaflet, 'Are you committing a crime? Think before you buy'. © TRAFFIC India

TRAFFIC India launches consumer awareness campaign

On 24 October 2007 during the 12 Kailash Sankhala Lecture held at WWF India Secretariat in New Delhi, Mike Pandey a renowned filmmaker and conservationist, launched a new TRAFFIC India consumer awareness campaign with the release of the leaflet, "Are you committing a crime? Think before you buy".

The leaflet is mainly targeted at sensitizing tourists/buyers about the illegal wildlife trade that has endangered India's wildlife. TRAFFIC India is hopeful that wide distribution of this leaflet will spread awareness about illegal wildlife trade that is threatening the survival of various species of flora and fauna in India.

"Since the leaflet is largely targeted at tourists, both domestic and international, travelling across India, TRAFFIC hopes to drive home the point that souvenirs derived from endangered wildlife species should not be treated as mementos for carrying home but rather a symbol of the wanton destruction of our natural habitat," said Mr. Samir Sinha, Head-TRAFFIC India.

The leaflet is available in both English and Hindi.

For more information, contact Dilpreet B Chhabra at dchhabra@wwfindia.net.

Staff news

Azrina Abdullah has been appointed Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia as of 1 December 2007, based in Kuala Lumpur where the TRAFFIC regional office is hosted by WWF Malaysia. Azrina has been working for TRAFFIC since June 2006, based in Bangkok, as project leader for TRAFFIC's team under the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network support programme.

Inggar Rahardjo joined TRAFFIC on 1 January 2008 as a Programme Officer, based in Jakarta. Inggar graduated from Bogor Agricultural University in 2006, majoring in Forest Resource Conservation, focusing on amphibians. She will be working on TSEA's projects on the pangolin trade (Indonesia component) and Sumatran elephants. She may be contacted at sopixie@yahoo.com.

James Compton, who formerly headed TRAFFIC's regional team in Southeast Asia, has been appointed Asia-Pacific Programme Co-ordinator. Working closely with existing regional directors and their teams, he will focus on consolidating the current momentum TRAFFIC and its partners have generated to address illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade from source to market.

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the wildlife trade monitoring network

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News from TRAFFIC's Wildlife Trade Initiative
Issue 5, January 1 – March 30, 2008



TRAFFIC conducts trans-boundary market survey in Russia and China

Recent surveys by TRAFFIC of wildlife markets along both sides of the Russia-China border reveal a high level of illegal trade, even though most traders are aware of the law.

In March, several of the biggest wildlife and agricultural markets and pet shops were surveyed in Vladivostok as well as Ussuriisk, a town bordering China and having the highest concentration of Chinese citizens in Primorsky province. Preliminary results showed that most wildlife trade in Primorsky province is covert; however, caviar from endangered sturgeon species, one of the most popular tourist delicacies in the region, can be bought in the most popular tourist places, including Vladivostok Airport. The survey also found demand for traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) products (mainly musk and bear gall bladder) in Primorsky province's Chinese markets. This is especially true at Druzhba market, the largest Chinese market in Ussuriisk, where a high level of covert wildlife trade takes place.

In the Russian Far East, whether wildlife trade takes place openly or covertly in the markets is related to the level of law enforcement. Practically all Russian and Chinese traders interviewed were aware that wildlife trade without a special licence was illegal and that wildlife trade of endangered species is prohibited in Russia. The level of traders' awareness during the survey was high due to a widely publicized criminal case, which took place in Vladivostok at the end of March 2008. The case involved three Russian and three Chinese citizens who were accused of smuggling Tiger skins, Tiger bones and 480 bear paws. Around 80% of Chinese traders interviewed in Ussuriisk were aware of the case, which demonstrates the effectiveness of publicizing wildlife seizures.

On the Chinese side of the border, the survey continued in Harbin and Qiqihaer, where four wildlife and antique markets, five agricultural markets, three aquatic markets, one TCM raw material wholesale market and 10 TCM retail shops were



Products made from Hawksbill Turtle for sale at a curio market in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, China. © Xu Ling/TRAFFIC East Asia - China Programme

CONTENTS

- 1 TRAFFIC conducts trans-boundary market survey in Russia and China
- 2 Amur-Heilong Ecoregion planning workshop held in Vladivostok
- 3 Vietnamese, Indonesian officials exchange approaches to halt illegal timber trade
- 4 NGOs work together to address illegal wildlife trade on the Chinese-language internet
- 5 Enforcement officers gear up to combat illegal ivory trade in China
- 6 TRAFFIC warns Chinese travellers against transporting ivory
- 7 Indo-Bhutan wildlife enforcement training workshop organized by TRAFFIC India

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On traffic.org

Bangkok market a hub for illegal international trade in freshwater turtles and tortoises

TRAFFIC India promotes ISSC-MAP at International Summit

Hotline tip leads to bust by Wildlife Crime Unit in Malaysia

Royal Thai Police raid Bangkok wildlife market

Police on course to tackle wildlife crime in Indonesia

23 tonnes of pangolins seized in a week in Viet Nam

Judiciary workshop on wildlife crime a Thai first

Sustainable use of wild plants project launched in India

'Don't buy trouble' warns TRAFFIC India



Blood ivory: end consumers are as much partners in wildlife crime as those who deal in or hunt protected species of wildlife.

investigated. The survey revealed a high level of wildlife products being sold openly to the public, indicating a lower level of law enforcement of wildlife trade in China than in the Russian areas surveyed. Interviews of TCM traders found that at least 50% were engaged in illegal trade. The interviews revealed that most of the wildlife products in Harbin's wholesale market (Shankeshu), such as ginseng, bear gall bladder and deer antlers, come from Chinese breeding farms, which are legal sources. However, products from the wild, such as musk pods or antlers were also available. The survey showed a growing demand in Shankeshu TCM market for saiga horns and musk pods from Russia, whether legal or not. Surveys in wildlife and antique markets showed that some illegal ivory, hawksbill products, raptor specimens and other animal products were being sold. However, illegal wildlife products were not found being sold in agricultural and aquatic markets or TCM retail shops.

"The Russian Far East is one of the most problematic regions in the Russian Federation with respect to illegal hunting, collection and trade in wild animals

and plants," said Natalia Pervushina, TRAFFIC Europe Russia programme co-ordinator, "Most of the illegal wildlife trade in the region occurs along the Sino-Russian border where quite often both Russian and Chinese citizens are engaged in organized illegal wildlife procurement and transportation. Trans-boundary work on wildlife trade monitoring is essential for having a clear picture of what is happening with wildlife markets in the region."

This is the first joint market monitoring survey conducted by TRAFFIC's Russia and China programmes. "This survey has helped us further understand what is happening in markets in both China and Russia, enabling us to track the movement of wildlife products along the border," added Xu Ling, TRAFFIC East Asia programme officer, "We hope this successful trans-boundary collaboration will lead to more information exchanges and better law enforcement in China and Russia."

For more information, contact Natalia Pervushina at npervushina@wwf-rfe.ru or Xu Ling at lxu@wwfchina.org

Amur-Heilong Ecoregion planning workshop held in Vladivostok

The Amur-Heilong Ecoregion Programme (AHEP) FY09–11 planning workshop was held 27–30 March 2008 in Vladivostok, Russia. Representatives from numerous TRAFFIC and WWF offices, as well as key partners participated. The aim of the workshop was to draft a three-year programme for AHEP for Russia, China and Mongolia. This involves incorporating country programmes into one co-ordinated ecoregional Conservation Action Plan. This includes a coordinated Amur Tiger and Leopard Restoration Programme for Chanbaishan Tiger Conservation Landscape; agreement on a new Programme Implementation Agreement with three-year commitments of implementing and donor offices and the drafting of a future communications strategy. The planning workshop ended with confirmation of financing for the AHEP for the coming three years with a total of over EUR 6 million.



Participants at the Amur-Heilong Ecoregion Programme (AHEP) planning workshop develop a coordinated multi-country conservation plan for Russia, China and Mongolia. © TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC has ambitious plans for support of the AHEP over the next three years. Planning during the AHEP workshop included Russia-China wildlife market surveys, trans-boundary workshops for customs officers and regular information exchanges between governments and partner organizations. A draft budget for the next three years was also presented at the workshop.

TRAFFIC's office in Russia also presented plans for a three-year collaboration between WWF Russia Far East and the Vladivostok Branch of the Russian Customs Academy. These Plans were first outlined through discussion of all partners in November 2007. The agreement will lead to improved wildlife conservation and control of wildlife trafficking across the Russian border. TRAFFIC will serve as the WWF representative for implementing this plan.

For more information, contact Natalia Pervushina at npervushina@wwfje.ru or Xu Ling at lxu@wwfchina.org

Vietnamese, Indonesian officials exchange approaches to halt illegal timber trade

Vietnamese wildlife trade enforcement officials have completed a timber trade study tour to the Republic of Indonesia from 7–10 January 2008.

During the visit, organized by TRAFFIC under the framework of the Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) project, Vietnamese officials learned from the experiences of their Indonesian counterparts about combating timber smuggling from Indonesia to Viet Nam.

Participants included senior officials from the Viet Nam Forest Protection Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and General Customs Department of the Ministry of Finance. Staff from TRAFFIC's office in Hanoi facilitated this dialogue.

The Vietnamese delegation met with representatives from several Indonesian government and non-government organizations and visited trade-related industrial sites. Participants discussed forest management and timber trade



TRAFFIC is working to combat timber smuggling from Indonesia to Viet Nam © Thomas Osborn/TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Greater Mekong Programme

issues and reviewed management concerns with Indonesia's decentralized forestry management framework.

The delegation also learned about Indonesian methods for managing legally exploited timber through documentation, monitoring and timber identification. This included reviewing strategies used by smugglers to negate these systems and outlining possible measures to prevent such activity.

"This study tour has provided a great opportunity to develop practical cooperation between the two countries in the fight against illegal timber trade," said Tom Osborn, TRAFFIC Greater Mekong Programme's Forest Trade Officer, "The next task is to build on the success of the study tour by implementing some of the ideas that resulted from discussions."

The tour identified the need for the Viet Nam Customs Department to hold regular training courses on anti-smuggling measures, as well as to better incorporate information technology into their management systems. The tour also provided several ideas for future collaboration between Indonesian and Vietnamese Forest Protection and Customs officials, including training courses on timber identification and the development of a focal point system for information exchange.

For more information, contact Judith Le at jle@traffic.netnam.vn

NGOs work together to address illegal wildlife trade on the Chinese-language internet

A workshop aimed at controlling illegal wildlife trade on the Chinese-language internet was held in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China in January 2008.

The workshop was organized by the China CITES Management Authority and Internet Information Security Monitoring Bureau of the Ministry of Public Security. The objective of the workshop was to discuss how to control the illegal trade of endangered species on the internet efficiently, including the illegal trade of ivory and rhino products, which has become a serious problem.

There were more than 30 participants, including numerous government agencies as well as representatives from China's three main auction websites. At the workshop, enforcement efforts by the CITES Management Authority as well as other government departments were reviewed, and experiences controlling illegal web trade were shared. In addition, TRAFFIC introduced its report on internet trade of endangered species on Chinese websites in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which was conducted from 2005 to 2006.

All participants agreed that the conservation of endangered species and enforcement requires cooperation between police, customs, forestry, and industry and commerce departments, together with collaboration of relevant websites.

During the workshop, the web companies present - Taobao, eBay and Tencent - expressed interest in training courses conducted by TRAFFIC to improve conservation awareness and identification capacity of company managers.

For more information, contact Xu Ling at lxu@wwfchina.org

Enforcement officers gear up to combat illegal ivory trade in China

More than 30 enforcement officers and staff from China's police, Customs, market and industry and CITES Management Authorities departments gathered in Shanghai on 8 January 2008 to discuss how to work together more effectively to combat illegal ivory trade in China.

The Shanghai Ivory Trade Market Management Workshop was organized by the Shanghai Landscape Administration Bureau and East China Normal University. TRAFFIC, the only NGO represented at the workshop, gave presentations on recent market surveys of illegal ivory trade in China, as well as illegal ivory trade on the internet.

TRAFFIC's market survey, which had taken place in December 2006, and included ivory markets in Shanghai, found illegal ivory trade taking place in Shanghai's Curio, Flower and Bird market. In addition, a TRAFFIC survey of illegal wildlife trade taking place on the Chinese-language internet also revealed illegal ivory trade on various websites.

The Shanghai Wildlife Conservation and Management Division acted upon the survey results by sending an official to take part in TRAFFIC's second ivory market survey. Wei Li, the director of the Fair Trade Bureau of the State Administration of Industry and Commerce, suggested the establishment of a multi-departmental system and strengthening market monitoring to combat illegal ivory trade.

At the Shanghai meeting, participants agreed that all related departments should cooperate with each other to carry out an

enforcement campaign to combat illegal ivory trade in the near future. This could be followed by the development of a long-term cooperation system to eliminate all illegal ivory trade in Shanghai.

At the conclusion of the meeting, TRAFFIC was asked to compile workshop reports and related policies and regulations prohibiting the illegal ivory trade. These materials have been sent to all enforcement departments to aid future enforcement efforts.

For more information, contact Xu Ling at lxu@wwfchina.org

TRAFFIC warns Chinese travellers against transporting ivory

Illicit trade in elephant ivory has steadily increased since the mid-1990s, with demand for ivory in China behind much of this trend.

This message is being brought to travellers through 5000 posters sent to Chinese embassies and consulates in 37 African countries, as well as these countries' embassies in Beijing.

TRAFFIC is advising travellers that transporting ivory across borders is illegal. This campaign mainly targets Chinese citizens traveling between key African countries and China, as well as Thailand and Myanmar.

According to incomplete statistics, there were a total of 85 ivory seizures published online from January 2007 to March 2008. Of the 85 seizures, 27 reports explicitly mention the means of transportation involved: 59% occurred at security checks at the airport, with all items hidden in luggage;



严禁非法携带、邮寄、运输象牙及其制品出入境

象被列入《濒危野生动植物种国际贸易公约》（简称《CITES公约》）附录I或附录II，象牙及其制品的贸易受到该公约和《中华人民共和国濒危野生动植物进出口管理条例》的管理，未经批准，严格禁止非法运输、携带和进出口。

Transporting and mailing ivory products across borders is illegal

Elephants are listed in Appendix I/II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which places strict controls on international trade in elephant products. CITES and Chinese law strictly prohibit the transportation of all ivory products across borders without official documentation.

中华人民共和国濒危物种进出口管理办公室
电话: 86-10-62179904 传真: 86-10-62179904 地址: 中国北京朝外大街18号 网址: www.cites.gov.cn
The CITES Management Authority of the P.R.China
Tel: 86-10-62179904 Fax: 86-10-62179904 Address: No. 18, Heping East Street, Beijing, China Website: www.cites.gov.cn
中华人民共和国濒危物种进出口管理办公室 TRAFFIC (网址: www.trafficchina.org) 敬告
Article Drafted by: The CITES Management Authority of the P.R.China and TRAFFIC

A TRAFFIC poster advises travelers that transporting ivory across borders is illegal.

33% were via courier or ordinary mail; and 4% by train or automobile. In addition, 20 reports explicitly mentioned the nationality of suspects involved: 80% were mainland Chinese and 20% were people from Hong Kong or other nationalities. In December 2007, there were three ivory seizures in Beijing Capital Airport; two suspects were from Congo and Cameroon.

The Global Elephant Trade and Information System shows that African countries such as Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Nigeria, as well as China and Thailand in Asia, play important parts of this illegal trade. This trade is believed to be the principal driver of the illegal killing of elephants.

"Illegal ivory trade has caused large-scale damage to elephant populations. We hope these posters help drive home the point to Chinese travellers that transporting ivory across borders is contributing in a real way to the demise of wild elephant populations," said Xu Hongfa of TRAFFIC's China programme.

One example of the poster's impact comes from the Embassy of China in Tanzania, which has reinforced this key message to Chinese enterprises, experts, and overseas Chinese associations in Tanzania, asking Chinese citizens to comply with Chinese and Tanzanian laws and regulations regarding CITES. The TRAFFIC poster is displayed in the visa section of that embassy. It has also been used in the visa section of the Thai embassy in Beijing as well as the embassies of other countries.

For more information, contact Xu Ling at lxu@wwfchina.org

Indo-Bhutan wildlife enforcement training workshop organized by TRAFFIC India

TRAFFIC India with support from WWF-India, Bodoland Territorial Council and the Assam Forest Department, organized an Indo-Bhutan wildlife enforcement training workshop at Manas Tiger Reserve from 7-9 January 2008. The main aim of the workshop was to enhance skills of the enforcement agencies working to curb illegal wildlife trade and to improve crossborder co-operation and co-ordination between the two countries on such issues.

Training was given on the legal and technical aspects of prosecuting wildlife cases and curbing illegal wildlife trade. This was done through a series of case studies, group discussions and presentations. Participants included officials from the Manas Tiger Reserve and the various Forest Divisions of Assam in India. From Bhutan, there were officials from the Forest Divisions, Royal Manas National Park, Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park and their Nature Conservation Division.

Such joint training programmes are an important means to strengthen regional co-operation and collaboration to fight the trans-national illegal wildlife trade in South Asia.

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Asian Wildlife Trade Bulletin

News from TRAFFIC's Wildlife Trade Initiative
Issue 6, December 31, 2008



South Asian ministers pledge regional co-operation in tackling illegal wildlife trade

South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network to be established

In May 2008, the eight member countries of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) pledged to tackle illegal wildlife trade in the region.

In a Ministerial statement known as the "Jaipur Declaration", the SACEP countries supported the development of a South Asia regional strategic plan on illegal wildlife trade and the establishment of a South Asia wildlife enforcement network (SAWEN).

The eight member countries also endorsed a South Asia regional strategic plan on illegal wildlife trade that will focus on key areas of work, including co-operation and co-ordination; effective legislation, policies and law enforcement; sharing knowledge and effective dissemination of information; intelligence networks and early warning systems; and capacity building.

The Declaration followed the Eleventh Meeting of the Governing Council of

SACEP, where Environment Ministers from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, issued a Statement stressing the importance of mutual networking and technical support to address the needs of the region in combating illegal wildlife trade.

"Regional co-operation can provide the best solution for regional problems," the Ministers said.

SACEP is an inter-governmental organisation established in 1982 for promoting regional co-operation in South Asia in the environment field.

Outgoing SACEP Director-General Dr Arvind A. Boaz said the commitment lays the foundations for a co-operative effort to crack down on illegal trade and to improve the management of wild species and the implementation of CITES in the region.

"This is the first comprehensive wildlife trade initiative of its kind in South Asia

CONTENTS

- 1 South Asian ministers pledge regional co-operation in tackling illegal wildlife trade
- 2 Contraband channel closed for business in the Russian Far East
- 3 TRAFFIC reaches out to consumers in Asia
- 4 Scaling up pangolin trade enforcement efforts
- 5 TRAFFIC pilots sustainability standards for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Cambodia, India and China
- 6 ASEAN Anti-Wildlife Crime Task Forces get further support from USAID



SACEP Ministerial Representatives in Jaipur.
Photo Credit: Samir Sinha/TRAFFIC

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the wildlife trade monitoring network

and SACEP is confident it will lead to further commitment in the region, and even closer South-South co-operation to address illegal wildlife trade problems effectively," Dr Boaz added.

The Head of TRAFFIC India, Samir Sinha, said that regional co-operation was absolutely essential in tackling the challenges of wildlife trade.

"TRAFFIC warmly welcomes the initiative by all eight countries of South Asia in taking this important step of coming together and seeking to address poaching and illegal trade as a region," he said. "We look forward to helping make this initiative a conservation success."

The Jaipur Declaration endorses the outcomes of the First Regional Workshop on the South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative which was held in Nepal from 31 January–1 February 2008. The workshop was organised by the Government of Nepal, SACEP, WWF Nepal and TRAFFIC and was made possible thanks to funding from the US Department of State, SACEP and WWF.

TRAFFIC has been involved in similar regional efforts worldwide, including the inter-governmental Regional Action Plan and its Wildlife Enforcement Network that has been established by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the development of the European Community Action Plan on CITES Enforcement.

For more information, contact Samir Sinha on ssinha@wwfindia.net

Contraband channel closed for business in the Russian Far East

In May 2008, seven Sino-Russian smugglers were given stiff punishments for their complicity in two separate illegal wildlife trading operations. The seizures that led to the convictions were the two biggest ever recorded and the product of months of collaborative work between Nature Protection operative officers, law enforcement agencies, WWF-Russia Far East (WWF-RFE) and TRAFFIC.

In the first case, a total of 900 bear paws from black and brown bears, four Amur Tiger skins, more than 60 kg of Tiger bones, and 531 Saiga horns were seized by the Border, Internal and Customs services of Russia's Primorskii Province in August 2007. After a long trial, the six persons involved in the crime syndicate responsible for the smuggling were convicted, with the most active members sentenced to eight years of imprisonment and a fine of 200 000 rubles each (approximately USD8 500). The Chinese and Russian accomplices were sentenced to seven and a half and four and a half years in prison respectively.

The second case began when Russia's Far Eastern Customs seized a total of 29 kg of wild ginseng roots bound for China. The case was concluded in May 2008, when the leader of this crime syndicate was sentenced to four years in prison. Throughout these cases, WWF and TRAFFIC provided zoological expertise and collected trade and operative information to provide legal assistance.



Confiscated bear gall bladders.
Photo Credit: Sergey Lyapustin

Natalia Pervushina, the Program Coordinator for TRAFFIC in Russia, applauded Russian authorities for the comprehensive legal action.

"Economic crimes and crimes of nature have long been separated in the Russian Federation's Criminal Code – resulting in much weaker sentences for those involved in illegally trading wildlife", she said "TRAFFIC and WWF hope these penalties show that the government will no longer allow this to be the case."

"While we cannot revive the killed animals, or replant the wild roots," she added, "the level of collaboration between enforcement agencies, the government and non-profit organizations in working to enforce control on the Sino-Russian border and eliminate a major contraband channel gives us reason to be encouraged."

New Fines for Illegal Hunting Announced in Russia



Photo Credit: Sergey Lyapustin

On November 1 2008, in conjunction with the start of another ungulate hunting season in Russia, WWF and TRAFFIC applauded officials on the significant fine increases for illegally harvesting animals listed in Russia's Red Data Book.

The new fines, the product of two years of consultation between TRAFFIC, WWF and Russia's Nature Protection agencies, are being celebrated as potentially deterring a sizable amount of illegal hunting in Russia.

Established by the decree of the Nature Resources Ministry N 107 issued on 28 April 2008, the new fines are 25 times higher than previously for hunting Amur Tigers (USD18 520), Far Eastern Leopards (USD18 520) and Japanese Cranes (USD5 500); and 20 times higher for hunting White-naped Cranes. Also protected by the new fines are the Spoonbill, the Oriental White Stork, the Lesser White-Fronted Goose, the Baikal Teal, the Mandarin Duck and the Amur Serow.

TRAFFIC reaches out to consumers in Asia

Recent TRAFFIC work has reached out to Asian consumers to highlight the need for public participation in stopping illegal wildlife trade in the region.

In Japan, TRAFFIC has produced an educational DVD entitled *Our Life and Wildlife – What is CITES?* The film, which goes into a uniquely in-depth discussion in four separate chapters, aims to educate Japanese travellers about sustainable consumption and about CITES – the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Using the elephant ivory trade and vicuna trade as two examples of what will happen to wild resources if they are not consumed sustainably, the video calls upon viewers to think more deeply about the environment they are leaving for future generations.

The DVD has been distributed throughout Japan to diverse audiences, including company employees, college students, public libraries and government agencies and ministries as part of an ongoing project being generously funded by the Japan Lottery Association.

In India, TRAFFIC has been reaching a variety of stakeholders under its consumer awareness campaign ‘Don’t Buy Trouble’. The primary target has been to educate tourists, both domestic and international, and other consumers on issues related to illegal wildlife trade. A short film has been produced to urge viewers to think before buying wildlife products, highlighting aspects of the illegal wildlife trade with images of poaching and trade in charismatic species such as Tiger, Leopard, rhino and elephant. Other lesser-known species are also profiled, including mongoose, reptiles, marine turtles, birds, primates, butterflies and other insects, musk deer and medicinal plants. The film can be viewed at:

http://wwfindia.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/traffic/index.cfm

An innovative partnership with Times Out of Home, a unit of Times Innovative Media, Ltd., has allowed high-profile display of TRAFFIC’s “Don’t buy trouble” posters at India’s Mumbai and Delhi airports in late 2008. The posters draw attention to the various national and international laws protecting wildlife, warning passers-by about the legal consequences of engaging in such trade. Both the film and airport advertisements were produced as part of TRAFFIC’s ongoing consumer awareness work in India.

In Viet Nam, TRAFFIC has implemented a campaign with pictures of endangered species on stickers asking people not to consume them. The eye-catching stickers, which focus on four endangered species traded in Viet Nam: bears, tigers, rhinos and pangolins, have been placed on everything from cupboards and doorjambs to motorbike helmets since their production.

In August and September 2008, TRAFFIC worked alongside WWF in Viet Nam to host a public service announcement design competition. The competition called for innovative messages to discourage the illegal trade of wildlife and attracted over 170 entries. The six top prize winners have since been reworked by Saatchi & Saatchi Design Company and will be released country-wide in Viet Nam’s newspapers, magazines, and roadside bulletins soon.



Viet Nam awareness campaign poster.
Photo Credit: WWF/TRAFFIC/Nguyen Huong Lan

Both the sticker campaign and the design competition were part of the project “A Matter of Attitude – Reducing consumption of wildlife products in Ha Noi, Viet Nam,” an awareness campaign that is being funded by DANIDA and jointly implemented by TRAFFIC and WWF Greater Mekong Programmes.

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Scaling up pangolin trade enforcement efforts

Despite being protected by national and international laws and conventions, pangolins *Manis* spp. are still heavily traded in Asia for their meat and for their use in traditional medicines. This fact has been highlighted by several recent and significant seizures, including two in Viet Nam during 2008 in which nearly 24 tons of pangolins were confiscated and one in Indonesia that resulted in the seizure of nearly 14 tonnes of frozen pangolin.

To address this problem, TRAFFIC and Wildlife Reserves Singapore – which manages the Singapore Zoo, the Night Safari and Jurong Bird Park – held a workshop in Singapore



Photo Credit: Chin Sing Yun/TRAFFIC



Baby pangolins.

Photo Credit: EW/TRAFFIC

from 30 June to 2 July 2008 on the trade and conservation of pangolins native to South and South-east Asia. The workshop brought together over 75 government leaders, academics, conservationists and veterinarians from 15 countries. The objectives were to identify priority actions to reduce the illegal trade of pangolins and to allow experts to share information and knowledge about pangolins and the pangolin trade.

Government agencies presented the successes and obstacles they face in their national jurisdictions to combat the illegal pangolin trade. Other institutions provided technical inputs on specific aspects related to the trade and conservation of Asian pangolins including information on feeding habits and behavior, available population assessments, and trade dynamics.

Participants worked together to identify top priorities for future research and action in the fields of biology and ecology; trade and law enforcement; husbandry and rehabilitation; and education and awareness. Draft recommendations for future action focused on the need to gain further information about pangolin population status and rehabilitation requirements; develop a trade monitoring network and centralized reporting system; build law enforcement capacity; and improve educational materials for enforcement agencies, children and the media.

A second major output of the workshop was the agreement among participants to create a Pangolin Working Group. The working group will be responsible for coordinating follow-up action and finding ways to improve the co-ordination of research, fundraising, exchanging information and supporting enforcement activities. This directly complements the current focus within the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network to increase law enforcement action against pangolin smuggling.

TRAFFIC has been carrying out surveys in South-east Asia on the pangolin trade, specifically in Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam, since August 2007 in order to improve understanding of the pangolin trade and its regional dynamics. This work has been made possible by the support of SeaWorld&Busch Gardens Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society. The Katala Foundation Incorporated (KFI) also provided valuable assistance in conducting a preliminary survey of pangolin trade in Palawan, Philippines.

For more information, contact Chris Shepherd at cstsea@po.jaring.my

TRAFFIC pilots sustainability standards for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in Cambodia, India and China

Following the pioneering efforts to establish the International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP), TRAFFIC is now testing these criteria with demonstration projects in India and Cambodia and China.

Under the umbrella of "Saving Plants that Save Lives and Livelihoods", TRAFFIC is piloting mechanisms for the sustainable management of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) through the use of ISSC-MAP. Basically this involves a set of guidelines that promotes five principles: maintaining wild MAP resources; preventing negative environmental impacts; legal compliance; respecting customary rights; and applying responsible business practices.

Global in scope, the project is being piloted in India (in the States of Uttarakhand and Karnataka), Nepal (Eastern Himalayan region), Brazil (Amazon region), Lesotho (Southern Africa) and Cambodia (Greater Mekong). Phase one includes working in close collaboration with key stakeholders to select both the species and the field site using detailed criteria. Following this, a comprehensive resource assessment is undertaken before local communities are enlisted to help develop a detailed management plan to harvest the species in a sustainable manner.

TRAFFIC's work in Cambodia brought together stakeholders from local communities, traders, research organizations, NGOs, government and universities, amongst others. Two species were selected at this meeting in May 2008, the shrub Krakao *Amomum ovoideum*, and the rare tree Tepiru *Cinnamomum cambodianum*. Both are found in the same field site, Prek Thnot Community Protected Area in Bokor National Park, south of Phnom Penh.

In India, TRAFFIC's work on phase one has included two workshops, one in Uttarakhand in late February 2008 and one in Karnataka in May 2008. At both workshops, ISSC-MAP was introduced to key policy makers, Forest Department officials, educational institutes, pharmaceutical companies, MAP cultivators and collectors, traders, and other NGOs. In Karnataka, two species were also selected from each of



Medicinal plant ingredients in China.
Photo Credit: James Compton/TRAFFIC

two sites: *Salacia chinensis* and *Embelia tsjeriam-cottam* at Shirgungi village in Katgal Range; and *Ailanthus triphyssa* and *Myristica malabarica* at Illeman village in Tirthahalli Range.

Aside from workshops, TRAFFIC's project staff have undertaken field work at all three of the sites to assess the status of these species in their countries at large and *in situ* at their specific field sites.

According to Thomas Osborn, TRAFFIC's medicinal plants specialist in the Greater Mekong region, the project has generated a huge amount of interest in the countries of implementation with high levels of stakeholder participation. "There is a long way to go, but through ISSC-MAP we are well on the way to providing a replicable model for the sustainable wild collection of medicinal plants," Osborn said.



Sustainable collection of cinnamon bark.
Photo Credit: Eang Hourt Khou/TRAFFIC

The Saving Plants that Save Lives and Livelihoods project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and implemented by WWF/TRAFFIC Germany and the IUCN Medicinal Plants Specialist Group.

The second project, funded under the European Community's EU-China Biodiversity Project (ECBP), aims to develop a model for the sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants in the mountainous landscapes of the upper Yangtze River Basin of China. This incredibly biodiverse location contains an estimated 75% of the commonly harvested plant species for Traditional Chinese Medicine. In this project, ISSC-MAP is being used towards designing locally appropriate management tools.

TRAFFIC, working jointly with WWF, IUCN, provincial forestry departments and TCM experts, has helped to translate ISSC-MAP into Chinese and to modify the document to

conform to local standards. The revisions to the document are in draft form and have been thoroughly reviewed via consultation with national experts. Despite the challenges brought by the tragic events of the Sichuan earthquake, which affected some of the medicinal plant habitats, fieldwork is continuing with the full suite of partners.

For more information about the project in Cambodia, contact Thomas Osborn at tosborn@traffic.netnam.vn; in India, contact Samir Sinha at ssinha@wwfindia.net, and in China, contact Xueyan Liu at xylu@wwfchina.org.

ASEAN Anti-Wildlife Crime Task Forces get further support from USAID

The first three years of the Support Program for the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), jointly implemented by TRAFFIC and Wildlife Alliance (formerly known as WildAid) via a co-operative partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has achieved many important milestones, including the establishment of a dedicated national Wildlife Crime Task Force by a majority of member countries and a Program Coordination Unit, based in Bangkok, Thailand.

Based on this success, the Support Program recently obtained multi-year funding for a second phase of work (Phase II) that will focus on dismantling some of the region's key wildlife trafficking routes. A recent meeting in Lao PDR in May 2008 set the scene for an even more intensive co-operation between ASEAN nations and their trading partners in controlling illegal trade in wild animals and plants.

The over-arching goal of the ASEAN-WEN Support Programme-Phase II will be to reduce illegal wildlife trade in Southeast Asia by dismantling some of the region's key wildlife trafficking networks. This will be achieved through a continuing refinement of a three-part strategy: Strengthening ASEAN-WEN's capacity to reduce wildlife crime; strengthening and sustaining the network; and increasing political will and public support for the network.

The 2008 annual regional meeting, hosted by Lao PDR, brought together police, Customs and CITES Officers from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Vientiane meeting aimed to allow participants an opportunity to review the progress of ASEAN-WEN implementation at national and regional levels. In recognition of the fact that wildlife crime is one of the world's most lucrative forms of organized crimes and that its syndicates are operating from East to West, delegates from the United States, New Zealand, Interpol, ASEAN Secretariat and the CITES Secretariat were also present at the meeting.

A significant output of the meeting was that the region's national Anti-Wildlife Crime Task Forces agreed to form a joint Special Investigations Group (SIG) to bolster cross-border wildlife crime suppression. The group will link up with INTERPOL and local law enforcement throughout the

region to ensure seizures are followed by more arrests and prosecutions.

Klairoong Poonpon, Senior Liaison Officer of the ASEAN-WEN Program Coordination Unit, said that this meeting provided ASEAN-WEN members “a chance to first figure out how to sustain the Network and second, a chance to fine-tune its enforcement capacity, allowing them to go after the major smugglers in the region”.

The meeting was facilitated by the Lao PDR Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry’s Department of Forestry, with logistical and financial support from the ASEAN-WEN Program Coordination Unit (PCU) and the ASEAN-WEN Support Program, which is sponsored by USAID. Malaysia will be the next chair of ASEAN-WEN beginning May 2009.

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Photo Credit: ASEAN-WEN

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China imports legal ivory stocks from African Elephant range States

China has imported 65 tonnes of stockpiled African Elephant ivory sold by four southern African nations in auctions held in 2008. The auctions were overseen by members of the CITES Secretariat (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

The ivory auctions, held by Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, were the first in which China was permitted to bid after the country was designated an approved buyer at a CITES Standing Committee meeting in July 2008.

"After any ivory sale takes place, CITES monitoring systems track whether or not it leads to an increase in illegal trade in ivory," noted Tom Milliken, TRAFFIC's East/Southern Africa Regional Director, and a leading expert on the global ivory trade.

TRAFFIC operates the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) on behalf of CITES, which uses law enforcement data to track illegal trade in elephant products. It is one of the principal monitoring tools for elephants under CITES.

"Following the last one-off ivory sale (to Japan, in 1999), it is encouraging to note that the illicit trade in ivory progressively declined over the next five years; we hope a similar result is achieved this time," Milliken added.

China's market control systems and law enforcement effectiveness were assessed by the CITES Secretariat prior to the latest sale, with a report to the CITES Standing Committee noting that China's trade controls "satisfy what is required by the relevant Resolution and these are designed to prevent illicit ivory from being laundered through licensed premises."

China's controls to improve the management of ivory stock and products include the recording of ivory product sources and the issuance of certification labels.

"TRAFFIC will continue working with the Chinese government to help maintain the effectiveness of their market controls when the new ivory products begin entering the retail market," said Professor Xu Hongfa, Head of TRAFFIC's East Asia China Programme.

China's State Forestry Administration has listed African Elephants as a national Grade

CONTENTS

- 1 China imports legal ivory stocks from African Elephant range States
- 2 China's consumption of wildlife rising: report
- 3 Elephants under threat as illegal ivory prices soar in Viet Nam
- 4 Raising awareness about protecting marine turtles in Viet Nam
- 5 ASEAN judiciary workshop on wildlife crime and prosecution in Kuala Lumpur
- 6 Wildlife trade in the Russian Far East feels bite of global economic crisis
- 7 Metal detectors uncover hidden traps
- 8 China-Nepal visit exchange: cracking down on cross-border illegal wildlife trade
- 9 Some recent large wildlife seizures in Asia



Ivory products in Beijing © Xu Ling/TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

I protected animal and capped the annual consumption of ivory raw materials at five tonnes in order to sustain the ivory sculpting industry for the next 15–20 years.

China has also stepped up its efforts in prosecuting those convicted of illegal trading in ivory. For example, in May 2009, two Chinese men were each sentenced to three years in jail by the Chengdu Intermediate Court and Chongqing No. 1 Intermediate People's Court, respectively, for smuggling ivory carvings from the USA and Japan into China.

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China's consumption of wildlife rising: report

China's consumption of wild animal and plant species is rising according to a TRAFFIC report—*The State of Wildlife Trade in China 2007*.

Consumption of wild animals is increasing following a slump surrounding fears over SARS in 2003. A TRAFFIC survey in five southern Chinese cities found that 13 of 25 markets and 20 of 50 restaurants had wild animals for sale. A total of 56 species were found and of these eight were protected under Chinese law and 17 were protected under CITES, which prohibits or strictly controls their international trade.

TRAFFIC released its yearly snapshot of wildlife trade in China in November 2008 with coverage on issues including wild meat consumption, traditional Chinese medicine trade, illegal ivory trade and wood imports.

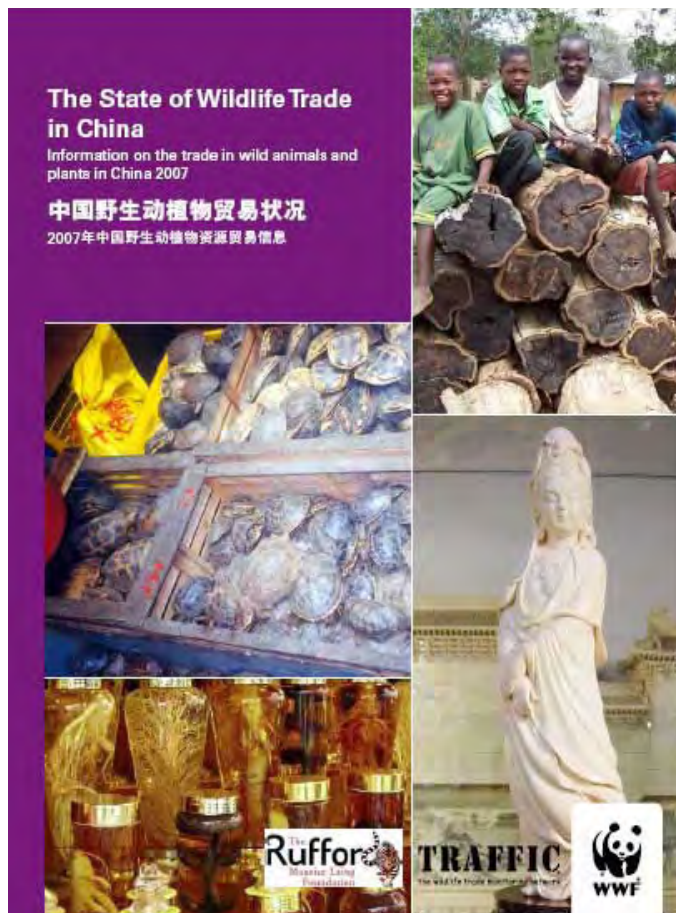
"*The State of Wildlife Trade in China 2007* examines the impact China's consumption is having on biodiversity and what emerging trends there are in the wildlife trade," explained Professor Xu Hongfa, Head of TRAFFIC East Asia's China Programme.

In addition to tracking a rise in China's wildlife consumption, the report revealed that China's traditional medicine trade is rapidly growing; China's illegal ivory trade is declining; China is the world's second largest wood importer; and China's persistent trade in freshwater turtles is thriving.

Traditional Chinese medicine

The Chinese traditional medicine trade has grown at an annual rate of 10 percent since 2003. Most exports (USD687 million-worth) go to Asia, but Europe (USD162 million) and North America (USD144 million) are increasingly important markets. Over-harvesting and poor management of resources are looming threats, for species sourced both in China and from neighbouring countries, and currently there are no standards to ensure the sustainable collection of wild medicinal plants.

"TRAFFIC, the Beijing Chinese Medicinal Institution and others recently contributed to the development of the International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, which could be applied to help China's important medicinal plant industry achieve sustainability," said Professor Xu.



The front cover of *The State of Wildlife Trade in China 2007*

Ivory trade

A re-examination in 2007 of the illegal ivory trade in China found that the situation had improved since a year earlier, with surveys showing a substantial reduction in the number of outlets selling ivory illegally.

"The reduction in illegal ivory trade is very welcome, but we urge the authorities to remain vigilant, particularly to ensure there is no laundering of illegal ivory," said Professor Xu.

Timber imports

The report notes the rapid increase in demand in China for commodities such as timber and points out that while Russia is currently the top supplier of timber to China, Africa accounts for a growing percentage, which is stimulating illegal timber trade in Africa.

"Chinese companies buying legal African timber must ensure the benefits of the timber trade are equitably shared, right down to the African rural communities on whose land the trees are growing," said Professor Xu.

Freshwater turtle trade

The majority of illegal wild animal trade was in freshwater turtles and snakes. In China, freshwater turtles and snakes are sold mostly for their meat and for medicinal purposes.

While China tends to be a destination for many wildlife products, other countries such as Viet Nam are both a user and a key transit point, with many of the wildlife products—including those sourced illegally—en route to China.

“The trends seen in this report into *the State of Wildlife Trade in China 2007* that show increasing demand in wildlife products and diminishing supply should be a wake up call for law enforcement, policy makers and consumers,” said Dr Susan Lieberman, Director of WWF International's Species Programme.

“We call upon Chinese authorities to enhance enforcement and public education efforts, to stop illegal trade and reduce consumption of threatened species from around the world.”

For more information, contact Priscilla Jiao at bjiao@wwfchina.org

Elephants under threat as illegal ivory prices soar in Viet Nam

Indochina's few surviving elephants are under increasing threat from high ivory prices in Viet Nam, according to a market analysis released by TRAFFIC Southeast Asia in February 2009.

The report, *An Assessment of the Illegal Ivory Trade in Viet Nam*, said Vietnamese ivory prices could be the highest in the world.



Painted plaques seen in several places in Viet Nam are manufactured in a village near Hue. They can be made of ivory or bone, and can be difficult to distinguish. © Daniel Stiles

Most of the raw ivory was said to originate from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, with small amounts from Viet Nam and Cambodia. According to TRAFFIC's Chris Shepherd, this is a particularly worrying trend as according to IUCN figures, no more than 1000 elephants are believed to survive in Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) while in Viet Nam, fewer than 150 are believed to exist.

Although no African raw ivory was found during the survey, a major seizure in Haiphong, Viet Nam, in March 2009 confirms that Viet Nam is still either a conduit or final destination for the illegal trade of African Elephant ivory in the region. The fate of the six tonnes (equating to more than 200 pairs of tusks) of ivory seized in this event remains unclear. Investigations are ongoing in both Viet Nam and Tanzania, where the shipment originated.

Trade in ivory was outlawed in Viet Nam in 1992, but a major loophole in the legislation exists because shops can still sell ivory held in stock prior to 1992. This facilitates the possible re-stocking by some shop owners with recently-carved ivory.

In 2008, TRAFFIC surveyed 669 retail outlets across Viet Nam and found 73 (11%) selling a total of 2444 ivory items. Whilst the scale of the ivory market was smaller than in previous surveys, there were signs of increasing demand and overall numbers of craftsmen had increased since 2001. Ho Chi Minh City had the most retail outlets (49) and ivory items (1776), but Ha Noi, with only 10 outlets, had the highest number of craftsmen.

The report recommends that Viet Nam should strengthen its compliance with its obligations under CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), particularly regarding the reporting of ivory seizures to the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), that national regulations and their enforcement should be tightened and offenders prosecuted, and that ivory for sale in retail outlets should be confiscated by the government authorities and destroyed.

The report also recommends enhanced training programmes for wildlife law enforcement officers and continued participation in the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) and similar initiatives that aim to control the illicit trafficking of ivory and other wildlife products in the region.

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Raising awareness about protecting marine turtles in Viet Nam

Hanoi's citizens may have seen something strange walking in the Vietnamese capital's historic Old Quarter in recent months: a line of cyclists dressed as marine turtles making their way through traffic.

The cyclists, who carried signs about marine turtle conservation, aimed to raise public awareness as part of the Marine Turtle Conservation Programme. The campaign, funded by DANIDA and jointly implemented by TRAFFIC, the Department of Capture Fisheries and Fisheries Resource Protection (DECAFIREP), and Hanoi Fisheries, took place over a period of two weeks last November.



A volunteer from the local student group "Cycle for the Environment" participating in TRAFFIC's November awareness campaign © Lisa Kelley/TRAFFIC

Six of seven of the world's marine turtle species are found in the Asia Pacific, five of them in waters off Viet Nam. Marine turtles have historic cultural, social and economic significance to many communities in Southeast Asia and many in the region consume marine turtles for their meat and eggs. There is also a long history of harvesting turtle eggs for their aphrodisiac and medicinal properties, and of targeting Hawksbill Turtles for their shell, used in the manufacture of jewellery, ornaments and utensils.

Levels of consumption today, however, pose one of the most serious threats to wild populations of marine turtles, many of which have already undergone a precipitous decline over the past two decades. Reflecting this decline, all species found in Viet Nam's waters are prohibited from trade for all purposes except scientific research. The five marine turtle species known to inhabit Vietnamese waters are classified as Endangered or as Critically Endangered in the 2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

However, marine turtle products continue to be found in retail shops in Hanoi and other cities in Viet Nam, with TRAFFIC research showing the trade has actually increased in some parts of the country since the early 1990s, with many consumers still unaware of the trade's illegality.

The public awareness campaign began with 200 roadside banners on the major thoroughfares in Hanoi that asked consumers to question their consumption of turtles. Other campaign activities included a three-day bicycle road show through some of Hanoi's busiest streets and two TV programmes that showcased the illegality of the trade as many citizens were unaware of the legislation protecting marine turtles. A highlight of the campaign was the participation of over 50 university students, part of a group called Cycle for the Environment. The students spent three days following the roadshow and distributing fliers about the trade to the public.

For more information, contact Lisa Kelly at lkelly@traffic.netnam.vn

ASEAN judiciary workshop on wildlife crime and prosecution in Kuala Lumpur

Magistrates and prosecutors across Peninsular Malaysia gathered in March to discuss how the judiciary could play a bigger role in combating wildlife crime.

Some 20 magistrates and four prosecutors working in wildlife crime "hotspots" attended the ASEAN Judiciary Workshop on Wildlife Crime and Prosecution and discussed how stronger cases could be presented against poachers and smugglers.

Participants heard from speakers who represented the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (PERHILITAN), Royal Malaysian Customs, the Anti-Smuggling Unit and TRAFFIC.

Magistrates and prosecutors were presented with facts regarding the major threat posed by illegal wildlife trade to Southeast Asia's biodiversity, and were told further that the criminal nature of the trade not only contributed to the extinction of internationally protected species, but had repercussions for Malaysia's international stature.

Enforcement officers detailed how the illegal trade in wildlife benefitted only a few individuals but cost the country an immeasurable amount in loss of biodiversity. They pushed the case for stiffer sentences and jail time for smugglers and poachers.

At the opening ceremony, participants also heard a strong message of commitment from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to strengthen current legislation, including a proposal for mandatory jail terms for some wildlife crimes.



Prosecutors and magistrates during group discussions at the workshop © Julia Ng/TRAFFIC

The magistrates and prosecutors spent a day with Robert S. Anderson, a Senior Trial Attorney attached to the US Department of Justice's Environmental Crimes Section, who discussed how charges could be better constructed, the standards of evidence brought to court, and argued the case for appropriate sentences.

He also stressed to prosecutors the importance of presenting wildlife crime cases as they would other criminal cases, based on law, hard facts and evidence, rather than on appeals on an emotional basis.

The magistrates and prosecutors, many of whom had never handled wildlife crime cases, also had the opportunity to discuss with Anderson factual scenarios and how they would present these in court cases.

This workshop was the fifth in a series held in the region under the USAID-funded support programme for the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), and also had the support of the Federal Courts of Malaysia.

ASEAN-WEN is an initiative that brings ASEAN governments together to combat wildlife crime. TRAFFIC and Freeland Foundation, in partnership with USAID, provide technical assistance to government agencies implementing this initiative.

The next judiciary workshop in the series is scheduled for later in 2009. Around thirty people including prosecutors and judges from hotspot provinces will be invited.

For more information, contact Elizabeth John at jlizzjohn@gmail.com

Wildlife trade in the Russian Far East feels bite of global economic crisis?

Between September and November 2008, the main season for wildlife trade in Russia, TRAFFIC staff from the Russian Far East and representatives of the Vladivostok branch of the Russian Customs Academy surveyed five key wildlife markets in Vladivostok and also markets in Primorsky province



Leopard skin in Russia @ Sergey Aramilev/
WWF Amur branch

(in the villages of Nezhino, Olenevod, Filipovka, Barabash, Znadvorovka and Andreevka).

According to preliminary analysis of monitoring results, trade in wild medicinal, decorative and other plants and mushrooms, some of them listed in the Russian and Primorye Red Data Books, appeared widespread. There was active trade in wild plants from Khabarovsk and Sakhalinsk provinces, including illegally procured species such as Manchurian Birthwort *Aristolochia manshuriensis* and Snowdown Rose *Rhodiola rosea*.

Earlier in 2008, monitoring in Primorsky and Khabarovsk provinces revealed that many local people were aware that trade in rare and threatened protected wild animals and plants was strictly prohibited and may result in strict penalties under Russian legislation. However, interviews suggested that 40–70% of the population were involved in such trade, driven largely by the opportunities to earn extra income. Buyers included Russian citizens as well as foreigners, predominantly from China and North Korea, living temporarily in Russia.

“Monitoring of markets in Primorsky and Khabarovsk provinces is very important in terms of understanding what is happening to the wildlife trade in the region,” said Natalia Pervushina, co-ordinator of TRAFFIC’s work in the Russian Far East.

“Special attention should be paid to assess the impact of the global economic crisis on the illegal wildlife trade. Many mining and timber industries have closed, resulting in high levels of unemployment in the region. The situation is exacerbated by the reduction of armed forces in the region by up to 60-70% with the closure of many military bases, leaving even fewer opportunities for local employment,” she added.

A vivid indication that the wildlife trade situation may be worsening was the seizure of an Amur Leopard skin on 3 April 2009 in Primorsky province made by Internal Police Service officers while inspecting a private car. The Amur Leopard *Panthera pardus orientalis* is one of the rarest animals in the world with only 30-40 individuals left in the wild. It is listed by IUCN and in the Russian Red Data Book as Critically Endangered, as well as in Appendix I of CITES, meaning all commercial international trade is prohibited.

Sergey Aramilev, WWF Russia’s Amur Branch Biodiversity Conservation Co-ordinator described the killing as “an act of outspoken barbarism”.

Bi-annual wildlife trade market monitoring is one of the core activities of TRAFFIC’s work in the Russian Far East, which aims to determine the composition, scale and value of trade in wild animals and plants between Russia and China.

For more information, contact Natalia Pervushina at npervushina@amur.wwf.ru

Metal detectors uncover hidden traps

TRAFFIC, in co-operation with India’s National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is using a novel method to locate snares set to catch Tigers and other animals in India’s forests.

“Metal snares are often used to catch Tigers and other big cats, but they are almost impossible to find because they are cleverly camouflaged,” said Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India. “However, by using Deep Search Metal Detectors, forest guards can now find even the most cleverly hidden traps.”

Deep Search Metal Detectors are ideal for remote field operations because they are robust, simple to assemble and use, and do not require complicated maintenance or handling.

The detectors can also be used during post-mortem examinations to see if snared animals have bullet wounds. This helps strengthen legal follow up procedures and should lead to more effective prosecutions for poaching.

TRAFFIC is providing full training in the use of detectors and has developed a handy manual in English and Hindi to help Indian field personnel.

“The feedback from trainees is very positive and they see many benefits from using the equipment,” said Sinha.

Senior officials are enthusiastic too, and several have contacted TRAFFIC to ask how they can obtain detectors.

“The use of metal detectors is likely to have a deterrent effect in the long run, simply as poachers become aware new technology is in place to stop their efforts,” said Sinha.

TRAFFIC India’s metal detector programme, which is generously funded by WWF-UK and WWF-Germany, has seen equipment sent to Tiger areas throughout India, including well-known reserves such as Corbett, Ranthambore, Kanha, Pench, Simlipal, Bandhavgarh and Rajaji.

A pair of detectors plus training in their use can cost up to INR80 000 (USD1600) for each reserve but, according to Sinha, the cost of the new technology is a small price to pay for helping to protect India’s Tigers.

For more information, contact Samir Sinha at ssinha@wwfindia.net



Metal detector being used to locate snares © Samir Sinha/TRAFFIC



China-Nepal visit exchange: cracking down on cross-border illegal wildlife trade

A landmark visit by Chinese government officials to Nepal has laid the foundation for improved cross-border collaboration to stem illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade between the two countries.

A three-person delegation from China's Endangered Species Import and Export Management Office visited Nepal in October 2008. The Chinese delegates met their Nepali counterparts from the Management Authorities for the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) for focused discussions on enhancing bilateral CITES law enforcement.

China borders Nepal along a 1400 km stretch of mostly remote snow-capped mountains rising up to 5000-6000 m above sea level. However, cross-border smuggling of wildlife species continues to include wool from Tibetan Antelopes, poached in China and smuggled into India via Nepal, processed into scarves and sold illegally as the prized *shahtoosh*. Numerous examples of Tiger and Leopard skins and bones smuggled from India and Nepal into China have led to previous dialogue meetings between China, India and Nepal regarding multilateral co-operation on cross-border smuggling.

The bilateral exchange between China and Nepal in 2008 builds on a previous visit by Chinese officials to India in 2006, and missions from India and Nepal to China.

The Chinese mission discussed cross-border management of trade in several species, including Tibetan Antelope, Red Sandalwood, Asian big cats, *Cordyceps sinensis* (caterpillar fungus, a valuable ingredient in traditional oriental medicines), and how to crack down on illegal activities. Key Nepali government agencies, including the General Administration of Customs, the Bureau of Flora Resources, the Forestry Bureau, the CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, were involved in discussions with the Chinese delegation. A field visit to Tatopani Customs (opposite Zhangmu in China) enabled an assessment of the on-ground challenges faced by Customs to control the heavy traffic passing through the major land-border between the two countries.

The visit was co-ordinated by TRAFFIC and WWF-Nepal, with funding from WWF-UK.

For more information, contact Priscilla Jiao at bjiao@wwfchina.org

Some recent large wildlife seizures in Asia

East Asia

China

On 6 January 2009, Kunming forest police seized 31 Asian Elephant (CITES I) tusks (36 kg) that had been purchased in Yingjiang City, on the border with Myanmar. Two suspects were detained. The case is under investigation.

On 5 January 2009, border soldiers at the Hengjiang checkpoint, Fangchenggang City, Guangxi Province, confiscated 150 kg of suspected elephant tusks from a coach in Dongxing City, en route to Xiamen City, Fujian Province. The material was to be identified by the relevant authority.

http://www.yn.xinhuanet.com/nets/2009-02/04/content_15601756.htm;

<http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2009-01-07/085114994537s.shtml>

Taiwan

In March 2009, Customs officials in Taipei intercepted a parcel arriving by post from Tanzania. Inside they found 84 Leopard Tortoises (CITES II). No one turned up to collect the package.

On 11 May 2009, at Taipei International Airport, two people returning from Jakarta, Indonesia, were stopped by Customs after 27 kg and 14.9 kg of agarwood spp. (CITES II) was discovered in their respective luggage; no CITES permit could be presented. The agarwood was seized and the case has been sent to the district prosecution office.

Customs and Forestry police, Taiwan; <http://news.chinatimes.com/2007Cti/2007Cti-Rtn/2007Cti-Rtn-Content/0,4526,110105+112009051100884,00.html>

South Asia

India

On 31 January 2009, the north-east district police of Delhi confiscated a large consignment of art brushes made out of mongoose hair at a factory in the Bhajanpura area, reported to be ready for shipment to Mumbai. Police officers arrested two people, and the owner of more than 30,000 brushes is being sought. All species of mongoose *Herpestes* are protected under Schedule 2 Part II of the *Wildlife Protection Act*, 1972.

On 16 February 2009, personnel from Assam Rifle's 20th battalion in Chandel district, Manipur, seized animal parts, including skulls of two Tigers (CITES I), two Tiger paws, 16 kg of Tiger bones, 340 kg of pangolin *Manis* spp. (CITES II), shell and 191 deer antlers from a lorry at a checkpoint in Bongyang village.

On 7 January 2009, personnel of the Customs Preventative Force stationed at Pallel Gate, Chandel district, Manipur, seized 58.4 kg of deer [species not reported] horn antlers and 116 kg of pangolin spp. scales from a lorry travelling from Imphal towards Moreh, Manipur, on the border with Myanmar.

On 9 December 2008, officials of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Coimbatore, seized 10.51 t of Red Sandalwood logs. The consignment was on its way to Kochi from Bangalore and was intended for export. The logs have been deposited at the Inland Container Depot at Singanallur, Tamil Nadu.

www.wpsi-india.org/news/25012009.php, 25 January 2009; http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Delhi/30000_mongoose_hair_brushes_seized_2_held/articleshow/4057990.cms; The Sangai Express, 12 January 2009, www.e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=3.130109.jan09; http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Health_Science/Earth/43_jailed_for_smuggling_animal_parts_in_MP/articleshow/3962751.cms; www.thehindu.com/2008/12/12/stories/2008121260250800.htm

Southeast Asia

Malaysia

On 15 April 2009, wildlife and National Parks department officers chased down and stopped a lorry carrying 1202 Clouded Monitor Lizards along a highway in the state of Pahang, Malaysia. This haul was believed to be destined for restaurants overseas. Based on information from this seizure, the team later raided the home of a man in an indigenous people's settlement nearby and seized another 34 Clouded Monitor Lizards and 2 Dumeril's Monitor Lizards that he had hidden behind the house.

On 1 April 2009, four tonnes (150 head) of Wild Boar carcasses were seized from a lorry believed to be smuggling the meat from Malaysia to Thailand. The carcasses were found along a major highway in the Peninsular Malaysian state of Pahang.

In November 2008, more than 7000 live Clouded Monitor Lizards and almost 900 dead owls plus other protected wildlife species were seized in two raids in Peninsular Malaysia. A local man was arrested and remanded in custody for three days, but pleaded not guilty and was released on bail of MYR19 000 (USD5300).

On 2 November, Malaysian marine police based in Sandakan seized 10 000 Green Turtle (CITES I) eggs that had been abandoned on Kampung Forest beach; four people escaped by speedboat. This is the largest seizure of turtle eggs by local authorities in 2009 to date.

www.traffic.org/home/2009/4/17/clouded-and-dumerils-monitor-lizards-seized-in-malaysia.html, 17 April 2009; www.wildlifeextra.com/go/news/malaysia-crime827.html 19 November 2009

Thailand

Officials in Bangkok have seized 1 tonne of ivory arriving from Uganda, the biggest seizure of illegal animal products from the country in recent times. Police questioned two Ugandan Entebbe-based officials who allegedly cleared the cargo on 13 January 2009. The suspected exporter, believed to be a Congolese, is on the run.

www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/675746, 24 March, 2009



Almost 900 dead owls plus other protected wildlife were seized in two raids in Peninsular Malaysia in November 2008 © Chris R Shepherd / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia.

Viet Nam

On 6 March 2009, at Dinh Vu Port, Hai Phong city, Customs officials discovered over 6 tonnes of tusks contained in 114 boxes of cartons covered with bags of plastic waste – the largest-ever seizure of tusks in the country. The container was on a ship carrying a Malaysian flag, which arrived at the port on 28 February. The receiver, as written in the bill of lading, was a company based in Hai Phong city. The smuggled goods started their journey in Tanzania in late January 2009, and transited Malaysia before entering Viet Nam.

On 10 January 2009, Hanoi's environmental police seized two sets of Tiger bones, 10 kg of bones and horns of Serow *Naemohedus sp.* (CITES II), 6 frozen pieces of Tiger skin, 7 bear paws, 16 bear gall bladders, 6 porcupine stomachs and 69 bags of bones from various wild animals (more than 2 metric tonnes) from a store in Dong Da district. The testimony of the suspect led to the arrest of a man manufacturing Tiger bone gel found in a warehouse belonging to the suspect.

On 19 December 2008, Customs officials in Viet Nam seized 4400 kg of frozen pangolin meat and 900 kg of pangolin scales in Cai Lan seaport, Quang Ninh, believed to be bound for China.

www.nhandan.com.vn/english/life/300309/life_cas.htm, 30 March 2009; www.ensnewswire.com/ens/jan2009/2009-01-21-02.asp, 21 January 2009; <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/msid-3873473,prtpage-1.cms>, 22 December 2008

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Issue 8, December 2009



Viet Nam's Government commits to protecting wildlife from illegal trade

Over 100 participants from the Communist Party of Viet Nam (CPV), government agencies and other organizations attended a workshop in August to discuss the illegal wildlife trade threatening Viet Nam's natural resources.

The event, entitled *The Protection of Wildlife and Its Impact on the Conservation and Sustainability of Natural Resources in Viet Nam*, marked an important milestone in Viet Nam's fight against wildlife trafficking as the first meeting sponsored by the ruling Communist Party, bringing high-level officials to the table to discuss the illegal and unsustainable trade.

The two day workshop was co-organized by the Central Committee for Communications and Education (CCCE), an advising body to the Communist Party, with support from TRAFFIC's Greater Mekong Programme. Participants included representatives of the CCCE, different Central Committees of the CPV, offices of the Government, the National Assembly, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, local government officials, a representative of the US Embassy, and members of TRAFFIC, WWF and IUCN.

In an effort to educate the media to raise awareness of wildlife trafficking, the workshop also included journalists from 17 major Vietnamese newspaper, television and radio organizations.

Attendees heard presentations on the current status of biodiversity in Viet Nam and the impact of wildlife trade on natural resources. Participants also discussed how to use existing legislation and the media to change consumer behaviour and end illegal wildlife consumption.

An official statement from the CCCE following the workshop stressed the need for Party and Government officials to address illegal wildlife trade and contribute to the preservation of natural resources in Viet Nam.

"To protect wildlife species is not only the responsibility of the Forest Protection Department, the Police, Customs Department and Market Control. Depending only on these law enforcement agencies is not sufficient to ensure the existence and sustainability of wildlife species. There must be participation of communities, co-operation, information sharing, co-ordination among various organizations and the guidance of the Party's committees and government authorities at different levels," concluded the report.

The CPV also recommended stricter implementation of national laws related to wildlife protection; use of the mass media to raise public awareness; expedited implementation of Viet Nam's Biodiversity Law; increased funding for conservation and sustainable use of resources; improved living standards for people living in and around protected natural areas; and the establishment of an environmental court to prosecute crimes related to wildlife.

The workshop was held as part of the TRAFFIC and WWF-led Wildlife Trade Campaign, which aims to change consumer attitudes in Viet Nam to end illegal wildlife trade. This workshop specifically targeted government officials, one of two major consumer groups of wildlife products in Hanoi, according to research conducted by TRAFFIC. The second major consumer group is businessmen.

The response and range of attendees is promising for the future of wildlife conservation in Viet Nam. Co-organizers TRAFFIC and CCCE have committed to collaboration on two additional workshops in the coming months. The first will help educate the CCCE's Communications Officials from Viet Nam's Northern provinces so that they can inform their respective ministries, organizations, and districts about wildlife trade. The second will be held in conjunction with the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness of the wildlife trade in the business community.

For more information, contact Sarah Morgan at smorgan@traffic.netnam.vn

CONTENTS

- 1 Viet Nam's Government commits to protecting wildlife from illegal trade
- 2 New hunting law passed in Russia
- 3 Information displayed on illegal wildlife trade on Russian-Chinese border
- 4 Training for frontline staff pays off
- 5 China's fisheries must adapt to meet new EU regulations
- 6 Poaching crisis as rhino horn demand booms in Asia
- 7 Elephant-size loopholes sustain Thai ivory trade
- 8 Customs staff gear up with ivory identification skills in Shanghai
- 9 Enforcement officers put in the picture
- 10 Local harvesters learn about sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants
- 11 Spotlight: bird identification poster released

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

New wildlife identification handbook released in Viet Nam



Front cover of the new wildlife ID guides © Sarah Morgan/TRAFFIC

In late May, TRAFFIC's Greater Mekong Programme and the Vietnamese Forest Protection Department released *A Pictorial Guide for Quick Identification of Some Wild Animals Protected by Vietnamese Laws and CITES*.

The guide, published in Vietnamese, includes coloured photographs and descriptions of nearly 150 species protected under national legislation and CITES, focusing on key characteristics that allow for easy identification.

The handbook is meant to be a field tool for enforcement officials to identify quickly some of the protected species bought and sold in the wildlife trade. It is a much-needed resource as illegal wildlife trafficking continues to threaten the country's unique biodiversity.

The production of this handbook was a collaborative effort between TRAFFIC, the Forest Protection Department (FPD) and the CITES Scientific Authority. The Royal Danish Embassy is the donor behind the books.

TRAFFIC distributed 1,000 first-edition copies to officials throughout the country from the FPD, Market Control, Customs, the Environmental Police and the National Park to assist them in enforcing wildlife trade legislation. The co-operative efforts between TRAFFIC and Vietnamese authorities are vital to increasing the effectiveness of wildlife trade law enforcement.

Revolution. Since then, hunting in Russia has been governed by a series of decrees and court orders.

The new law includes several clauses relating to sustainable use of animals and will provide a stronger legal basis for implementing hunting regulations and introducing subsidiary legislation.

"TRAFFIC warmly welcomes this new legislation, which marks a big step forward for wildlife management and conservation in the Russian Federation," commented TRAFFIC's Alexey Vaisman, who was a member of the Federal Parliament's working group that helped draft the law.

He added that although there were still some gaps in the legislation, they would be addressed during the autumn session of Parliament.

The legislation was approved following a vote in parliament after its third reading, and will enter into force on 1 April 2010.

For more information, contact Natalia Pervushina at npervushina@amur.wwf.ru

Information displayed on illegal wildlife trade on Russian-Chinese border

Sixteen information boards about illegal wildlife products have been put on display at Far Eastern Customs Directorate checkpoints along the Russian-Chinese border. The informative displays are already set up in eight Customs houses, as well as in Vladivostok International Airport.

The bilingual boards—in Russian and Chinese—provide travellers with information about the legislation governing the transportation of wildlife products, and were designed with the input of experts from the Vladivostok branch of the Russian Customs Academy, the Russian and Chinese CITES Management Authorities, plus TRAFFIC and WWF staff.



Information board in Russian and Chinese

The information boards also feature images of convicted Russian and Chinese wildlife smugglers. It is the first time such public awareness notifications, specific to the implementation of Russian and Chinese legislations on wildlife transportation, have appeared at these regional Customs checkpoints.

"The input of several government and non-government Russian and Chinese authorities is an indication of the collaborative effort needed to solve cross-border problems associated with wildlife illegal trafficking," commented Natalia Pervushina, co-ordinator of TRAFFIC's work in the Russian Far East (RFE).

Illegal harvesting and trade in rare animals and plants remains a major threat to the biodiversity of the RFE, a region which

New hunting law passed in Russia

In an historic move, the Russian parliament has passed new legislation on wildlife hunting and conservation of hunting resources.

Russia's only previous hunting law was signed by Emperor Alexander III in 1892, but repealed in 1917 following the Russian

faces many challenges. On the one hand, it is a region rich in biodiversity, but at the same time it is one of the most problematic regions in Russia for illegal trade in wild animals and plants. High demand from neighbouring Asian countries, especially China, drives the trade in wildlife products, including wild ginseng roots, skins and bones of Tiger and Leopard, bear paws and gall bladders, Musk Deer pods, furs, dried sea cucumber, products of Amur Sturgeon and amphibians.

Russia's Far Eastern Operative Customs reported that in 2008 there were 45 wildlife seizures by RFE Customs, among which 35 administrative cases and 10 criminal cases were instituted. According to experts' estimates, 160 species of RFE wildlife are affected by illegal and unsustainable trade, which has resulted in the RFE Customs prioritizing the fight against wildlife trafficking.

"Special attention should be paid to combating illegal wildlife trafficking during the current economic crisis when people may be tempted to generate extra income through illicit means," warned Natalia Pervushina.

For more information, contact Natalia Pervushina at npervushina@amur.wwf.ru

Training for frontline staff pays off

Staff from the International Airport and Low Cost Carrier Terminal in Malaysia's capital Kuala Lumpur underwent a course in August to learn how to identify species in trade and to intercept wildlife traffickers.

The Wildlife Trade Regulation Workshop was organized by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN).

During this workshop, security, airline and cargo personnel, as well as law enforcement officers based at the airports, learnt how smugglers conceal wildlife in baggage, air freight and on their person. The workshop also provided an introduction to the laws and regulations that govern international trade in wild plants and animals.



Participants listen as the Chairman of the Conference makes his opening speech during the government workshop on illegal wildlife trade © Nguyen Dao Ngoc Van/TRAFFIC

Participants from airlines, airport management, and freight forwarding companies, Royal Malaysian Customs and the National

Parks and Wildlife Department also heard from TRAFFIC about the most commonly traded species and were given illustrative guides to help identify these.

A special session on tortoises—one of the species groups most commonly smuggled in carry-on luggage—was also held for participants.

The participants were also encouraged to play a bigger role in halting the illegal wildlife trade by the Senior Officer of the ASEAN-WEN Program Coordination Unit; Dr Chumphon Sukksaem. He outlined the growing role that airports in the region were playing as conduits for the illegal wildlife trade.

Participants were told that as frontline personnel, their work was vital if Malaysia and its fellow ASEAN member countries were to win the fight against illegal wildlife traders.

The day following the training, Air Asia staff at the Low Cost Carrier Terminal who attended the course, seized five Zebra Doves from a Bali-bound passenger and one week later, found and seized a Leopard Gecko from a Hong Kong-bound passenger.

Over the past two years, several tonnes of ivory have been seized by authorities at regional airports in Taipei, Guangzhou, and Bangkok; rare tortoises and turtles are regularly found hidden in other air cargo consignments; while most recently, Australian Customs arrested a man attempting to smuggle 39 parrot eggs into Australia through Perth International Airport,

ASEAN-WEN is an initiative that brings ASEAN governments together to combat wildlife crime and the course is one of several supporting components aimed to help government agencies thwart illegal wildlife trade in the region.

The Wildlife Trade Regulation Workshop was held with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Malaysia Airports, and is designed to target the considerable quantity of illegal wildlife that is carried in personal baggage or shipped as airfreight.

The course aims to create a critical mass of informed employees and enforcement officers at airports to shut out wildlife trafficking effectively. TRAFFIC and partner organization FREELAND Foundation, provide technical assistance for the implementation of programmes under the ASEAN-WEN banner.

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China's fisheries must adapt to meet new EU regulations

China appears to have made considerable progress in improving the traceability of its fish processing industry, but will need to adapt further if it is to meet the requirements of forthcoming European Union regulations.

From January 2010, all fish materials imported into the European Union (EU) will have to be accompanied by catch certificates, which have to be validated by the flag State of the vessel that caught the fish. The new laws aim to combat Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing.



Fish processing factory in Shangdong Province © C.Morrison

To meet the new requirements, China will have to issue certificates for all catches by China-flagged vessels, and obtain certificates from other countries when fish is imported into China for processing.

The TRAFFIC study, *Understanding China's fish trade and traceability*, characterizes China's fish reprocessing industry and examines to what extent its existing traceability systems will be able to cope with the requirements of the forthcoming EU legislation. The study was funded by the UK Government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

"The welcome initiative by the EU to tackle IUU fishing, along with measures being introduced in the US, mean that the days are rapidly disappearing for those who trade in seafood products without adequate documentation to prove the legitimacy of their operations," said Glenn Sant, TRAFFIC's Global Marine Programme Leader.

The study compiled information on the structure of the current fish processing trade for marine species caught or reprocessed by mainland China, and examined the fish documentation schemes in place to look for weaknesses where infiltration of illegally sourced fish might occur.

Species examined in the report include pollock, cod, salmon, redfish, haddock, whiting, coalfish, hake, toothfish and tuna. Determining the quantities of species of fish being re-processed is far from straightforward: Customs systems both in China and in some importing countries lack sufficient detail in commodity codes and usually do not check whether fish imports are classified under the appropriate code.

Recommendations in the report include streamlining of the monitoring systems currently used by Chinese authorities into a single, integrated and effective traceability system; the development of formal requirements for catch certification and documentation in China.

Understanding China's fish trade and traceability (PDF, 2.5 MB) by Shelley Clarke was published by TRAFFIC East Asia and is available on www.traffic.org

For more information, contact Priscilla Jiao at bjiao@wwfchina.org

Poaching crisis as rhino horn demand booms in Asia

Rhino poaching worldwide is poised to hit a 15-year-high driven by Asian demand for horns. Poachers in Africa and Asia are killing an ever increasing number of rhinos—an estimated two to three a week in some areas—to meet a growing demand for horns believed in some countries to have medicinal value, according to a briefing by TRAFFIC, WWF and IUCN.

An estimated three rhinos were illegally killed each month in all of Africa from 2000–2005, out of a population of around 18,000. 12 rhinoceroses now are being poached each month in South Africa and Zimbabwe alone, the three groups said in August.

"Illegal rhino horn trade to destinations in Asia is driving the killing, with growing evidence of involvement of Vietnamese, Chinese and Thai nationals in the illegal procurement and transport of rhino horn out of Africa," the briefing states.

Since 2006 the majority (96 percent) of the poaching in Africa has occurred in Zimbabwe and South Africa, according to a further report by TRAFFIC and IUCN, released in December 2009 (see <http://www.cites.org/common/cop/15/doc/E15-45-01A.pdf>).

"These two nations collectively form the epicentre of an unrelenting poaching crisis in southern Africa," said Tom Milliken of TRAFFIC.

Both reports document a decline in law enforcement effectiveness and an increase in poaching intensity in Africa. They have been submitted to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES); Parties to the Convention will meet in March to discuss rhino poaching and other wildlife trade issues.

Meanwhile, rhino poaching is also problematic in Asia. About 10 rhinos have been poached in India and at least seven in Nepal since January alone—out of a combined population of only 2,400 endangered rhinos.

The second report also raises concerns regarding the low and declining numbers as well as the uncertain status of some of the Sumatran and Javan Rhino populations in Malaysia, Indonesia and Viet Nam.

"Increased demand for rhino horn, alongside a lack of law enforcement, a low level of prosecutions for poachers who are actually arrested and increasingly daring attempts by poachers and thieves to obtain the horn is proving to be too much for rhinos and some populations are seriously declining," said Steven Broad, Executive Director of TRAFFIC.

"Concerted action at the highest level is needed to stop this global crisis of rampant rhino poaching," said Amanda Nickson, Director of the Species Programme at WWF International. "We call on the countries of concern to come to COP 15 in March with specific actions they have undertaken to show their commitment to stopping this poaching and protecting rhinos in the wild."

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Elephant-size loopholes sustain Thai ivory trade

Legal loopholes and insufficient law enforcement mean that Thailand continues to harbour the largest illegal ivory market in Asia.

Concerns were raised that legal provisions governing trade in domesticated elephants are providing cover for illegal trade in wild-caught, highly-endangered Asian Elephants from both Thailand and neighbouring Myanmar, according to a TRAFFIC report.

TRAFFIC's survey documented over 26,000 worked ivory products for sale in local markets, with many more retail outlets dealing in ivory products than market surveys conducted in 2001.



Thai ivory buddhas © Daniel Stiles/TRAFFIC

Market surveys in 2008 found 50 more retail outlets offering ivory items in Chiang Mai and Bangkok, the main hub for illegal ivory activities, accounting for over 70 percent of the retail outlets in Thailand offering ivory items for sale. However, overall there was less worked ivory openly on sale than in 2001.

"Since 2004, the Thai Government has only reported two ivory seizure cases totaling 1.2 tonnes of raw ivory. Thailand needs to reassess its policy for controlling its local ivory markets as currently it is not implementing international requirements to the ongoing detriment of both African and Asian Elephant populations," said Tom Milliken, director of TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.

The report includes new information on ivory workshops—eight in Uthai Thani, one each in Chai Nat and Payuha Kiri, and three in Bangkok—between them employing dozens of carvers in the production of ivory jewelry, belt buckles and knife-handles. Much of the ivory being worked is illegally imported from Africa. Some workshop owners boasted close ties with European knife makers, while others reported sending ivory, steel and silver items to the US for sale in gun shops.

"The Thai Government needs to crack down on this serious illegal activity and stop allowing people to abuse the law," said Dr Colman O'Criodain, WWF International's analyst on wildlife trade issues. "A good first step would be to put in place a comprehensive registration system for all ivory in trade and for live elephants".

Hundreds of live elephants are known to have been illegally imported from Myanmar in recent years, to be sold to elephant trekking companies catering to adventure tourism in Thailand. The capture of wild elephants has been banned in Thailand since the 1970s, but such trade usually goes undetected because domesticated elephants do not have to be registered legally until they are eight years of age.

"There must be greater scrutiny of the live elephant trade if enforcement efforts are to have any impact at all," said Chris R. Shepherd, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia's Acting Director. "Thailand and Myanmar should work together, and with urgency, to address cross-border trade problems," he added.

A recent high-profile ivory seizure, a review of national legislation, and the initiation of training courses for both government staff and ivory traders are indications of the commitment being shown by the Thai Government to tackle the illegal ivory trade. 316 pieces of raw ivory weighing 812.5 kg illegally imported from Qatar were confiscated by the Royal Thai Customs Department in August at the Suvarnabhumi International Airport. The Government is beginning a review of the Wildlife Animal Reservation and Protection Act (WARPA 1992), which contains a loophole that allows illegal trade to flourish in the country.

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Customs staff gear up with identification skills in Shanghai

In light of China's receipt of 101.4 tonnes of legal ivory from four southern African countries, law enforcement and Customs staff have been prioritized to receive additional training to identify ivory products.

A specific course on regulation and management of ivory and its products was organized by the Shanghai Municipal Afforestation Administration and co-organized by TRAFFIC in May 2009. Participants were drawn from the protection sections and management stations of Shanghai Municipal Afforestation Administration, Shanghai office of CITES management authority of China, wildlife conservation departments in 12 districts, as well as government-authorized ivory processing and retail companies.

Shanghai, one of China's wealthiest cities, has become a hotspot in illegal ivory trade in recent years. This year's survey has indicated that illegal trade persists and some legitimate shops are covertly running illegal operations.

The training workshop was intended to intensify the crackdown on illegal trade, regulate legal ivory trade in Shanghai as well as identify illegal trade disguised as legal trade.

Professor Xu Hongfa, head of the TRAFFIC's China Programme, briefed the participants about the CITES one-off auction in ivory in 2008, and analysed the impact of China and Japan's one-off ivory import on international ivory trade. "Smugglers might try to disguise illegally imported ivory as from legitimate sources, imposing a huge challenge on our regulatory management of ivory trade," Professor Xu said.

The Elephant Information Trade System (ETIS), managed by TRAFFIC on behalf of the Parties to CITES, can be utilized to

gain a better understanding of illegal ivory trade and provide useful information in ivory trade management and combating smuggling.

TRAFFIC's China Programme Officer Xu Ling gave a detailed report on results from a survey of ivory trade in major Chinese cities of Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai. The report recommended law enforcement authorities co-operate with ivory processing and selling authorities focus on strict implementation of labeling and certification of ivory so that illegally-sourced ivory cannot be misrepresented as legal.

A former senior craftsman with Shanghai Friendship Store joined the training team to demonstrate how to identify ivory products definitively, something which will be very helpful in future law enforcement in Shanghai.

The regulatory authorities requested wildlife conservation officers in every district to intensify crackdowns on ivory smuggling and illegal trade, urge designated ivory processing and selling companies to operate in strict accordance with the relevant regulations as well as implement ivory labeling and certification management.

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Enforcement officers put in the picture



Frontline enforcement officers in Asia now have simple species identification sheets to help them identify the wildlife they see in trade

Can you tell an Indian Star from a Ploughshare Tortoise or an Eld's Deer antlers from those of a Sambar? Probably not, and no doubt you'd seek expert assistance if required to do so, but that's the sort of challenge facing wildlife enforcement officers who need to be able to recognize which of the wide variety of wild animal and plant species in the ASEAN region is being traded.

To assist them, the ASEAN-Wildlife Enforcement Network (WEN) has developed a set of simple identification sheets to help Customs and other enforcement officers as they inspect shipments of wildlife goods to see if they comply with relevant legislation.

The sheets were compiled by Claire Beastall of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia as part of the US Agency for International

Development (USAID) funded ASEAN-WEN Support Program. Technical assistance for the implementation of activities under this program is provided by TRAFFIC and FREELAND Foundation.

"It's obviously impossible for officers to be experts in the identification of every wildlife product they come across, which is why ASEAN-WEN has produced these simple guides to help them" commented Dr Chumphon Sukkaseam, Senior Officer of the ASEAN-WEN Programme Coordination Unit (PCU).

The identification sheets aim to assist busy frontline enforcement officers with a user-friendly tool designed to help them decide whether a species is being transported legally, and if not how to seek specialist help.

Unscrupulous traders sometimes label shipments of rare and threatened animals as common species that can be legally traded, in the hope that officers inspecting the shipment won't know the difference.

"The need for such guides has long been recognized," commented Chris R. Shepherd, Acting Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia. "I am confident these guides will help plug a gaping hole in wildlife enforcement efforts in the region."

The English version of the identification sheets will be made available for download on the ASEAN-WEN website, and translated versions will be delivered to countries throughout the ASEAN region. To date, they have been translated into Bahasa Malay, Bahasa Indonesia, Khmer, Lao, Filipino, Thai and Vietnamese languages.

ASEAN-WEN is the world's largest wildlife law enforcement network, comprised of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The United States and China are also co-operating with ASEAN.

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Local harvesters learn sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants

Medicinal plant harvesters undertook a training session on sustainable harvesting of the southern Schisandra fruit in China's southwest Sichuan province in August.

The training took place in Daping village, Shuijing Town, as an activity of the EU-China Biodiversity Programme. Participants included more than 30 villagers, mainly harvesters, staff from Wanglang Nature Reserve as well as staff from TRAFFIC and WWF China.

The training materials were developed by experts from the Sichuan Academy of Chinese Medicine Sciences and Southwest University based on the international standards for sustainable harvesting of wild medicinal and aromatic plants (ISSC-MAP).

Participants learnt the concepts of organic products and sustainable harvesting, methods of identifying, harvesting, processing, packaging and transportation. Trainer Dr Yang Wenyu of Xihua



More than 30 harvesters learning sustainable harvesting skills © Liu Xueyan/TRAFFIC

University delivered the simplified training contents by using picture diagrams, enabling villagers to interact actively with the trainer, and offering their own ideas on sustainable harvesting.

Daping Village has a long tradition of harvesting the Southern Schisandra *Schisandra sphenanthera*. However, some methods are inappropriate: cutting off the whole plant damages the resource and the environment; harvesting in the wrong season and applying incorrect processing methods leads to low content; hygiene standards don't meet international market requirements. The training targeted these issues, to help correct bad harvesting practice and educating villagers on the correct methods to use. Through the workshop, villagers were expected to accept and adopt reasonable methods to improve the quality of products.

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Spotlight

TRAFFIC India's latest poster entitled "Munias of India in the illegal bird-trade" has been produced to help enforcement agencies identify the various species of munias in India's illegal bird-trade.

India is home to eight species of munia, all of which are protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Munias are popular aviculture subjects worldwide. Being small in size and adored for their beautiful coloration, melodious calls, low-cost diet and easy captive-care, they are commercially exploited throughout their range. Although parakeets are the most popular pet birds in terms of preference and popularity, munias rank number one in terms of their sheer volume in bird trade



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Banner photo collage (l to r): African Elephant, © WWF-Canon / Martin HARVEY; Bengal Tiger, © WWF-Canon / Martin HARVEY; Orang-utan, © WWF-Canon / Alain COMPOST; Hawksbill Turtle, © WWF-Canon / Cat HOLLOWAY

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Tiger conservation a hot topic for Chinese Year of the Tiger

The international campaign to conserve Tigers has continued apace since the start of the Chinese Year of the Tiger and following the Hua Hin Declaration.

Thirteen Asian governments committed to doubling numbers of wild Tigers by 2022 at the 1st Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation, held in Hua Hin, Thailand in January 2010.

Ministers and senior delegations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand, and Viet Nam, all 13 Tiger range countries, committed to implementing the measures.

Currently there are around 3,200 Tigers left in the wild. A Century ago the figure was nearer 100,000.

The post-conference Hua Hin Declaration included pledges to protect wild Tigers and their prey from

poaching through regular patrolling of Tiger habitats and elimination of national and cross-border trade in Tiger parts as well as a commitment to support communities living in and around Tiger landscapes and minimize human-Tiger conflicts.

Also in January, the State Forestry Administration (SFA) of China issued a Directive calling for increased protection of wild Tigers through natural habitat management, stronger law enforcement action against illegal trade in Tiger parts and products, stricter regulation of captive breeding regulations and enhanced public awareness campaigns. The Directive also established a hotline for the public to report wildlife crime.

"2010 will determine if the Tiger's future burns bright or continues to fade away," said Professor Xu Hongfa, head of TRAFFIC's China Programme.

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CONTENTS

- 1 Tiger conservation a hot topic for Chinese Year of the Tiger
- 2 CITES meeting update
- 3 Viet Nam's threatened wildlife gets a boost from business
- 4 "Four-footed" Customs officers track down wildlife contraband
- 5 "Tigernet" launched in India
- 6 Understanding Chinese consumer motivation the key to controlling unsustainable wildlife consumption
- 7 Thailand gets tough on illegal ivory trade
- 8 Porous China-Myanmar border allowing illegal wildlife trade
- 9 Teaming up for wild Tigers

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the wildlife trade monitoring network

WWF

保护野生老虎 制止非法贸易

孟加拉虎 © Michel Terrettaz/WWF-Canon

Bengal Tiger © Martin Harvey/WWF-Canon

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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CITES meeting update

The 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties of CITES, attended by delegates from the majority of the 175 member states, concluded in Doha, Qatar, in March, after meeting for 13 days to address the threats posed by international trade to the world's wild animal and plant species.

Marine species get raw deal

The CoP 15 meeting was marked by the repeated rejection of proposals to protect marine species, such as the Atlantic Bluefin Tuna, corals and several shark species.

Of the marine proposals, Porbeagle shark was the only one initially accepted, but it was overturned during the final day of the meeting.

Red and Pink Corals – species that are heavily exploited for the jewellery trade, but greatly overharvested in many parts of their range – failed for the second CITES meeting running to be afforded greater protection within the Convention.

Ivory issues still unresolved

Separately, requests by two countries – Tanzania and Zambia – to relax trade restrictions on their elephant populations, which would have paved way for a future sell-off of government-owned ivory stockpiles, were both voted down at the meeting.

“African nations now seem further away from a consensus on how to deal with the ivory issue than at any time since 1989,” said Steven Broad, Executive Director of TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network.

“The dilemma remains – each year tonnes of legally sourced ivory accumulate in government stockpiles in Africa, yet the continent remains divided on what to do with this resource.”

Tigers and rhinos get CITES support

However, there were some conservation successes at CITES related to Tigers and rhinos, which are facing a global poaching crisis.

Countries with rhino populations agreed to focus on increasing law enforcement, training of guards, strengthening border controls, improving rhino population monitoring, creating awareness raising campaigns in consumer countries such as Viet Nam, and rooting out organized crime syndicates that are behind the increase in poaching and illegal trade.

Meanwhile, Tiger range countries, including China, reached a strong consensus in Qatar on the way forward to address pressing concerns of illegal trade threatening

wild populations of Tiger and other Asian big cat species. CITES governments maintained their position against farming of Tigers for trade in parts and derivatives. A significant market for Tiger products persists in China, but commitments from the Chinese government and traditional Chinese medicine associations point the way forward to making effective interventions to reduce consumer demand and stop illegal trade.



African Elephant © Martin Harvey/WWF-Canon

Immediately prior to the CITES Parties meeting in Qatar, the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS) announced in Beijing their commitment to Tiger conservation. The WFCMS, which has 195 member organizations in 57 countries, urged its members not to use Tigers and other endangered wildlife species in traditional medicine.

Enforcement boost

More financial resources for tackling enforcement were agreed in the CITES budget discussions and the recently-formed International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), made up of the CITES Secretariat, INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank and the World Customs Organization, committed to engage on a number of joint activities to bring wildlife criminals to justice.

“CITES trade rules can only deliver conservation and economic benefits if they are enforced properly and all too often this is simply not the case,” said Steven Broad, “the new commitments to CITES compliance and wildlife trade law enforcement announced at this conference are crucial steps in the right direction.”

TRAFFIC produced a briefing document for CITES Parties on the importance of law enforcement to the goals of the Convention, including the strategic role NGOs can play in assisting government-led law enforcement efforts – see www.traffic.org/cop15

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Viet Nam's threatened wildlife gets a boost from business

In mid December 2009, Viet Nam's business community got a chance to focus on wildlife protection during the first event of its kind in the country.

A two-day workshop entitled "Corporate social responsibility for the protection of wildlife, the conservation of natural resources and the sustainable development of Viet Nam" was held in the northern town of Tam Dao. Over 100 participants from State-owned companies, private enterprises, governmental advisory bodies and media agencies attended the workshop, which aimed to raise awareness regarding the unsustainable and illegal wildlife trade that threatens Viet Nam's unique biodiversity. Presentations were given by businesses with successful environmental practices and open group discussions focused on integrating commerce, policy and wildlife protection.

In recent years, Viet Nam has emerged as one of the wildlife trade hotspots in South-East Asia, with a growing illicit trade at the domestic and international levels. Although businesspeople are one of the two major consumers of wildlife and its products in Ha Noi, according to research conducted by TRAFFIC in 2005, until this workshop, few efforts had been made to involve the business community directly in the prevention of illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade.

During closing remarks, government organizers from the Central Committee for Communications and Education (CCCE), the main advisory body to the governing Communist Party of Viet Nam, emphasized this connection, stressing that the protection of wildlife is the social responsibility of all Vietnamese people, in addition to being a business decision.

Recommendations generated during the event included a variety of political and economic steps that could be taken to increase protection for rare and endangered species such as Tiger, a species that has dwindled in Viet Nam, with some estimates of as low as 30 individuals remaining in the wild.

Business participants recommended stricter enforcement of existing environmental laws; increased availability and access to information on protected species and wildlife laws; tax reductions or other economic incentives to encourage businesses to protect wildlife; and more stringent punishments for wildlife law infractions.

The workshop was hosted by the TRAFFIC Greater Mekong Programme in conjunction with the CCCE and the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The joint WWF-TRAFFIC campaign to change consumer attitudes and behaviour regarding the consumption of wildlife is funded by the Royal Danish Embassy.



Listening to presentations by environmentally responsible businesses © TSEA-GMP

Such collaborations will be crucial for the promotion of sustainable wildlife consumption and the conservation of natural resources in Viet Nam. Event organizers and participants are currently working on the next steps to address the workshop's outputs.

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"Four-footed" Customs officers track down wildlife contraband

The use of sniffer dogs to detect wildlife products was demonstrated to assembled media at Vladivostok International Airport on 3 March 2010, an event chosen to coincide with the 37th anniversary of the creation of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), in 1973.

The event was organized by officers from the Far Eastern Operative Customs and Vladivostok Customs Sniffer Dogs Services, together with WWF and TRAFFIC.

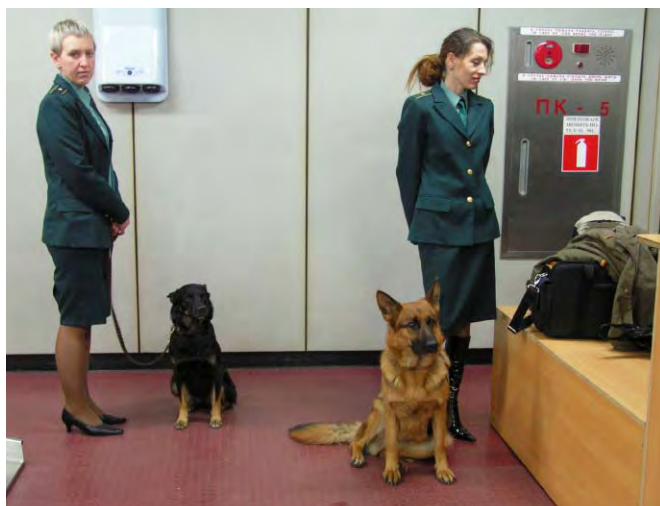
In 2004, WWF Russia and TRAFFIC initiated a project using sniffer dogs to detect trafficked wildlife products at Vladivostok International airport, where trained Giant Schnauzer dogs successfully detected several packages with wildlife parts and derivatives.

“The project was not systematic, it only took place in the airport, but it was a test of the strengths and opportunities of using this approach to tackle wildlife trafficking,” said Natalia Pervushina, TRAFFIC Europe programme officer and WWF officer.

Today the WWF and TRAFFIC programme works closely with officers from the Sniffer Dogs Service of the Far Eastern Operative Customs, created in June 2008.

A total of 77 sniffer dogs currently work in the Service, 28 of them trained in the Regional Sniffer Dog Centre in the Internal Service Directorate of Primorsky province.

Many species exported from the Russian Far East into East Asia are listed in the Russia Red Data Book and CITES Appendices. Among them are Amur Tiger, Far Eastern Leopard, Brown and Black Bears, Far Eastern Frog, Wild Ginseng, Far Eastern Cucumber, Amur Sturgeon and many others.



Two sniffer dogs guarding a checkpoint © TRAFFIC

“It is vital to identify wild species accurately, to differentiate high value species from lower value ones as well as to assist with the training of dogs for wildlife detection,” said Pervushina.

Meanwhile, a new trend in illegal wildlife export in the region has emerged—that of smuggling derivatives in small quantities hidden on the body or beneath clothing. Under such circumstances only a specially trained dog can readily detect such items.

“Twenty-four seizures connected with various wildlife items were made with the help of sniffer dogs in 2009-2010,” said Michael Borschev, Head of the Sniffer Dogs Service’s Analytical Division at the Far Eastern Operative Customs.

One dog, Kira, together with her owner, Elena Kurbatskaya, seized 10 kg of deer antlers in luggage bound for Seoul in 2009 at Vladivostok International airport.

In total, 137 wildlife items together weighing 30 kg have been seized, the majority by Customs officers in Birobidjanskaya, Blagoveschenskaya and Khasanskaya. Tackling wildlife contraband remains one of the biggest priorities for Customs in the region.

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“Tigernet” launched in India

Tigernet (<http://tigernet.nic.in>), a new system to monitor patterns of Tiger mortalities and where poaching incidents are occurring, was launched in January 2010 by Shri Jairam Ramesh, Hon. Minister of Environment and Forests, Government of India, in New Delhi.

The unique database deals not only with Tigers but also other protected species within Tiger reserves. It was constructed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) with assistance from TRAFFIC India. The database allows enforcement officers such as Tiger Reserve Directors and Chief Wildlife Wardens to input and verify information and use it to strengthen anti-poaching efforts.

The data will help in gauging trends in poaching, the regional and national significance of Tiger mortalities and provide pointers for effective field actions to tackle any problems, including mapping of incidents. It is anticipated the new website will help simplify the reporting of Tiger deaths and allow a more accurate and transparent picture to be generated of the poaching and other threats facing the nation’s Tiger population.

The website also provides an option for concerned citizens to send in reports about suspected wildlife crime.

Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India said, “Collection of streamlined information is the first step toward addressing the root cause of a misdeed and this website has to be seen in this context”.

He further added, “It is hoped that it will engender a spirit of honesty and co-operation among all major stakeholders in Tiger conservation in the country for remedial action to save the majestic predator of the Indian jungles along with all the other denizens that cohabit with it”.

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Understanding Chinese consumer motivation the key to controlling unsustainable wildlife consumption

Concerted action is needed in China to reduce consumer demand for endangered wildlife, according to a new report by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, into consumer attitudes in China.

Released ahead of Chinese New Year of the Tiger, which began on 14 February, the report, *Understanding the motivations: the first step toward influencing China's unsustainable wildlife consumption*, called for a reduction in wildlife consumption during the New Year celebrations.

“Chinese people favour eating wildlife meat as a tonic in winter and many believe it’s good for their health. They are not aware that this kind of consumption could threaten the survival of endangered wildlife,” said Professor Xu Hongfa, Head of TRAFFIC’s China programme.

TRAFFIC, working with a professional market research company, found that 44% of respondents claimed to have consumed wildlife in the past 12 months, the majority (36%) as food. However, most respondents were aware of the conservation status of China’s National Grade 1 and Grade 2 protected species, and relatively few consumed these in any form.

The surveys found that consumption of wild species, particularly consumption of wild meats and wild animal medicines/tonics is widespread, with most people having either a neutral attitude, or one of acceptance, towards the consumption of wild animals as food.

The report, which focused on six major cities in China, found that the scale and pattern of wildlife consumption varies across the country. Guangzhou has the highest incidence of consumption, followed by Kunming, Chengdu and Harbin. Those with higher incomes and education levels were consistently more likely to consume wildlife as food, possibly due to the prevalence of wildlife consumption in the Chinese business sector.

The factors motivating wildlife consumption are complex and rooted in culture, motivated by both ‘emotional’ and ‘functional’ reasons. Respondents consumed wildlife because they saw it as representing social status and showing respect for guests (‘emotional motivation’) and because they believed it to be nourishing and to have curative values, ideas rooted in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) (‘functional motivation’).



Water snakes prepared for restaurant consumption in Guangzhou © Xu Ling/TRAFFIC

This persistent consumer demand is increasingly placing wild animals and plants, and their ecosystems—both in China and abroad—at risk through unsustainable and often illegal wildlife trade. As a result, wild populations of many species have become depleted in China, and sourcing has shifted to countries in South-East Asia, South Asia, the Russian Far East and further afield.

The study found three principal barriers to wildlife consumption: limited availability, illegality, and price.

“The government of China has demonstrated it has the ability to control wildlife trade through the highly effective temporary suspension of such trade following the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003. However, trade in wild animals for meat and medicinal purposes has subsequently resumed, and is believed to be on the increase,” said Professor Xu.

The report suggests that an effective long-term communications campaign should target both end-users, focusing on those segments of the population that consume the most wildlife and/or have high potential for cutting down on wildlife consumption, and influential individuals and sectors of society able to reach wider audiences.

In China, the media, government wildlife law enforcement agencies, and the traditional medicine community are already helping combat unsustainable wildlife consumption, and these efforts should be strengthened and sustained through a long-term strategy.

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Thailand gets tough on illegal ivory trade

Rising to the challenge posed by the growing illegal ivory trade, the Royal Thai Customs Department carried out a number of high profile seizures at Suvarnabhumi International Airport recently, netting hundreds of tusks, dried elephant tails and worked ivory.

The latest was a seizure of 239 African Elephant tusks, weighing an estimated 2 tonnes in the last week of February. It was reportedly the largest ivory seizure ever in the country.

On the heels of this and another large seizure at the same airport in August last year, of 316 pieces of raw ivory, comes a joint campaign by Thai authorities and TRAFFIC, to raise public awareness of the illegal trade in elephant ivory items sold as souvenirs to holiday makers and others. The “Buy Ivory, Buy Trouble” campaign, launched in March, urges consumers not to fuel the illegal trade by buying and transporting ivory across international borders.

The Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP)—the Thai authority responsible for tackling illegal wildlife trade, in co-operation with the Airport Authority of Thailand (AOT) and the wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC launched the campaign targeting passengers travelling through Suvarnabhumi International Airport.

Elephants are threatened across much of their range because of poaching for the illegal ivory trade. Thailand was recently identified as one of the top three countries most highly implicated in the illicit ivory trade, and was the country of most concern in Asia.

Consumers fuel the illicit ivory trade through buying ivory products without realizing they are often illegal. The campaign, officially launched by Thailand’s

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, H.E. Mr Suwit Khunkitti, includes an exhibition at Suvarnabhumi International Airport by the DNP, the Customs Department, the CITES Management Authority, AOT and TRAFFIC.

Brochures informing the public, especially travelers and visitors, about the problem of ivory trade in Thailand were also distributed. Campaign materials also included luggage tags and information about the laws governing and controlling the ivory trade.

Stickers with the warning message: “It is illegal to take ivory and other elephant products across international borders” were distributed by the DNP to shops selling ivory products in Thailand, asking them to co-operate and spread the message to locals and tourists.

In November 2009, a global analysis of ivory seizures identified Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Thailand as the three countries most heavily implicated in the global illicit ivory trade.



A joint campaign launched at Suvarnabhumi International Airport by H. E. Mr Suwit Khunkitti, Thailand's Environment Minister, fifth from left © TRAFFIC

The Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) report, compiled by TRAFFIC on behalf of Parties to CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), also noted a remarkable surge in ivory seizures in 2009, suggesting an increased involvement of organized crime syndicates in the trade, connecting African source countries with Asian end-use markets.

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Porous China-Myanmar border allowing illegal wildlife trade

Porous borders are allowing vendors in Myanmar to offer a door-to-door delivery service for illegal wildlife products such as Tiger bone wine to buyers in China, according to TRAFFIC's latest snapshot into wildlife trade in China.

The State of Wildlife Trade in China 2008, released in March 2010, is the third in an annual series on emerging trends in China's wildlife trade.

The report found that over-exploitation of wildlife for trade has affected many species and is stimulating illegal trade across China's borders.

"China's border areas have long been considered a hotbed for illegal trade, with remote locations often making surveillance a difficult problem in sparsely populated areas," said Professor Xu Hongfa, Head of TRAFFIC's programme in China.

Tiger and leopard parts were also found openly for sale in western China, although market surveys in 18 cities found just two places where such items were encountered. One of them—Bei Da Jie Market in Linxia city—has a history of trading in Tiger products. There, a total of five surveys between late 2007 and 2008 found one Tiger, 15 Leopard and seven Snow Leopard skins for sale.



Yu'erma Tiger-bone wine near Mongla Stadium, Myanmar © Xu Ling/TRAFFIC

"There is clearly ongoing demand for leopard and Tiger products, but the trade appears to be becoming less visible year-on-year," said Professor Xu, adding that it is unclear if it is because there is less trade in such products or it has become more covert and organized.

The report also examines the trade of other wildlife species in China. In southern China, TRAFFIC identified

26 species of freshwater turtles for sale. The majority of animals were claimed by vendors to be supplied from freshwater turtle farms—many of which do not practice closed-cycle captive breeding and therefore rely on wild-sourced breeding stock.

"If no action is taken, sourcing from the wild coupled with increased captive production to meet an expanding market demand will pose a serious threat to wild species through unsustainable harvesting from wild populations in China and beyond," said Professor Xu.

The report also highlights research into the legality of timber imported into China from source countries in Africa and South-East Asia, noting up to 30% discrepancies between reported import and export timber volumes.

Other topics covered include sustainable utilization of traditional medicinal plants, analysis of wildlife trade information, the *Corallium* trade in East Asia, tackling cross-border illegal wildlife trade on the China-Nepal border, and stopping illegal wildlife trade online.

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Teaming up for wild Tigers

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia has joined with several partner organizations to raise the alarm on threats to wild Tigers in Malaysia.

Efforts began in late 2009 with a WWF Malaysia-TRAFFIC awareness-raising trip to the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex in the north of Peninsular Malaysia, for members of local and international media. The trip came shortly after the dramatic rescue of a Tiger from a poacher's snare in this area, by the Wildlife and National Parks Department and WWF's Wildlife Protection Unit.

The resulting slew of media articles and television reports drew attention to this priority Tiger Conservation Landscape, the plight of Tigers in the wild and also served to present 2010, the Year of the Tiger in the Chinese Lunar calendar, as the perfect time to initiate public and private action towards protecting Tigers in the wild.

The media trip was followed by an exhibition at the Dong Zhen Buddhist Temple which held an annual month-long fair in conjunction with the Chinese New Year celebrations and received thousands of visitors

during this time. TRAFFIC also held several Tiger awareness talks during the festival, answering a range of questions from devotees and visitors about poaching and trade, the use of Tiger parts in traditional medicines and Tiger farming.

TRAFFIC also worked closely with partners in the Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) to keep Tiger-related issues in the public eye throughout the year including publicizing Malaysia's National Tiger Action Plan and its goal of doubling the number of Tigers in the wild in Peninsular Malaysia by 2020.

MYCAT is a coalition that comprises four of the country's foremost groups that work on wildlife issues and provides a common platform for them to address matters affecting Tigers.



Distributing Tiger-related publications at the temple fair © TRAFFIC

Several cases of Tiger poaching and the abuse of Tigers in captivity were addressed in the press and calls were made for stern action as well as deterrent sentences in such cases.

TRAFFIC has also found a new voice for Tigers in Malaysian Feng Shui master Lillian Too. The partners have just begun work with Ms Too to educate the public that poaching and killing of Tigers for their parts does not bring the user or wearer of these parts good fortune, but bad.

TRAFFIC and WWF-Malaysia also began work with enforcement agencies last month, to help shape a joint taskforce that will act against poachers and encroachers in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex. By bringing the various agencies to the discussion table to begin drawing up their plans, the two groups have begun a process that could eventually result in a template for more co-ordinated and effective action against Tiger poachers in other landscapes.

In the rest of South-East Asia, TRAFFIC is investigating the trade in Tigers and other Asian big cats along the Myanmar-Thai border, and is also working closely with WWF-Thailand to end poaching and trade in Tigers and Tiger prey species in the Western Forest Complex.

Indonesia is monitoring and collecting information on trade in Tigers to assist the authorities in their enforcement efforts, as well as investigating the poaching and trade in the province of Aceh, Sumatra, with a report of these findings being prepared for publication.

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Asia Wildlife Trade Bulletin

News from TRAFFIC's Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative
Issue 10, September 2010

Chinese Medicine communities commit to rejecting the use of Tiger parts



TRAFFIC symposium with WFCMS on 12th March, 2010 © Xu Ling / Traffic China

TRAFFIC's China Programme has been working closely with the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) community in China.

One outcome from this co-operation is a World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS) commitment from its 195 members in 57 countries not to use Tiger bone or any other parts from endangered wildlife.

The statement was made at a symposium jointly held by TRAFFIC and WFCMS on 12th March in Beijing. It notes that some of the claimed medicinal benefits of Tiger bone have no basis.

The use of tiger bones was removed from the TCM pharmacopeia in 1993, when China first introduced a domestic ban on tiger trade.

The statement also calls on all WFCMS members to promote tiger conservation and encourages them to abide by all relevant international and national regulations on wildlife trade.

"The Societies' public declaration is a clear signal that the traditional Chinese medicinal community is now backing efforts to secure a future for wild Tigers," said Professor Xu Hongfa, head of TRAFFIC's programme in China.

As an international traditional Chinese academic organization, the WFCMS stated that it had a duty to research the conservation of endangered species, including Tigers.

"In the meantime, we ask our members not to use endangered wildlife in traditional Chinese medicine, and reduce

Contents

Chinese Medicine communities commit to rejecting the use of Tiger parts

South Asia forges consensus on wildlife enforcement network

Sniffer dogs on patrol in India

Russian and Chinese Customs meet to tackle illicit wildlife trade

Sustainable management of TCM Plants promoted at Biofach 2010

Noi Bai airport staff and Vietnamese environmental agencies learn how to tackle wildlife trafficking

Trapping for food threatens Spoon-billed Sandpipers

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

the misunderstanding and bias of the international community,” said WFCMS’s Huang Jianyin.

“The traditional Chinese medicine industry should look for substitutes and research economical and effective substitutes for Tiger products, which will improve the international image and status of traditional Chinese medicine and promote TCM worldwide.”

Later, TRAFFIC met with TCM practitioners in Shanghai on two occasions. A seminar with TCM Academic leaders on 14th May resulted in a commitment from the TCM sector to take greater responsibility in conserving valuable wild medicinal species and reject the use of endangered species such as Tiger through strict adherence to national laws and international conventions.

At a WFCMS forum attended by pharmaceutical companies and medical treatment organizations on 4th June, participants heard about the severe threats to medicinal species caused by excessive exploitation and illegal trade. Participants expressed their willingness to reject the use of endangered species and protect and sustainably utilize non-endangered species for the sake of sustainable development of TCM.

“It is imperative we focus our conservation actions to protect wild Tigers during the current Chinese Year of the Tiger,” said Professor Xu. “The leadership shown by the TCM community to reject the use of certain ingredients, including Tiger bone, to protect endangered wildlife species, is an important step in reaching out to TCM practitioners, industry and consumers.”

The WFCMS is an international academic organization based in Beijing, with 195 member organizations spanning 57 nations where traditional Chinese medicine is used. It aims to promote the development of traditional Chinese medicine, which is a primary form of healthcare delivery in China, and widely regarded as an important part of China’s rich cultural heritage.

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South Asia forges consensus on wildlife enforcement network



Seized animal skins in Nepal: a wildlife enforcement network in South Asia will help keep enforcement authorities ahead of the wildlife traffickers © Jeff Foott / WWF-Canon

Experts from South Asia have laid the foundation for a South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) as a co-ordinated regional response to combat illegal poaching and trafficking. Seven member countries agreed to the establishment of a secretariat and an outline work programme for the network.

The historic First Meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade was concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 19th May 2010 with the objective of helping wildlife law enforcement agencies become better organized than the criminals themselves. As a major step towards a co-ordinated and collaborative mechanism, the Experts Group agreed that an action-oriented approach under the newly formed SAWEN should be pursued without delay.

The experts from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka agreed the structure, functions and operational parameters for SAWEN, including ideas for developing multi-lateral activities based on strong inter-agency co-operation at the national level.

“Co-operation and co-ordination between the government agencies supported by their international counterparts is of utmost importance to effectively tackle illegal wildlife trade in the region,” said Hon. Mr Deepak Bohara, Minister for Forest and Soil Conservation, Government of Nepal, in his closing address.

The Government of Nepal has offered to drive this process further in hosting the network and acting as an interim co-ordinator for the network. Over the next six months, it will focus on co-ordinating key information and identifying further resources and expertise from member countries to develop joint operations, training programmes, communication plans and fundraising to enable the network to begin interdicting major trafficking activities. The Government of Bhutan has offered to host the next meeting of SAWEN members.

The First Meeting of the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade was hosted by the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, Govt. of Nepal, and supported by WWF Nepal and TRAFFIC. Funding support for the meeting was generously provided by the US Government's Department of State.

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Sniffer dogs on patrol in India



Five sniffer dogs trained through a TRAFFIC India programme have entered service with Forest Departments across the country © TRAFFIC India

On 29th July 2010, five dogs specially trained to sniff out illegal wildlife products joined the ranks of the Forest Departments of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Jharkhand in India

The dogs have been trained to detect hidden wildlife articles such as Tiger bone and skin, Leopard bone and skin and bear bile.

The dogs and their 10 handlers have completed a rigorous nine month training programme at the Dog Training Centre, 23rd Battalion of Special Armed Forces, Bhopal.

The procurement of the dogs and the training programme was facilitated by TRAFFIC India.

It is the second phase of TRAFFIC India's sniffer dog training programme. Previously two dogs were trained and later deployed by the Forest Departments of Haryana and Uttarakhand.

TRAFFIC has helped establish sniffer dog programmes to detect smuggled wildlife parts in several countries including in the Russian Far East and Europe.

“Illegal wildlife trade has evolved into an organized transnational activity threatening the survival of many species in India,” said Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India.

“In order to curb this growing menace it is necessary to deploy the best enforcement practices available including the use of sniffer dogs, which have a proven track record in detecting crime and serving as a long-term deterrent.”

Both the Indian Forest Department and the 23rd Battalion of Special Armed Forces have contributed their expertise in support of training dogs in crime detection.

Dr H.S. Pabla, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, said, “Today, Tigers in India need protection like never before. We are confident the sniffer dogs programme, which has proved successful in curbing illegal wildlife trade in other

countries, will further strengthen enforcement efforts in India.”

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Russian and Chinese Customs meet to tackle illicit wildlife trade



Russian and Chinese Customs have signed an agreement on co-operation to tackle wildlife crime © TRAFFIC

Chinese Customs officers met their counterparts in Russia in early July to discuss co-operation on tackling cross-border illicit wildlife trade.

The meeting led to the signing of a protocol on collaboration between the Vladivostok branch of the Russian Customs Academy and Shanghai Customs Academy.

TRAFFIC and WWF Russia warmly welcomed the move.

“The collaboration between Russian Customs officers and their counterparts in China is an important step forward in efforts to stem the illicit cross-border trade in wildlife goods,” said Natalia Pervushina, TRAFFIC’s Programme Co-ordinator in the Russian Far East.

Customs training and co-operation on wildlife protection were high on the meeting agenda, which took place from 5-9 July.

WWF Russia and TRAFFIC have a long-term co-operation agreement with the Vladivostok Customs Academy.

Over more than a decade TRAFFIC and WWF Russia have helped train around 500 officers and students from the Academy, assisted with implementation of a highly successful sniffer dog programme and published many training manuals on wildlife trade issues aimed at students and enforcement officers.

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Sustainable management of TCM Plants promoted at Biofach 2010

TRAFFIC and WWF presented information on the sustainable management of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) plants resources in China at the 2010 Shanghai International Organic Trade Conference (BioFach), held from 27-29th May at the Shanghai International Exhibition Center.

It was TRAFFIC’s second exhibition at BioFach and aimed at promoting awareness of the FairWild certification process to the wild TCM plant harvesting industry and reaching potential traders for TCM products.

The booth attracted a wide range of stakeholders including plant extract traders, TCM plant processors, traders, and researchers, herbalists doctors, as well as officials and reporters. Many visitors expressed an interest to be kept in touch with future FairWild developments.

Biofach is the only organic products trade fair in China and TRAFFIC and WWF’s display included posters, images and TCM plant samples to illustrate the concept and importance of sustainable management of these industry raw materials.

Highlighted was TRAFFIC’s collaborative work on the EU China Biodiversity Programme (ECBP)-funded project on “Sustainable Management of Traditional

Medicinal Plants in High-biodiversity Landscapes of the Upper Yangtze Ecoregion”.

Mountain landscapes in the upper Yangtze River basin are internationally recognized for their biodiversity values and listed as the top priority area for biodiversity conservation in China.



The WWF/TRAFFIC booth at Biofach 2010 in Shanghai, where information on sustainable management of TCM resources was presented
© TRAFFIC China

An estimated 75% of commercially harvested Chinese medicinal plant species are found in the region, but many are endangered due to over-harvesting.

In order to mitigate the degradation of populations of TCM species and improve local plant harvesters' livelihoods, TRAFFIC China launched the above project in 2007 as a cornerstone of ECBP's programme in China.

The WWF/TRAFFIC booth demonstrated the project's implementation in Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi Provinces and the training courses held to teach collectors about the FairWild certification system and the International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collect of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP) guidelines; two sustainable

resource management criteria adopted as the principal tools in implementing the project.

FairWild certification entitles collectors to sell their products at a premium price, so acquiring the certificate is a continuous economic incentive for people whose livelihoods depend on collection of wild plants to harvest them sustainably.

Harvesters seeking FairWild certification who participated in TRAFFIC's training on sustainable collection of wild Nan Wu Wei Zi, or Southern Schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*) in Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi provinces have already reaped the benefits. Following a test order of 500 kg of Southern Schisandra, a US buyer has ordered 2 tonnes at a price favourable to the producers.

FairWild certification of wild collected plant products began in 2008 and is managed by the FairWild Foundation. It provides end consumers with transparency and assurance that the products from wild sources are produced in a socially and ecologically sound manner. It encourages collectors, workers and companies involved in the wild plant collection trade to work together on truly sustainable production practices and to receive a fair price for their goods. The system includes guidelines for collectors, producers and decision makers for planning and implementation of a sustainable resource management system—the “International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collect of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants” (ISSC-MAP).

ISSC-MAP defines principles and criteria to establish wild resource management systems in collection areas and enables those involved in collection to monitor the changes and impacts made by harvesting activities over time. The guideline was developed in 2006 and has been tested at six locations worldwide, one of them in China through a project entitled “Sustainable Management of Traditional Medicinal Plants in High-biodiversity Landscapes of the Upper Yangtze Ecoregion”.

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Noi Bai airport staff and Vietnamese environmental agencies learn how to tackle wildlife trafficking

In June 2010, Viet Nam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) partnered with the Civil Aviation Administration of Viet Nam to launch a U.S.-funded training course to help end wildlife trafficking.

Two "Wildlife Trade Regulation Courses" trained approximately 70 staff and enforcement officers at Noi Bai International Airport.

They included check-in counter attendants, baggage handlers, Customs officers, immigration staff and security officials along with members of INTERPOL, Customs, Environmental Police and the CITES Management Authority.

The two back-to-back workshops provided participants with knowledge on the impacts of illegal wildlife trade, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), relevant national legislation, smuggling techniques, species identification, and the handling of confiscated items.

Airports around the world and particularly those in South-East Asia play key roles as transport hubs for illegal wildlife trade.

There is growing recognition that airport and airline employees can play an important role in stopping wildlife trafficking and with adequate training, their capacity to detect wildlife smuggling during the course of their daily duties can be enhanced.

"It's time to put a stop to criminals using our airports to smuggle protected and endangered species" said Mr Nguyen Ngoc Binh, Deputy Director General of Viet Nam's Directorate of Forestry.

"Only by working together can we hope to counter effectively the well-organized and well-financed criminal syndicates involved in the illegal wildlife trade".

MARD's Directorate of Forestry helped facilitate the training through its association with the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), the largest regional environmental law enforcement network in the world.

ASEAN-WEN is supported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the US Department of State and is technically assisted by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, and FREELAND Foundation.



Around 70 airport staff and enforcement officers were trained in how to combat wildlife trafficking © TRAFFIC

This was the eighth training of its kind in South-East Asia. The course has been presented to more than 1,100 participants throughout the region, most recently at Suvarnabhumi International Airport, Bangkok, Thailand, and at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Malaysia.

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Trapping for food threatens Spoon-billed Sandpipers

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper, one of the world's most threatened birds, is rapidly heading towards extinction because young birds are being targeted for human consumption.

Spoon-billed Sandpipers nest only in the far north-east of Russia. In 2000, around 1,000 breeding pairs were known, but by 2009, the number had plummeted to just 120–220 pairs, a decline of 88%.



A Spoon-billed Sandpiper caught by a hunter in the Bay of Martaban, Myanmar, is released by local children after intervention by the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Expedition, January 2010 (photo: Rob Robinson / BTO).

During that time, adult survival appeared unchanged and breeding success was reasonable, but the recruitment of young birds back into the adult population was zero in all but one of the years studied.

Now an international team of scientists has discovered the apparent reason behind the dramatic decline and why young birds are particularly at risk.

First, the team had to find where the birds spent the winter months.

In both 2009 and 2010, they located around 200 Spoon-billed Sandpipers—the majority of the world population—wintering in Myanmar, most of them in the Bay of Martaban where local people target wading birds for food.

“For a species with such a small known population, it is likely that hunting in the wintering area is the major cause of the species’s decline,” said Christoph Zöckler of ArcCona, a Cambridge-based Consultancy.

The problem is exacerbated because young immature birds are more likely to be caught and spend the whole of their first year on the wintering grounds.

During the monsoon season (May–September), when adult Spoon-billed Sandpipers are far away on their breeding grounds, birds are particularly targeted by local hunters because fishing becomes difficult.

“The unintentional targeting of young Spoon-billed Sandpipers during the summer months explains the lack of recruitment of new birds into the breeding population,” said Zöckler.

TRAFFIC and IUCN have been developing indicators to monitor trends in the status of species used for food and medicine, including those utilized in Asia.

They show that birds and mammals used for these purposes are generally more threatened than those that are not.

Overall, 12% of all bird species are globally threatened with extinction, but a much higher percentage—23%—of those used for food and medicine are under threat.

To prevent the Spoon-billed Sandpiper’s extinction urgent action is needed, both to find ways to give local people economic alternatives to hunting birds and to persuade hunters to release any sandpipers they catch.

“Without such action, the world will lose one of its most charismatic birds,” said Zöckler.

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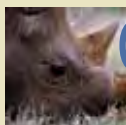


ASIA WILDLIFE TRADE BULLETIN

News from TRAFFIC's Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative

Issue 11, May 2011

Contents



01 South African delegates visit Viet Nam to address illegal rhino horn trade

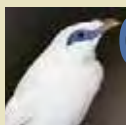
02 Notorious wildlife smuggler Wong jailed for an extra four-and-a-half years



03 World leaders aim for deal to save the Tiger

04 South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) formally launched at Paro

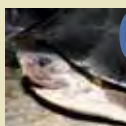
05 TRAFFIC features at key biodiversity meeting in Japan



06 Rare birds and other wildlife seized at Jakarta Airport during busy month

07 TRAFFIC hosts online fisheries seminar in Japan

08 Trade alliance formulated in China



09 Too little done to address trade threat to Asia's tortoises and freshwater turtles

10 Raising awareness to combat illegal wildlife trade in Asia

South African delegates visit Viet Nam to address illegal rhino horn trade



South African officials visited Viet Nam to discuss ways to tackle the crisis that saw one rhino poached every 26 hours in South Africa during 2010 © Michel Gunther / WWF-Canon

Five representatives from South Africa visited Viet Nam in October 2010 to discuss ways to address the growing illegal trade in rhinoceros horn between the two countries.

The delegation represented key government departments involved in monitoring and enforcement in the rhino trade in South Africa.

They met with Vietnamese counterparts in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City to learn more about national policies and how cases of illegal horn trade are dealt with in Viet Nam.

The aim of the trip, facilitated by TRAFFIC, was to increase collaborative law enforcement between the two nations in order to stop the illegal rhino horn trade.

Viet Nam has been increasingly implicated as a main driver of the illegal rhino horn trade in Asia,

and a major trade route has emerged connecting illegally killed rhinos in South Africa with consumers in Viet Nam.

“It’s vitally important to scale up Africa’s law enforcement efforts and link with Asia in the fight to save the world’s rhinos”, said Tom Milliken, Regional Director for TRAFFIC in East and Southern Africa.

“We’ll only win this war if both sides align against the criminal syndicates behind this trade.”

While Asian rhinoceros have likely been extirpated in Viet Nam, in part due to poaching for their horns, there are still important wild populations of rhinoceroses in Africa, especially South Africa where about 90% of all rhinos are found.

Some ownership of horns from trophy hunting is allowed, under strict regulations, but it is illegal to trade the horns commercially. However, the lack of a system to register and track privately-owned horns could be allowing horns to enter trade illegally.

South Africa had lost 333 rhinos to poaching by the end of 2010, one rhino every 26 hours, the worst conservation crisis over the last two decades and there has been no respite in 2011, with more than 80 animals killed by early April.

Throughout parts of Asia, rhino horn is believed to cure a range of ailments, with some claims that it can cure cancer, despite there being no supporting medical evidence. In Viet Nam, rhino horns (including fake horns) are being sold through traditional medicine stores, hospitals, and online sites.

The South Africa visit was hosted by the Viet Nam CITES Management Authority, with support from TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network. CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is the primary international agreement regulating the trade in wildlife.

The visit was made possible through the financial support of WWF-Germany, WWF African Rhino Programme and the US Government, who made a commitment to support such an initiative at the 2010 Conference of the Parties to CITES.

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Notorious wildlife smuggler Wong jailed for an extra four-and-a-half years

Wildlife smuggler Anson Wong, sentenced to six months in jail in September 2010, saw his prison term raised to five years by a Malaysian High Court.

Wong was arrested on the night of 26th August 2010 at Kuala Lumpur International Airport after Malaysia Airlines security staff noticed his broken bag on a conveyor belt and discovered 95 Boa Constrictors, two Rhinoceros Vipers and a Mata-Mata Turtle packed inside.

The sentence change followed an appeal by the Attorney-General’s Chambers over the earlier sentence.



Convicted wildlife smuggler Anson Wong leaving court handcuffed to a police officer, after hearing his sentence had been increased from six months to five years

In his judgement, Justice Mohtarudin Baki of the Shah Alam High Court said that the Sessions Court judge, who initially sentenced Wong, had not taken into account the large number of snakes in Wong's possession in his ruling.

Had the snakes escaped, the safety of the airport staff and passengers would have been in jeopardy, Justice Mohtarudin Baki said.

He added that the accused had been motivated by profit and was willing to smuggle with no concern for the safety of those around him and had no regard for the law. In reaching his decision, Justice Mohtarudin also took into account public interest in the case, noting that it should always prevail.

The earlier sentence and RM190 000 (USD61 500) in fines was overruled and the fine returned as this was Wong's first offence in the country.

Wong's defence council Datuk Seri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah immediately announced his intention to appeal the sentence. Wong is currently still in jail awaiting his appeal hearing.

Wong first came to public attention in 2000 when he pleaded guilty to having trafficked a menagerie of endangered species into the US, and was sentenced to 71 months' jail and fined USD60 000.

"The message to wildlife smugglers in Malaysia is loud and clear: carry on as you are and you will be spending years of your life behind bars," said TRAFFIC Southeast Asia senior programme officer Kanitha Krishnasamy.

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia Regional Director, William Schaedla also expressed optimism over the sentence.

"This is a great start. We hope Malaysia's new 'get-tough' stance will continue with investigations and convictions of other large-scale wildlife smugglers still operating in the country.

"We also hope other nations in Southeast Asia take notice of today's watershed ruling. For far too long, countries in this region have allowed their reputations to be tarnished and their natural treasures to be taken by thieves."

"This bold sentence shows they can address wildlife crime when the will is there."

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World leaders aim for deal to save the Tiger



World leaders backed plans to try and double the number of wild Tigers by 2022 © Vivek R. Sinha/WWF-Canon

Leaders from Tiger range countries have endorsed a Global Tiger Recovery Programme (GTRP) that aims to ensure a doubling of the world's wild Tiger population by 2022.

Currently the estimated number of wild Tigers is around 3 200 animals, down from 100 000 a Century ago.

This was the first time such a high level meeting took place to save a single species, one that is under threat from ever-diminishing habitats but also faces an even more imminent threat—that of poaching and trafficking of its parts.

Demand for the parts is fuelling the poaching of Tigers, especially from the wild populations in South-East Asia and India.

Steven Broad, Executive Director of TRAFFIC, addressed the Tiger Forum during an agenda item on illegal trade. He focused on the results of a recent TRAFFIC investigation, which found that parts of at least 1 069 Tigers had been illegally trafficked over a decade in 11 of the Tiger range countries.

Key to the GTRP's success in addressing illegal tiger trade will be the effectiveness of enforcement efforts by the Tiger range countries, as well as close regional and international co-operation on these efforts. The Tiger Forum highlighted strengthened regional law enforcement activities to combat illegal tiger trade through bilateral and multilateral arrangements, including the ASEAN-WEN (ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network), SAWEN (South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network) and bilateral protocols between key Tiger range countries.

The cost of implementing the GTRP is an estimated USD350 million. Several governments and organizations have already announced commitments of significant sums towards Tiger conservation at the Forum, including:

WWF's Director Jim Leape said his organization aims to mobilize USD85 million over the next five years. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has committed USD50 million over the next decade, while the US Government will allocate an additional USD9.2 million to tiger conservation to combat illegal

poaching and trafficking, the German Government will allocate an additional USD 17.2 million for tiger landscape conservation in Russia, Thailand, Laos, and Viet Nam and the World Bank USD100 million in a loan package to three tiger range countries. Actor Leonardo DiCaprio also announced a USD1 million donation to support WWF's efforts to protect wild Tigers.

An international conference reviewing implementation of GTRP was held in the last week of March in New Delhi, India.

High-level government representatives from Tiger range countries presented their national priority actions for implementation of the GTRP in 2011, with international partners outlining their support to assist these actions.

Partners include the World Bank's Global Tiger Initiative, the Global Tiger Forum, and CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) plus key NGOs including TRAFFIC and WWF.

John Scanlon, Secretary-General of CITES, also announced the formal creation of a new consortium to fight wildlife smuggling. The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCCWC, pronounced 'eye-quick') comprises five member organizations: CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), INTERPOL, UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), the World Bank and WCO (World Customs Organization).

Scanlon said the goal of ICCWC was "to introduce a new era to wildlife law enforcement by drawing upon the complementary skills of the Consortium."

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South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) formally launched at Paro



(l to r): Mr S.P. Yadav, Joint-Director National Tiger Conservation Authority and Head of the India Delegation; Lyonpo (Dr) Pema Gyamtsho, Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan; Mr Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India © TRAFFIC

The South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network was formally launched at an inter-governmental meeting hosted by the Royal Government of Bhutan in January 2011, thereby opening a new chapter in regional co-operation in South Asia for strengthening wildlife law enforcement. It was agreed to base the SAWEN Secretariat in Nepal.

Illegal wildlife trade is a form of trans-national organized crime that threatens many iconic species across the world. South Asia, home to a diverse network of natural ecosystems and varied biodiversity, is especially vulnerable to such threats. Apart from key species such as tigers, elephants and rhinos, there are a variety of medicinal plants, timber, marine species, birds and reptiles that are threatened by illegal exploitation and trafficking.

To counter such threats, the eight countries of South Asia have come together to establish an organized and co-ordinated body—the South Asia

Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN).

“SAWEN will help Bhutan to link up with authorities and officials across the region to share good practices and resources to co-operate and co-ordinate actions to apprehend poachers and traffickers,” said Lyonpo (Dr) Pema Gyamtsho, Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan, at the opening of the expert group’s meeting.

Relevant focal persons and experts from the governments of member countries, inter-governmental organizations, including the CITES Secretariat and INTERPOL, and non-governmental organizations including WWF and TRAFFIC participated in the two day meeting. The critical points decided by the Experts Group during the meeting were:

- An agreed action-oriented work plan for joint activities, some of which will begin immediately and will continue to develop further as the network gathers strength;
- Establishing a SAWEN Secretariat, to be hosted by the Government of Nepal;
- An agreed governance and operational structure for SAWEN;
- The need for strategic collaboration on communications and fundraising.

“CITES is delighted to see SAWEN come into being and we look forward to supporting the Network,” said John Sellar, Chief of Enforcement, CITES Secretariat. “The member countries have today demonstrated their commitment to bringing to justice those criminals who are robbing this part of the world of its precious natural resources.”

The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Royal Government of Bhutan with technical support from TRAFFIC and WWF Bhutan. TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, has been providing technical support for the SAWEN process since its inception and acknowledges the generous funding support of the US Department of State.

"With the formal operation of SAWEN beginning henceforth, the countries of the region have now reached a milestone in their efforts to counter the spectre of illegal wildlife trade," said Samir Sinha, TRAFFIC's programme head in India. "This is an essential piece of a collective effort to conserve a region of outstanding biological richness and diversity."

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TRAFFIC features at key biodiversity meeting in Japan

TRAFFIC was actively involved in a key meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD CoP10) that took place in October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, helping contribute to the negotiations, particularly to the decisions on sustainable use of biodiversity, and to the agreement for a successful new roadmap to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC).



Just ahead of the meeting's opening, TRAFFIC had released a report analysing the status of Japan's trade in wild animal and plant species entitled *The State of Wildlife Trade in Japan*.

The report analyses Japan's wildlife trade in the light of national and international regulations, providing critical

insights into the nature of Japan's impact on global biodiversity. It provides, among other things, explanations

of the current trends in topical issues such as Atlantic Bluefin Tuna and the often-illegal trade in reptiles as pets, while highlighting the importance of sustainable use of medicinal plants, an issue closely related to the goals of the CBD.

A key outcome of the Nagoya meeting was the finalizing of the "Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization": in short, the "Nagoya ABS Protocol". This aims to ensure countries harbouring great natural diversity of wildlife will receive adequate benefits in return for providing access to these resources and was opened for formal signing by Parties to the CBD in February 2011 at a special event to mark the beginning of International Year of Forests.

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Rare birds and other wildlife seized at Jakarta Airport during busy month

A string of seizures at Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport in January 2011 has turned up an array of illegally acquired wildlife including a pair of one of the world's rarest birds, the Bali Myna.

With fewer than 50 mature individuals estimated to now survive in the wild, the seizure of a pair of Bali Mynas in the luggage of a Singaporean man was a significant find.

The Bali Myna *Leucopsar rothschildi* is listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and all commercial trade in this species is prohibited as it is also listed in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



A pair of Bali Mynas—one of the world's rarest birds—were found in the luggage of a Sinagporean man at Jakarta airport
© Bill Majoros

Endemic to the island of Bali and once common across the north-west of the island, this myna's wild population has plummeted due to illegal poaching for the cagebird trade.

The seizure was made at Jakarta airport by Quarantine and Airport Security officers on 31st January. They also found four Slow Lorises *Nycticebus spp.* and eight Pig-nosed Turtles *Carettochelys insculpta* hidden in the suspect's bag when it was x-rayed. Slow lorises are listed in Appendix I of CITES, while Pig-nosed Turtles are in Appendix II. All the species seized are protected under Indonesian law.

The suspect was released on bail while the case was further investigated, and he faces a maximum three years in jail and a maximum fine of 150 million rupiah if found to have wilfully violated Indonesian law.

On 13th January, a passenger bound for Saudi Arabia was detained in Soekarno-Hatta Airport's Terminal Two when officers discovered two Hill Mynas *Gracula religiosa* (Appendix II) and other birds concealed in his luggage. The suspect had purchased the birds in the Pramuka Bird Market. The species is protected under Indonesian law.

On 7th January, the same Quarantine Office also foiled an attempt to smuggle an Orang Utan *Pongo spp.* skull and Helmeted Hornbill *Rhinoplax vigil* casks to the Netherlands. Both species are listed in CITES Appendix I.

On 1st January, Quarantine officers and Forestry Police found 14 birds including six Black-throated Laughingthrushes *Garrulax chinensis* hidden in 12 boxes in the luggage of a passenger bound for Bahrain.

"The number of recent seizures in the Soekarno-Hatta Airport illustrates the role Jakarta plays as a major hub in the illicit global wildlife trade," said Chris R. Shepherd, Deputy Regional Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia.

"The authorities are to be congratulated for intercepting these smuggling attempts. It is efforts such as these that are needed in order to ensure unscrupulous smugglers do not continue their trade from Indonesia's capital".

"We hope these activities are viewed as serious crimes, and the culprits are sufficiently penalized so as to deter further such activities".

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TRAFFIC hosts online fisheries seminar in Japan

In February 2011, TRAFFIC hosted a seminar in Tokyo entitled "Towards traceability and sustainable use of marine resources: international trends and activities in Japan". In a first for the organization, the seminar was broadcast live online.

The seminar aimed to encourage people to think about where the fish on their dinner plate had come from and whether it was legally sourced or not.



Bluefin Tuna market, Tokyo, Japan © Michel Gunther / WWF-Canon

"Here in Japan, there is growing awareness of the problems caused by IUU [illegal, unreported and unregulated] fishing of salmon, tuna, sharks and other marines resources, and consumers are increasingly demanding greater traceability in the source of the fish they eat, to ensure it comes from legal and sustainable sources," said Soyo Takahashi, Fisheries Officer with TRAFFIC Japan.

"This seminar provides an opportunity for those interested in this issue to hear how the experts are ensuring greater transparency in the fisheries supply chain."

Speakers included Mr Melcom Pohl Block, Namibian Ministry of Fisheries Marine Resources on "Namibia and the challenge of sustainable fisheries"; Mr Richard Parsons from the UK Government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on "The EU's IUU fisheries regulations and enforcement, with particular reference to the UK"; Mr Nakamura Nobuyuki, Senior Managing Director of an eel retailing company on "Traceability and eel farming: Production and public certification"; plus TRAFFIC's Ms Joyce Wu and Ms Soyo Takahashi and Ms Aiko Yamauchi of WWF Japan.

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Trade alliance formulated in China



The Qinling Changchun Winery has purchased sustainably collected southern Schisandra fruits to make wine since 2008 © TRAFFIC East Asia

TCM traders from across China and beyond sampled traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) plant products in Beijing, where they met in February 2011 with collectors of such plants from the Yangtze River area.

A sustainable TCM products trade alliance between local producers and traders home and abroad for the sustainable production of wild medicinal plant species was established through the inaugural trade alliance meeting.

The conference held by TRAFFIC, WWF and the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS) helped establish links between producer associations in mountainous villages and national and international traditional Chinese medicine traders.

Around 15 representatives from TCM manufacturers in the Netherlands, Russia, USA, Korea and Brazil as well as China and 15 representatives from three producers associations in three pilot study sites helped establish the foundations for the trade alliance.

The meeting was the latest development in a collaborative WWF China, IUCN and TRAFFIC China project on 'Sustainable Management of Traditional Medicinal Plants in High-biodiversity Landscapes of Upper Yangtze Ecoregion' through the European Union's China Biodiversity Programme (ECBP), funded by the European Union Development Programme (EUDP).

Mountain landscapes in the upper Yangtze River basin are internationally recognized for their biodiversity values and listed as the top priority area for biodiversity conservation in China.

An estimated 75% of commercially harvested Chinese medicinal plant species are found in the region, but many are endangered due to overharvesting.

In order to mitigate the degradation of populations of TCM species and improve local plant harvesters' livelihoods, in 2007 WWF, IUCN and TRAFFIC launched the project within the ECBP in China.

Local producers in villages in Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi Provinces were introduced to the concept and skills needed for sustainable harvesting of wild TCM plants.

Guidelines for the certification of wild-collected products were also introduced and producers helped with marketing of their sustainably harvested medicinal plant species.



Schisandra wine
© TRAFFIC
East Asia

In Ningshan County, Shaanxi Province, the Qinling Changchun Winery has purchased sustainably collected southern Schisandra fruits to make wine since 2008.

"We now have more a stable supply of Schisandra by supplementing our existing supplies with sustainably wild-harvested fruit," said Mr. Wang, Manager of the winery, who addressed the meeting in Beijing.

"Once the winery gets into full production capacity, hundreds of additional jobs will be made available to local villagers."

Thanks to the joint work of these conservation organizations, six producers associations have been established in the villages of the three Provinces, representing about 970 local families and 3322 villagers, who need wild plant collection as an important source of income.

"Three years after TRAFFIC/WWF and our partners introduced standards of sustainable management of wild medicinal plants to producers in the Yangtze region, our work is beginning to bear fruit," said Professor Xu Hongfa, Director of TRAFFIC's programme in China.

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Too little done to address trade threat to Asia's tortoises and freshwater turtles

Seventy experts who gathered in Singapore in March 2011 for a Conservation of Asian Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Workshop to evaluate the current status of such species in Asia found the vast majority are nearing extinction in the wild, and very little has been done to address the problem.

The meeting reported that illegal and unsustainable trade was the greatest threat to the survival of this highly



Malaysian Giant Turtle *Orlitia borneensis*, one of the largest freshwater turtles in the world is found only in Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo and Sumatra, and listed as Critically Endangered © Mark Auliya / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

threatened group of species and that laws and conventions in place to protect the animals were simply not being enforced.

Tortoises and freshwater turtles are among the world's most threatened groups of animals. Perhaps nowhere is the situation more critical than in Asia. In a recently released report, *Turtles in Trouble: the World's Top 25 Most Endangered Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles*, from the Turtle Conservation Coalition, 68 percent of those that made the list were native to Asia.

Seventy-two of Asia's 86 species of tortoises and freshwater turtles were assessed at the Singapore meeting, which was hosted by Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), in collaboration with the Turtle Survival Alliance, Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, San Diego Zoo Global and the IUCN SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group.

The Malaysian Giant Turtle *Orlitia borneensis*, one of the largest freshwater turtles in the world and found only in Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo and Sumatra, is now listed as Critically Endangered due to illegal collection and export for its meat. The Burmese Star Tortoise

Geochelone platynota, endemic to Myanmar, is thought to be possibly extinct in the wild due to relentless poaching for the international pet trade.

Alarm bells were first sounded for Asia's freshwater tortoises and turtles following a meeting of experts in 1999, held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, alerting the world to what was dubbed the Asian Turtle Crisis.

Asia's tortoises and freshwater turtles were being harvested in massive quantities to supply the demand for meat and use in traditional medicines, mostly in East Asia. These species are also in demand as pets. Much of the trade is carried out illegally.

Of Asia's 86 species, close to 70 species (approximately 80%) are considered threatened. This is a dramatic increase since these species were assessed in 1999—a 90% increase in the number of Critically Endangered species alone.

"Trade is the single greatest threat to tortoises and freshwater turtles – a species group that has been around since the days of the dinosaurs. Their future is now in the hands of policy makers, enforcement agencies and conservation bodies. To date, efforts to protect these species have been far from adequate. If effort and motivation to save these species is not greatly increased, we are going to lose many of these species," said Chris R. Shepherd, Deputy Regional Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group.

Shepherd urged authorities to make full use of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) under which many of Asia's freshwater turtle and tortoise species are protected.

"The last ten years has shown that while it is possible to save these species from extinction, the threat of trade is still present and ever-growing," said Colin Poole, Director, WCS Regional Hub.

“Of particular concern is the increasing impact of the pet trade on a number of tortoise species and the growth of the demand for dried carapace from softshell turtles sourced primarily in South Asia.”

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Raising awareness to combat illegal wildlife trade in Asia

The TRAFFIC network continues to focus on capacity building with government wildlife law enforcement agencies across Asia, facilitating a series of training workshops in the region over the past six months.



China

In October 2010, TRAFFIC supported a workshop on CITES Enforcement held in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China.

A total of 36 representatives from China's CITES Management Authority (MA), the Forest Police Bureau of the State Forestry Administration, the Anti-Smuggling Bureau of the General Customs and the Supreme People's Court attended.

The workshop reviewed enforcement action on endangered species carried out by different departments in 2010, as well as exchanging information about how to find smuggling routes, identify wildlife products and how to discover concealed goods.

TRAFFIC shared its findings of investigations into illegal trade of endangered species and their products

in China, focused on Asian Big Cats in Tibetan Areas (including Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan and Sichuan provinces) during the past year.

Mr Wan Ziming, Director of the Enforcement and Training Division of the CITES MA, said TRAFFIC's information could substantially support local enforcement efforts.

In November 2010, the CITES MA and TRAFFIC jointly conducted two workshops on ivory trade management and the use of ETIS (Elephant Trade Information System) in Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province and Wuyisha city, Fujian Province in.

More than 60 participants from the CITES MA, Forestry Department Customs, Post Office, the Anti-Smuggling Bureau, the Entry and Exit Inspection Service, Wildlife Conservation Department, Forest Public Security Bureau and Wildlife Identification Centre attended.

TRAFFIC briefed the meeting about the latest developments in international illegal wildlife trade and highlighted the ETIS system and its application.

The workshops helped enforcement staff to identify ivory products, increased their knowledge and understanding of policies and laws dealing with illegal ivory trade, and helped focus their efforts on how to locate illicit ivory amongst the huge volume of postal packages they process.

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Thailand

In December 2010, Customs Authorities in Thailand teamed up with TRAFFIC Southeast Asia to raise awareness among Customs Officers based at airports and other



Training materials for a Thai enforcement officers' workshop on the Elephant Trade Information System © Panjit Tansom / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

key checkpoints about ways to tackle the illegal ivory trade.

Workshop participants were taught how to differentiate real from fake ivory, about the importance of co-ordinating with other government agencies in reporting ivory seizures to ETIS, which TRAFFIC manages on behalf of Parties to CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), and about implementation of the Convention itself.

"In order to suppress the illegal ivory trade completely, the Royal Thai Customs is conscious that good co-operation both internationally and domestically is the most effective way to uncover any illegal shipments among the 5 000 shipments transiting the airport each day. Teaming up with TRAFFIC will help bring us up-to-date on the latest ways to ensure criminals don't avoid detection. Further, this workshop will benefit all Customs officers at the operational level to offer them support and to exchange work experiences too," said Mr Tanat Suvattanametakul, Director of Suvarnabhumi Airport Cargo Clearance Customs Bureau.

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India

Two law enforcement training workshops were held in Mumbai in January and in Kolkata in March 2011 respectively, aimed to bring enforcement officers up-to-date with the latest tools and techniques available to fight illicit wildlife trade and also to give them an overview of organized global wildlife crime.

TRAFFIC India, in collaboration with the UK Government's Defra (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), the National Academy for Customs, Wildlife Institute of India, WWF-India and West Bengal Forest Department trained the enforcement officers from Customs, the Forest Department, and CID personnel officials.

During the workshops, a wildlife forensic sample collection kit developed jointly by Wildlife Institute of India and TRAFFIC was distributed to participants. The customized kit will enable field staff to collect samples for forensic analysis. Other resource materials provided to participants included CDs on various themes plus books and posters relating to wildlife law and enforcement issues. Participants also viewed TRAFFIC-India's "Don't Buy Trouble" film, which educates viewers about the legal consequences of indulging in illegal wildlife trade.

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Viet Nam

In February 2011, law enforcement officers in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, were trained on how to identify



threatened reptile species and familiarize themselves with international wildlife protection policies in an effort to combat illegal wildlife trade in the ASEAN region.

The three-day course equipped key staff working in land and airports in southern Viet Nam with basic knowledge of the wildlife trade in South-East Asia, international regulations governing the trade such as CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), and relevant national laws. Participants were also trained to identify threatened reptile species that are commonly traded during an interactive session at Saigon Zoo.

The training course was conducted by the Viet Nam CITES Management Authority, Biodiversity Conservation Agency and Natural Museum with support from TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, and ASEAN-WEN.

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