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traffic



dispatches



Inside

- Victoria cracks down hard on underground wildlife trade
- IBAMA cracking down harder on illegal trade in South America
- Illegal timber trade: new report highlights scale of environmental crime
- The first ever international conference on illegal logging
- Globalization and biodiversity

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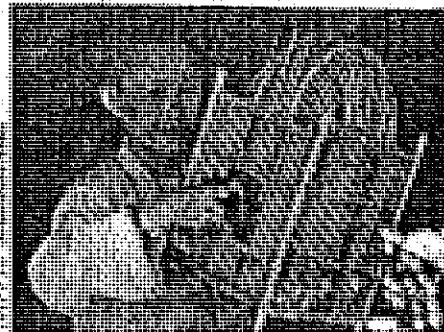
The International Union for the Conservation of Nature

Chinese Government burns rhino horn and tiger bones

In an attempt to show the world how serious it is about enforcing a ban on the international trade in rhino horn and tiger bone, the Chinese Government has publicly burned nearly 500 kilos of tiger bones and confiscated and burned over 1,000 kilos of rhino horn.

On 6 February, 230 kilos of rhino horn were burned in Guangdong province where journalists also recorded the event. CNN television filmed and broadcasted the symbolic gesture to millions of viewers worldwide. Another 825 kilos of rhino horn, said to be confiscated before the ban came into effect, were stored under lock and key for marking and registration, according to the CITES Secretariat in Geneva.

The use of tiger bones and rhino horn, ingredients in traditional oriental medicine for centuries, is having a devastating effect on the world's remaining population of wild rhinos and tigers.



Millions of viewers around the world have seen the Chinese Government burn tiger and rhino bones.

Tiger funeral in New Delhi

In the back streets of New Delhi's old city, citizens gathered together with folk singers and actors to mourn the death of one of their country's most celebrated tigers, Noon.

The ceremony was prompted just after the death of Noon was reported in the BBC/National Geographic television film, *Tiger Crises*, aired in the UK on January 2, 1994. Noon was one of an estimated 1,500 tigers killed by poachers in India in the past three years. Noon, like other tigers, was slaughtered mainly for her bones, which are sought after for use in oriental medicine by consumers in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea.

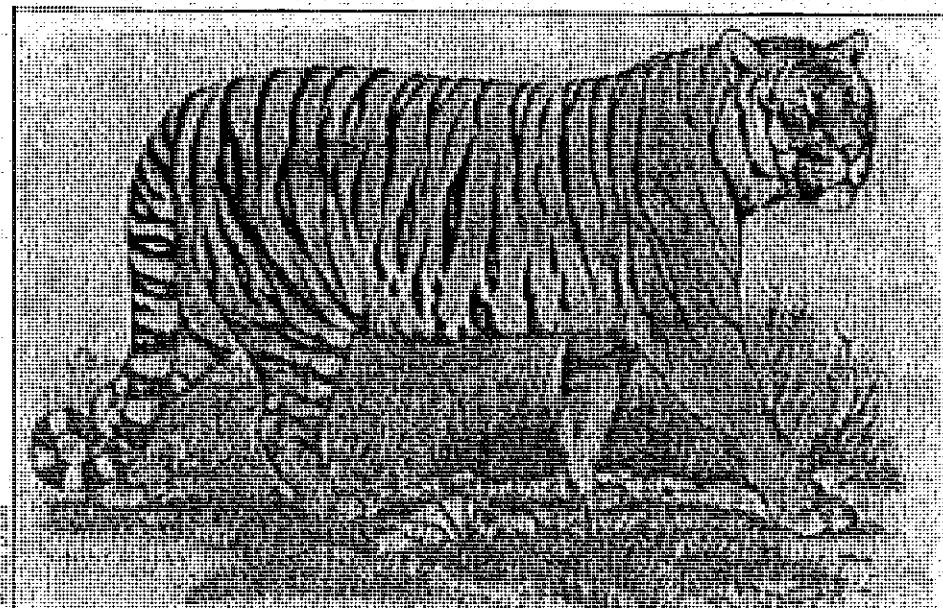
The BBC film, which highlighted the plight of India's rapidly vanishing wild tigers, showed the important role that TRAFFIC played in helping the Indian police in seizing 283 kilos of tiger bones,

destined for the medicine trade. The smuggling operation was uncovered by TRAFFIC, who tipped off the police. One of the chief presenters in the BBC film is Ashok Kumar, Director of TRAFFIC India.

Sold for a Song:

The Trade In Southeast Asian non-CITES Songbirds

Millions of viewers in over 120 countries watched a WWF-produced video news release, based on the above TRAFFIC International report, issued in Buenos Aires during IUCN's (World Conservation Union) General Assembly this February. Written by Steve Nash, former Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, the report is part of the TRAFFIC Species in Danger series. CNN has broadcast the video in English, and plans to use the report as a basis for additional broadcasting in Portuguese and Spanish.



The Siberian tiger, pictured here, is seriously threatened by the illegal wildlife trade.

Turtles and tortoises in trouble : TRAFFIC's trade study in India

Increasing destruction and shrinkage of their habitat, combined with direct exploitation, is a major threat to India's fresh water turtles and land tortoises, according to a recent report prepared by TRAFFIC India.*

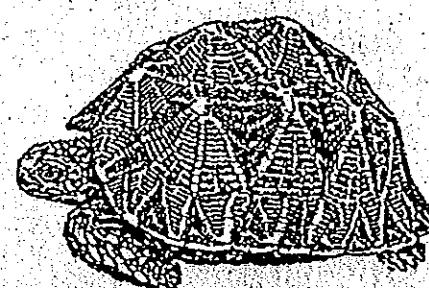
The level of commercial exploitation is a cause of concern for the survival of several turtle species, particularly those whose ranges are small. In addition, endemic species and those that have a low reproductive capability may also be in danger.

Protected areas in all biogeographic regions of the country could provide the last remaining habitats for some of these species. But for those, not secure in protected areas, the future could be "bleak".

The recently released report by TRAFFIC documents the main turtle species exploited for trade in India, localities from where they are exploited, methods and purpose

of exploitation, groups and people involved in the trade, and trade routes and transportation methods. It also examines the socio-economics involved in the turtle trade and the impact of the trade on turtles.

Turtles, both freshwater and marine, and land tortoises have been exploited throughout their range in India for food and

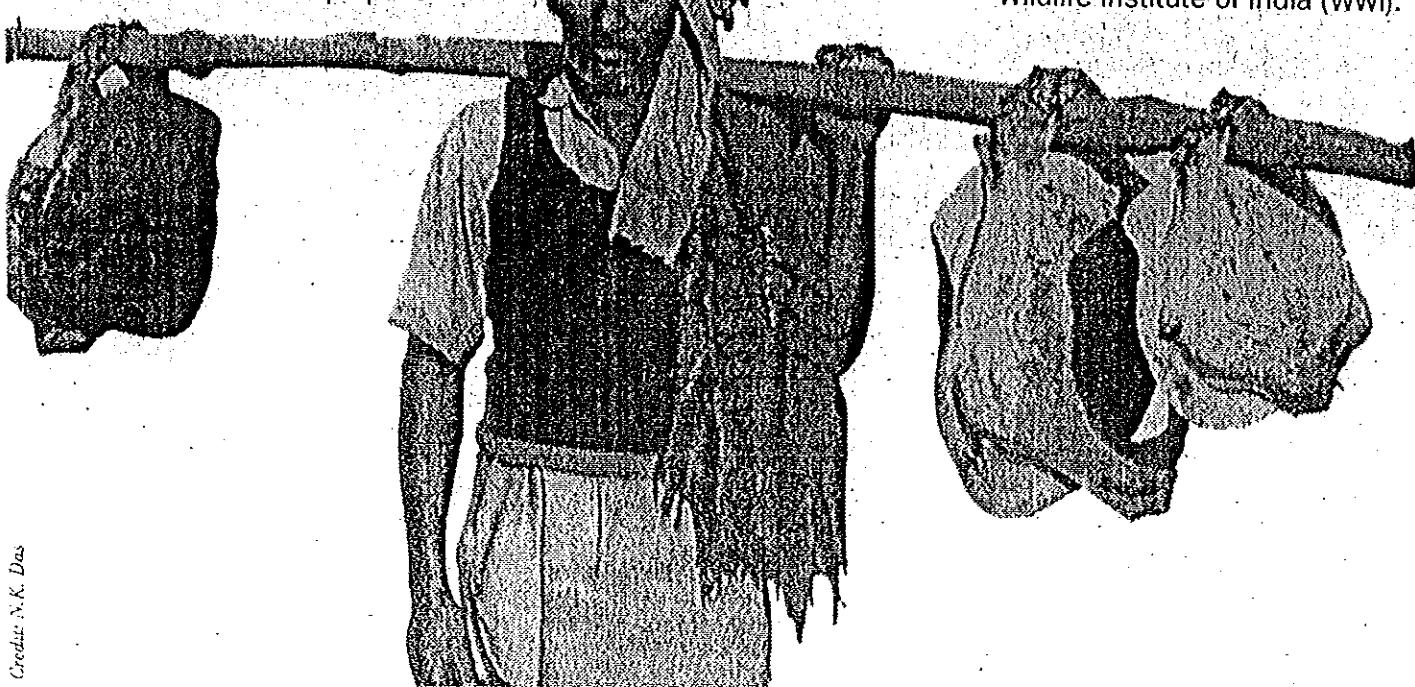


medicine for hundreds of years. They are a source of protein for fishermen and the hill tribes and an important renewable resource.

For centuries, both turtles and tortoises have been venerated and exploited for subsistence in India. The turtle is an incarnation of God Vishnu to the Hindus. They are enshrined in temples and mosques and their images maintained with reverence by Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists.

Recent trends show, however, that their use has been shifting from a sustainable to a non-sustainable level based on the current status, habitat and conditions, and utilization patterns of various Indian chelonians. A more realistic assignment of legal protection status to tortoises and turtles in both the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and CITES is needed, conclude co-authors of the report, B.C. Choudhury and S.Bhupathy of the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehra Dun.

* *Turtle Trade In India: A study of Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles*, prepared by TRAFFIC India for WWF-India in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII).



Vietnam stamps out illegal wildlife trade

by Elizabeth Kemf

In an attempt to flush out illegal traders — who have gone underground to escape beefed up national legislation clamping down on a burgeoning wildlife market — the government of Vietnam has decided to join CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the only international treaty that aims at regulating the trade in threatened animal and plant species.

"This initiative strengthens Vietnam's growing efforts to step up control of its escalating wildlife trade and offers hope for the rich biodiversity of Indochina," said Steven Broad, Director of TRAFFIC's Southeast Asia office.

"Much of Vietnam's wildlife trade has been driven behind closed doors with smugglers operating clandestine networks in an attempt to avoid wildlife legislation passed by Vietnam in 1992*," added Broad. In early 1993, the government boosted its internal legislation and issued a second decree calling for increased law enforcement and stating that tourist shops could no longer display rare wildlife species.

Most of the cages of wildlife at the Cau Mong Market along the Saigon river were razed and the trade was carried on privately in the homes of middlemen, through private companies — or through the Ministry of Forestry itself, which oversees Naforimex, a wildlife trade arm that grants export permits for species for "establishing captive breeding populations, for scientific exchange and other essential purposes".



Swamp tortoises and songbirds on sale in Cambodia at a market on the Mekong River near the Vietnamese border.

Vietnam and neighbouring Laos and Cambodia are home to a great wildlife diversity including the kouprey or forest ox, the Eastern Sarus crane, the douc langur, the clouded leopard, Eld's deer, and a number of species of plants, many of which may not have yet been named to science.

The future of rare animals such as the Vietnamese fireback, the tiger, elephant, white fronted leaf-monkey, several species of hornbill, and the Javan rhino as well as a variety of endangered orchids should be secured by Vietnam's decision to join the Convention, which will become effective on April 20.

Vietnam

"This is a much needed and important step forward toward protecting Vietnam's rich wildlife, some of which exists nowhere else in the world," said Dr. Le Quy An, Vietnam's Vice Minister for Science and Technology and Environment. "The Government of Vietnam is committed to enforcing the Convention at our borders. We plan to train our customs officers and to work closely with other countries' CITES authorities," he added.

China biggest buyer

Vietnamese researchers report that China is the biggest buyer of its wildlife, followed by Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and occasionally Thailand. They warn that with the lifting of the US economic embargo leading to a dramatic leap in all trade, that strict border controls will be needed.

In 1992 and 1993 investigators from the University of Hanoi's Centre for Natural Resources Management and Environmental Studies (CRES) and TRAFFIC

conducted surveys in live-animal markets ranging from frontier towns along the Chinese border to the very southern tip of the country in the Mekong Delta.

The CRES and TRAFFIC teams uncovered flourishing markets in tiger bones, cat skins, sea turtles, primates, tortoises, reptiles, seahorses, live bears and bear parts, orchids, otters and parrots.

The export trade in wild plants, particularly from the Central Highlands is booming. In January 1994, in nearby Nha Trang, many curio shops in the town centre and stores located along the harbour where many tourists depart to visit neighbouring islands, displayed for sale every above-mentioned product except for rhino horn.

The TRAFFIC/CRES team estimates the annual trade in swiftlet nests, most of which are exported from Nha Trang, is about US\$ 2 million a year. No figures are available for the overall annual trade.

Restaurants still do a brisk



Credit: Elizabeth Kemp

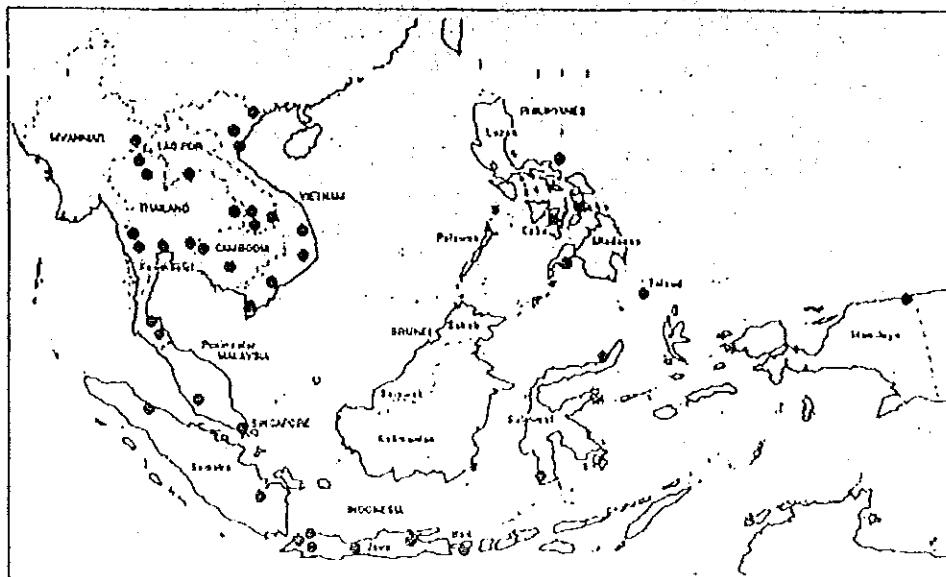
A craftsman in Ho Chi Minh City polishes a box made from the shell of a Hawksbill turtle. TRAFFIC and CRES are monitoring and investigating the impact of the turtle trade on the Hawksbill turtle in Vietnam.

business in snakes, frogs, porcupines, fruit bats, muntjac deer, etc. Roadside cafes — on the well-travelled tourist and business route between Ho Chi Minh City and Dalat — are increasing and most are offering some wildlife specialities in contravention of national legislation.

According to TRAFFIC investigators, many species which are captured in the Mekong Delta, such as fresh water turtles, frogs and snakes, are transported by the truckload directly from the south of the country to the northern border of China.

There in the early morning before dawn, tons of wildlife are imported into China at a price of as much as US \$ 160 per kilo for rare soft shell turtles.

TRAFFIC/CRES Vietnam tortoise/turtle trade monitoring project, supervised by Steve Broad,



Locations of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia surveys and investigations, 1991-1993.

Vietnam

reveals that at least 20 freshwater and 2 terrestrial species have been recorded. "CRES/TRAFFIC investigations show that trade in both tortoises and freshwater turtles for food, pets, and medicinal uses is of serious conservation concern in Vietnam and elsewhere in the region", says Broad.

TRAFFIC and CRES are preparing a report on this trade to be released in the spring. In addition, CRES/TRAFFIC are producing a report on a Hawksbill Turtle Trade investigation project, also to be completed in the spring. The species is used to produce tortoise shell products including combs and spectacle frames.

In December of 1993 the Vietnamese Prime Minister declared that border controls would be increased for several items including antiques and illegally exported timber. Vietnam has a ban on the export of raw or partially processed wood. According to the *Vietnam Investment Review*, in one area of Vietnam 80% of the timber cut for export is harvested illegally.

Duty free turtles

The rigour with which customs officials are controlling the import and export of tourist items at the airport in Ho Chi Minh City increases the likelihood that the illegal wildlife trade will be flushed out and that its ongoing and growing wildlife trade can be regulated on a sustainable basis. It is to be hoped that government officials will begin by banning the sale of the threatened species souvenirs – including sea turtle carapaces and products on display



A duty-free shop in Vietnam where items openly display and sell animal products by an upgrade in the country's wildlife laws. On April 21, Vietnam will enter CITES.

In the duty free shop – that can be purchased after passing through custom's inspection.

TRAFFIC, CRES, Vietnamese authorities and the CITES Secretariat will conduct a "scientific exchange" workshop in Hanoi on March 10-11 of this year. The purpose of the workshop is to explain the Convention, outline its benefits and obligations, and determine guidelines on how Vietnam can best implement CITES.

TRAFFIC has been encouraging Vietnam to join CITES for several years, and produced with CRES, a document to guide Vietnam in joining the Convention. TRAFFIC

also provided sample suggested legislation. Concurrently, the original trade monitoring project identified immediate areas for investigation.

*Instructions of the Prime Minister Regarding the Management and Protection of Rare and Precious Flora and Fauna which places maximum restriction on the exploitation for sale in foreign countries of all animals used in speciality dishes such as snakes, turtles, crabs, frogs and other flora and fauna, which even though neither rare nor precious, are in danger of depletion and thereby inducing a loss of ecological balance.

South Korea key player in rhino horn trade

by Elizabeth Kemf

An official announcement made by the Government of South Korea — stating that the domestic trade in rhino horn has been eradicated — has been thrown into question by the findings of an undercover two-month investigation carried out by TRAFFIC, the wildlife monitoring arm of WWF-World Wide Fund For Nature and IUCN, the World Conservation Union.

According to a TRAFFIC report entitled, "Market Under Cover: The Rhinoceros Horn Trade in South Korea", to be released in March 1994 and authored by TRAFFIC

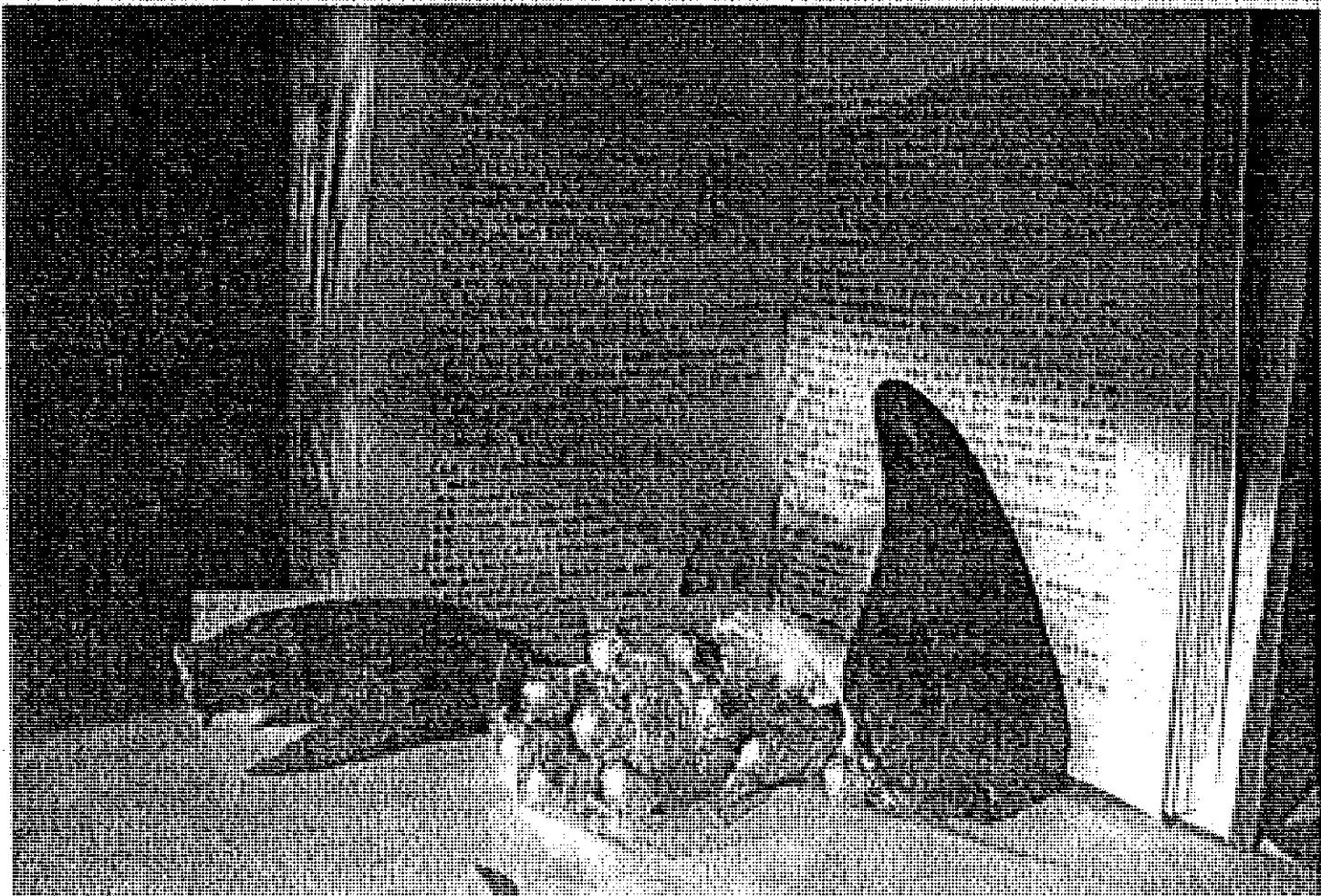
International Researcher Judy Mills, "South Korea remains one of the world's strongholds for the use of Asian traditional medicines made from wild animals and plants".

A team of undercover TRAFFIC investigators surveyed 149 oriental medicine shops and clinics in the country's five major cities and found that 68 of the establishments, representing 46% of the sample, claimed to use rhino horn as a key ingredient in **Won Hwang Chung Shim Won** balls, a medicine commonly found in Korean households in case of emergencies.

A 1988 survey conducted by TRAFFIC revealed that 64% of the shops and clinics claimed to sell rhino horn or rhino horn derivatives, indicating that the use of rhino horn in South Korea may have declined in the past six years, but it has by no means stopped.

"Despite new legislation and law enforcement efforts, the results of this most recent TRAFFIC survey indicate that there is an ongoing black market trade in rhino horn in South Korea," says Mills.

During the course of the investigation, Mills and her team of researchers purchased more



Medicine balls containing rhino horn on display for sale with rhino horns in South Korea, 1990.

Credit: WWF/E.B. Martin

South Korea

than 60 Woo Hwang Chung Shim Won balls alleged to contain rhino horn, plus one piece of alleged rhino horn. However, the Korean government has steadfastly refused to issue an export permit so that these samples can be analyzed by a laboratory in the United States which has a test to detect rhino horn in medicines. "The only way to confirm or deny the ongoing trade in rhino horn in South Korea is for the Government of South Korea to allow the release of these samples for export and forensic analysis," says Mills. For the past nine months, the samples have been held at the British Embassy in Seoul awaiting permission for export.

Dealer prosecuted

Bowing to international pressure on South Korea to stop its consumption of rhino horn, the government took unprecedented measures in 1993 to enforce a 1983 national law which calls for an import ban on rhino horn and instituted a domestic ban on the sale of rhino horn and its derivatives. The new law makes the sale, display or possession with the intent to sell rhino horn and products containing rhino horn a crime punishable by up to six months in prison or a fine of US\$ 1,255. So far, one dealer has been prosecuted and found guilty of possession with intent to sell.

In July 1993, South Korea acceded to CITES and continues to send teams of plain-clothes investigators to inspect the premises of every oriental medicine seller nationwide for violation of the rhino horn ban. The fact that there has been only

one violation found to date has caused officials to insist that South Korea is 100% free of rhino horn commerce.

During the months of May and June, however, TRAFFIC researchers discovered that the trade was still ongoing and confirmed just how ingrained the use of rhino horn is in the centuries old practice of oriental medicine. "Rhino horn is thought to save lives", says TRAFFIC's Mills. If you had the choice of buying or selling one Woo Hwang Chung Shim Won ball containing rhino horn, or to save someone from dying of a stroke, what would you do?"

A TRAFFIC questionnaire mailed to a random sampling of 260 oriental medicine practitioners found that 79% of those who replied regarded rhino horn as an essential medicine, while 70.2 % admitted that they still used rhino horn. Although only 18% of the questionnaires were returned answered, the response rate is considered high in light of the fact that questions basically asked respondents if they were breaking the law.

Government clampdown

According to the doctors who responded to the questionnaires, other doctors who agreed to personal interviews, and literature on the use of rhino horn, Woo Hwang Chung Shim Won is used to treat a range of ailments including high blood-pressure, strokes, headaches, nosebleeds, facial paralysis, inflammation and for fever reduction.

Moreover, the TRAFFIC survey revealed that if it were not for the

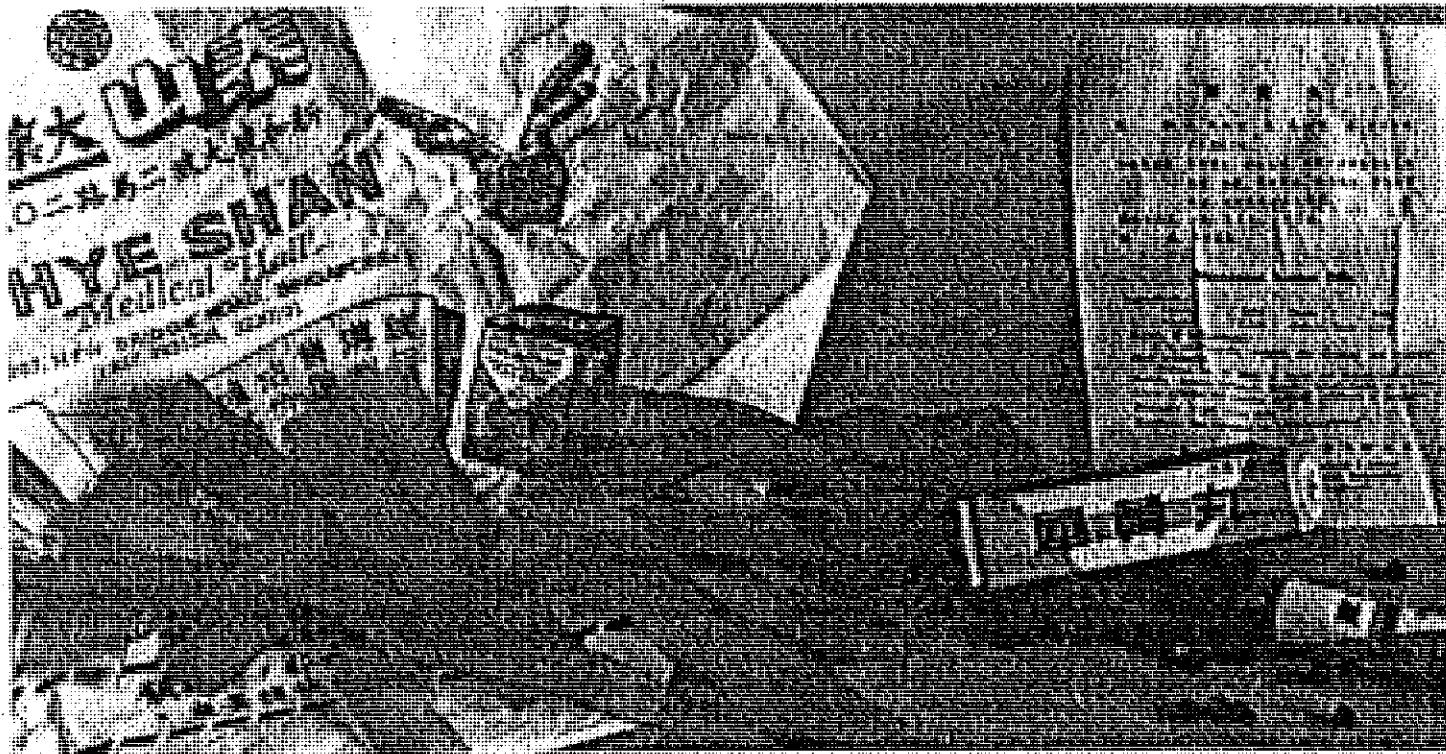
government clampdown on the use of rhino horn, oriental medicine doctors in South Korea would possibly increase the prescription of rhino horn rather than curb their use of it as a medicine.

Substituting cow or buffalo horn for rhino horn is being examined and used by some traditional medical doctors. One Korean researcher found that water buffalo horn and cow horn had greater efficacy than rhino horn in preventing life threatening blood clots; others say they need to use two to ten times as much cow or water buffalo horn to get the same effect. Some doctors who leave the ingredient out find no difference in efficacy.

What is remarkable is that many of the traditional doctors and users seem oblivious to the fact that the use of rhino horn in traditional medicine threatens to drive the rhino toward extinction. Less than 11,000 of the world's five rhino species survive in the world today. "Baseline public awareness of the plight of the rhino seems to be missing in South Korean society, up and to and including the higher echelons of government," notes Mills in her report.

According to the report, when the Korea Oriental Medicine Association (KOMA) sent out its letter asking member chapters to discourage the use of rhino horn, it did so with the argument that South Korea's international reputation was at stake. It did not mention the possibility that the rhino could be driven into extinction by the rhino horn trade in Korea and elsewhere.

South Korea



Rhino poachers and smugglers operating from China supply South Korea.

Mills estimates the consumption of rhino horn in South Korea could be as high as 300 kg per year, which could account for the deaths of more than 100 African rhinos. Prices for rhino horn in South Korea during mid-1993 were documented at US\$ 13,383 per kg.

South Korea's new laws may have driven rhino trade market under cover, yet this latest TRAFFIC report describes blatant examples of a disregard for the ban. The principal investigator was promised and received 24-hour delivery of a piece of rhino horn weighing 37.5 grammes for US\$ 251. And the public sale of Woo Hwang Chung Shim Won balls -- claimed openly to be made with authentic rhino horn -- at the oriental medicine store in Seoul's Lotte World shopping complex in May 1993 makes one wonder when and if that store will

The store's doctor is a president emeritus of KOMA.

Mills says that South Korea, until documented otherwise, still should be considered a key player in the decline of the wild rhino populations and concludes her TRAFFIC report with some solid recommendations for eliminating the demand including:

- * Continue trade monitoring such as polling regularly oriental medicine sellers nationwide.
- * Make available rhino horn samples for forensic testing in Korea and provide results readily to law enforcement agencies.
- * Establish a working relationship between the oriental medicine community and those charged with trade monitoring and law enforcement.

* Research and promote use of rhino horn substitutes.

* Establish cooperative law enforcement efforts between South Korea and rhino range states.

* Research the illegal trade networks that connect South Korea with key rhino range countries.

* Improve training of enforcement personnel.

* Mount culturally-sensitive public-awareness campaigns to dissuade the use of rhino horn as medicine.

TRAFFIC's next project in South Korea will be to organize a workshop bringing together the oriental medicine community with law enforcement officials and other key players in attempts to stop the trade in rhino horn.

Illegal wildlife trade worsens in European Union

by Elizabeth Kemf

Nearly eighty black cockatoos — one of the world's most prized parrots — have been confiscated in the Netherlands following a thorough investigation by Dutch authorities.

When these birds — endemic to Australia and never known to occur or breed in captivity outside of that country — were suddenly spotted in well known shops and private aviaries throughout the country, Dutch police and TRAFFIC began a nationwide search. This was over one year ago, a short time after the European Union (the European Community) consolidated the 12 member states into a single market. The Dutch discovered that several infamous dealers were part of a ring illegally importing eggs of the black cockatoos.

In early February of 1994, the Dutch brought the dealers to trial but the case was dropped for lack of evidence. The smugglers and birds had, metaphorically speaking, slipped through one of the biggest loopholes in the European Union's wildlife trade, namely the weak Dutch domestic legislation.

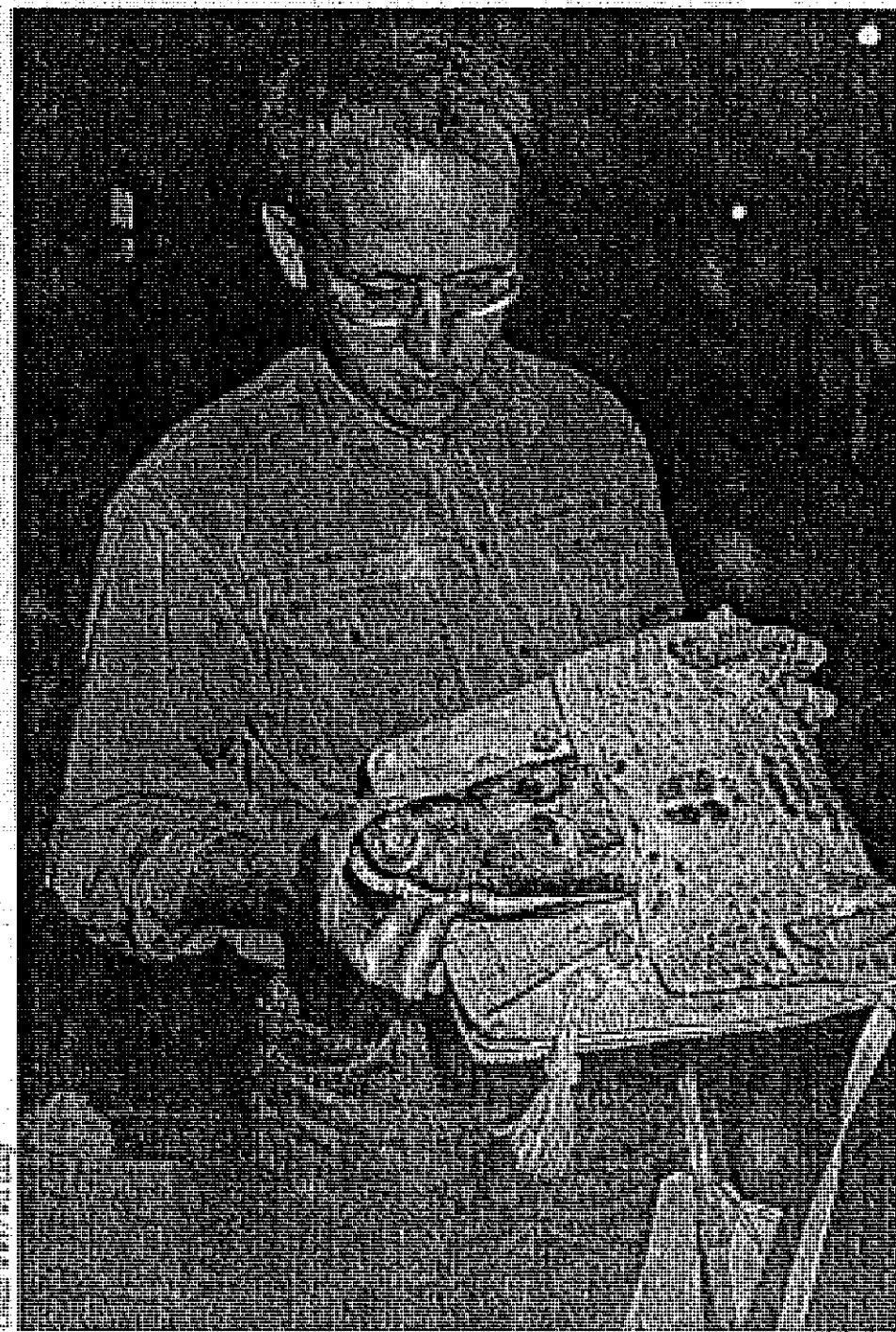
Consignments of CITES goods — once they enter the EU — can be transported throughout the EU, practically uncontrolled. The Dutch could not effectively prove that the birds had been imported illegally into the Netherlands — despite the fact that aviaries have never been able to breed the black cockatoos in captivity.

"The three dealers faced enormous penalties. All of these

birds are on Appendix II of CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), and they were all taken from the wild. They are fully protected in Australia. Two were confiscated in Belgium. We have no idea how many more slipped through," said Tom de

Meulenaer, Director of TRAFFIC Europe.

"CITES-listed goods, like a shipment of parrots, destined for an importer in one member state and introduced into the EU via another member state, are often not checked at all. Once they enter



Crocodile bag illegally imported and held at the customs depot at Schipol airport in the Netherlands.

European Union

the EU, these goods may disappear unchecked into free trade," says de Meulenaer. "They then become part of the world's richest single consumer market for wild species of flora and fauna".

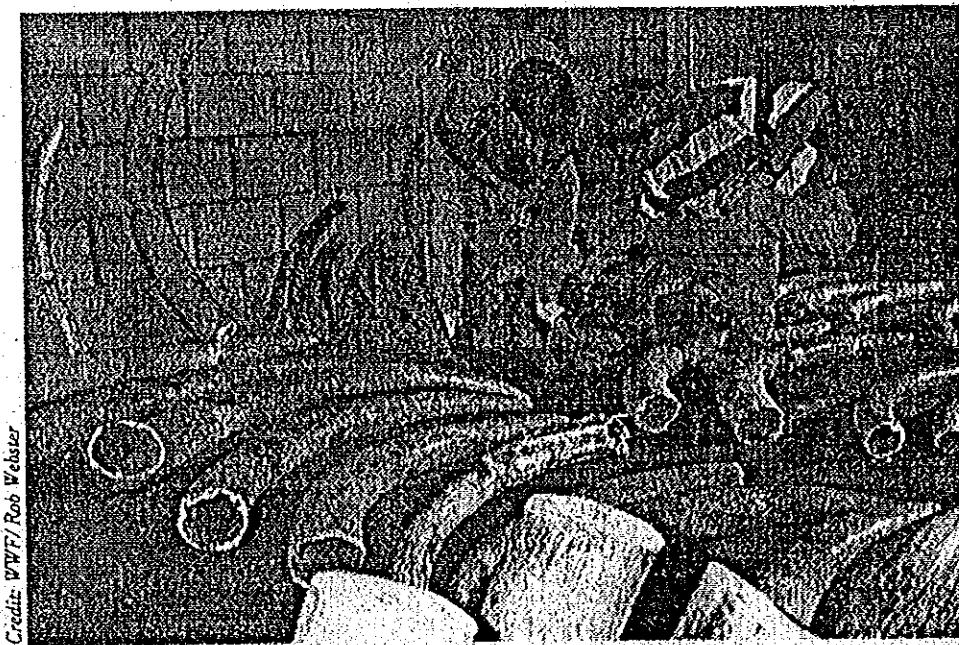
According to TRAFFIC, there are severe and growing problems with implementation of CITES in the EU. "The situation has not improved. Since the advent of the single market, it is worsening. The chaos is complete," says de Meulenaer.

The 120 member countries of CITES have for many years been concerned over the inadequate implementation of CITES by member states of The European Union. A prime concern — since January 1993 — when as de Meulenaer says "the walls came tumbling down and border controls were no longer strictly required," has been the non-reporting of intra-Union trade and the lack of control of such data.

At the last Conference of the Parties in Kyoto in March 1992, the Convention resolved that at the upcoming Conference of the Parties in November of this year, the CITES Secretariat would officially report on the state of CITES implementation by the EU.

This February the EU is to reveal a draft proposal for revised CITES regulations to replace existing ones which CITES is implementing in the EU.

TRAFFIC would like to see the revised and improved legislation put into place and implemented as soon as possible. "It's not a perfect law," says de Meulenaer, "but it's promising. It would



Ivory and rhino horn confiscated and held at the customs depot at Schipol airport in the Netherlands, June 1992.

harmonize wildlife trade regulation in the EU States and close down 'Dutch' loopholes. It's probably the most sophisticated wildlife trade law in the world, but it has to be approved and discussed by 12 countries plus the European Council, Parliament and Ministers. It will be finalized at the earliest probably only in 1996. Above all, however, the EU must allocate far more resources to properly implement CITES in the EU," he added.

Meanwhile, TRAFFIC Europe is monitoring a growing number of incidents of CITES violations including shipments of birds from Peru entering the EU via Luxembourg, reptiles from Madagascar via Paris attempted to be sent to Germany, and caiman skins from Colombia entering via France on route to Italy. It is also watching circuses travelling around Europe with species listed in CITES Appendix I, some of which have the same

phony copies of "papers" or identity cards. For example, several chimps are touring Europe on the basis of a single document copied or forged six times.

The Chairman of the Dutch CITES Scientific Authorities stresses that the EU's failure to implement CITES adequately has been the subject of significant criticism among CITES parties.

According to TRAFFIC Europe, its staff in five countries have been involved in guiding the legislators on specific issues and identifying the market's weaknesses.

Unless existing regulations are properly enforced, and unless urgent steps are taken now such as setting up a European CITES control team or uniform controls at EU points of entry and for internal trade monitoring, sanctions against the EU may be agreed at the next Conference of the Parties in November.

Philippine coral trade — stopped for now?

by Elizabeth Kemf

Despite a national harvest ban on selected types of coral — declared in the Philippines in 1973 over 20 years ago — coral exports have continued, some apparently in violation of the country's local laws and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Over 13,000 tonnes of coral have been mined from its vast reef system since 1960, making the Philippines one of the globe's major sources of corals in international trade for at least three decades. TRAFFIC Bulletin (Vol 13 No 3)* reports that over one million pieces were exported from the Philippines alone in 1992.

In the same year, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia's former director Stephen Nash visited the Philippines and confirmed that much of the coral being exported at that time was from fresh or "new" stock and not from "old" stock, supposedly collected and stockpiled by dealers before the country required registration both in 1977 and 1986/87.

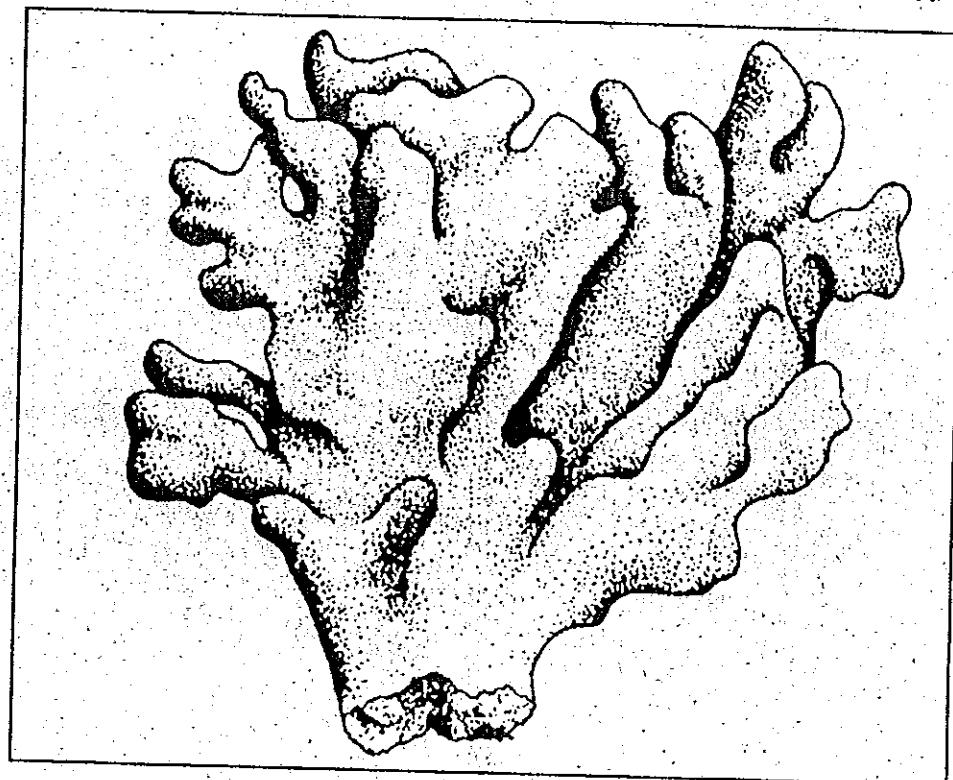
Recognizing the impact of the coral trade on reef ecosystems, the government prohibited the harvesting and export of corals in the 1970s. In 1977, all citizens in possession of coral stocks were required to report them to the Secretary of Natural Resources by mid-November of that year. If they were not registered they could not, according to national laws, be exported. In 1985, 17 genera of the most popular stony corals in

trade were listed in CITES Appendix II, requiring strict control of international trade. And in 1986/87 the government again required that traders register and clear their stocks.

"It became clear that traders were still augmenting existing stockpiles with newly collected corals,"

the Philippine government suspended its coral export ban from April to July 1992 in order to allow export of coral inventoried and registered in 1986. In 1992, TRAFFIC saw coral collected post 1986 being prepared for export.

"Decomposing organic matter and marine organisms were attached



*Blue coral *Heliopora coerulea**

said Nash and Teresa Mulliken, co-authors of the TRAFFIC report, *The Recent Trade in Philippines Corals.**

Thus, coral from the Philippines continued to be exported out of the country. Fortunately, vigilant conservation and customs authorities in the USA and the European community sometimes seized large shipments of coral. But, more often than not the stony corals streamed into the international market.

Confusion broke out in 1992 when

to corals included in a shipment arriving in the UK in May 1992. Government personnel in several other countries also questioned whether coral in shipments arriving from the Philippines, which also appeared to contain marine organisms in a similar state of recent decay, had been collected prior to 1986" wrote Nash and Mulliken.

In June 1992, the CITES Secretariat notified its 115 member states that it was "increasingly concerned about enforcement policy in the

Philippines



Coral from the Philippines seized by French customs officials at the port of Papeete, Tahiti.

Philippines regarding the export of corals and specimens of *Tridacnidae spp.* (giant clam species) from that country". The Secretariat also said that it was concerned about evidence indicating that some recent coral shipments contained freshly taken specimens, while others contained quantities in excess of the amounts authorized for export or specimens of species which did not correspond to those indicated on the export permits.**

As of February, 1994, the CITES Secretariat still refuses to confirm the validity of Philippine export permits for corals and giant clams (except for *Tridacna crocea*). For the time being, it will no longer recognize the existence of any pre-ban stockpiles and giant clams

(except *Tridacna crocea*) in the Philippines.

"Traders argue that coral exports should be allowed because they are an important source of employment," according to Mulliken and Nash. "But as the trade is presently managed, the coral trade could have a net negative effect on employment and the country's economy. The trade is known to be contributing to the localized degradation of the Philippines coral reefs, which in turn depletes fish and mollusc populations," they add. Loss of the reef also means a decline in tourism, an important source of foreign exchange. Coral reefs, sometimes called the "rainforests of the sea" provide fish, molluscs, and crustaceans, with a potential yield of 9 million tonnes per year.

TRAFFIC notes that the coral trade has shifted elsewhere with Indonesia now being the world's foremost source of stony corals to international markets. Given the recent history of the trade in the Philippines, it remains to be seen whether the ban on coral exports from this country will be permanent. Unless effective management plans are put in place in these and other coral exporting countries, it seems likely that the coral reef degradation caused by the international trade will continue.

* Source TRAFFIC Bulletin, Vol 13 No 3

** Notification to the Parties, Lausanne, 30 June, 1992

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TRADEFRONT's mission statement

TradeFront is a network of
environmental organizations

that work together to combat
the environmental impacts of
international trade. We believe
that environmental problems are
best solved through international
cooperation. TradeFront is a
network of environmental groups
from around the world that work
together to combat the environmental
impacts of international trade.

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11 things inside

• **Railroad approves merger**

• **Caltrans doubles traffic**

• **California starts the Century**

• **The last weekend?**

• **Highways in the camp**

• **More leaders call for belt to relieve congestion**

• **Interstate highway fees**
• **Highway tips**

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Cover photo: Hunter with dead bear in Russia

Photo credit: WWF/Marek Libersky

World leaders call for halt to wildlife smuggling

A road runs from Kathmandu in Nepal, through Lhasa and on to the Chinese hinterland. It is becoming an increasingly used trade and tourist route following easing of tensions between India and China. But the revived border trade has also increased the scope for wildlife smuggling.

With the high demand for tiger bone in China and the best source of tigers in India, some Tibetans in exile have become involved in smuggling rackets involving animal parts. Last August, as a result of TRAFFIC investigations, a Tibetan was arrested in Delhi with nearly 300kg of tiger bones. The discovery of another cache of bones near a Tibetan colony indicated other Tibetans could also be involved in the illegal trade. Evidence also points to Tibetans' involvement in smuggling other wildlife parts, including wool from the endangered Tibetan antelope, musk and bear gall bladders.

In February this year, WWF International's president, HRH The



The Dalai Lama has denounced the wildlife poaching and smuggling by Tibetans, uncovered by TRAFFIC.

Duke of Edinburgh, appealed to the Dalai Lama to use his influence "to discourage Tibetans from taking any further part in these criminal proceedings." Noting that the Tibetan leader was deeply respected by Tibetans and the rest of the world, Prince Philip wrote, "I am convinced that an appeal from you would make a significant contribution to the campaign to save these already

endangered species from extinction."

Prince Philip also asked the Dalai Lama to issue directions to practitioners of traditional Tibetan medicine, including the Central Tibetan Institute in Dharamsala, India, to discontinue the use of musk and bear bile in their prescriptions. This letter elicited a prompt response from His Holiness stressing that the actions of the Tibetans were "totally against the basic Buddhist concept of reverence for life and my personal concern for animal life, plants, the environment and the planet itself." He said he had urged his people on many occasions not to indulge in such activities and would continue to do so. He also assured the Duke of Edinburgh that his office would ensure the medical institute attached to his establishment would not use animal products in its medicines.

In letters to India's Minister for Environment and Forests, Mr Kamal Nath, and the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group's Vice Chairman for Asia, Mr Valmik Thapar, the Dalai Lama supported punishment of the Tibetans involved in killing tigers or illegally trading in wildlife.

UK travellers alerted about endangered species

Travellers are often unaware they have broken the law when they import an exotic coral ornament or reptile skin handbag or belt, or other wildlife souvenirs made from endangered species. Many have suffered a rude shock when their treasured acquisitions are confiscated by alert customs authorities.

So to warn the millions of passengers who pass through Britain's busy airports of how they may unwittingly be adding to the threats to endangered species, this April TRAFFIC and WWF-UK launched a major campaign called "Buyer Beware!" Exhibits of endangered species, as well as a collection of illegal wildlife souvenirs seized by customs officers show unwary travellers what not to buy.



Customs officers with confiscated wildlife souvenirs at Gatwick airport.

Posters, leaflets, videos and displays feature prominently at airport terminals and Body Shop outlets at Gatwick, Heathrow, Stansted, Birmingham and Manchester.

"British tourists could contribute to the threats facing many species by

making careless purchases while abroad," said Robin Pellew, Director of WWF-UK. "Together with the TRAFFIC Programme, we hope Buyer Beware will change that and enable tourists to make informed choices about the souvenirs they bring home. Our message is, 'If in doubt, don't buy'."

Russia

Bear galls and musk pods

Pressure on other species, besides the tiger, is also mounting. Korean workers from timber concessions in a district in Khabarovskiy Kray have been intensively poaching animals for fur skins for many years, practically destroying a population of musk deer. In Vladivostok, a Korean commercial firm is one of many to have issued an advertisement for buying gall bladders and musk pods.

"Research by TRAFFIC Europe confirms that the intensity of poaching for musk deer and bears increases from western Russia to the East, reflecting the strong demand in Asian countries for bear gall bladders and musk deer pods," said De Meulenaer.

According to one Russian expert, the original musk deer populations of about 35,000 in Khabarovskiy Kray have been reduced by 60% over the past three or four years. Licences were issued for hunting musk deer, until the last hunting season, when the rapid decline in its population caused authorities to put a halt to this. At present only some local ethnic communities are allowed licences.

Bears have been poached mainly for their gall bladders. However, some bear meat is also often found in food stores in the markets of the Russian Far East and many souvenir shops sell bear skins with prices varying from 500,000 to 1,000,000 rubles (US\$262 to US\$525). "TRAFFIC Europe experts report a recent drop in prices of these and other wildlife products in the Russian Far East, which may be due to oversupply and a saturated market," said De Meulenaer.

Brown bears may be hunted under licence but export of their parts requires a permit. Hunting of the Himalayan bear, on the other hand, is prohibited. Despite this, the Himalayan bear is more intensively poached as its gall bladder is larger and considered far more potent than



Poaching of bears in Russia has led to a dramatic decline in their numbers

that of the brown bear. The Khabarovskiy Kray Committee on Ecology and Natural Resources Protection estimates that up to 50% of all poached bears in Russia are Himalayan.

Russian experts believe bear hunting is seriously out of control in many parts of Russia. "Unsustainable trophy hunting and poaching of bears for their gall bladders has led to a dramatic decline in their populations – from about 11,000 bears in 1991 to 4,000 or 5,000 in 1993 in Kamchatka (a peninsula in northeastern Siberia) alone," according to De Meulenaer. Emphasizing the urgent need for action, he pointed to WWF-Germany's proposal to help the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Nature Reserves and the newly established WWF-Russia programme office in Moscow, with bear and forest conservation. This will include the establishment of new protected areas.

Other animals caught in the "poaching boom" are the mink, fox, blue fox, polar fox, beaver, sable, otter and marten – all for their fur, reindeer for their antlers, and Manchurian deer and fur-seal for their penises, to name a few. Of the plants, wild ginseng and Siberian pine are much sought after. Trapping of birds of prey and song-

birds as well as reptiles (mainly tortoises), for export is also increasing throughout Russia.

According to the TRAFFIC investigator, "While it is almost impossible to assess the real scale of the poaching and illegal trade, it appears that such trade is driving some species down to critically low levels. The trend towards organized criminal hunting and trading as opposed to individual operations is further cause for anxiety."

Researchers at TRAFFIC Europe are in the process of evaluating the extent of the illegal wildlife trade in Russia through questionnaires and interviews. "Although the picture looks grim for the moment," said De Meulenaer, "field reports show an increase in customs vigilance aimed at preventing wildlife smuggling – this was unheard of just a year ago. In many instances this results in mere confiscation but no penalties. But it's a start."

TRAFFIC Oceania: focus on fisheries

In 1993 TRAFFIC Oceania dived in at the deep end to investigate the state of international trade in marine invertebrates in the South Pacific. Its findings will allow TRAFFIC to make recommendations to help guide governments and fisheries authorities in regulating fishing practices and international trade in certain species.

TRAFFIC Oceania's work includes looking into relevant national legislation and management measures; the parties involved in the trade; the major markets for marine products; the kinds of products exported (i.e. whether raw, semi-processed or processed); trade trends – whether this trade is on the rise or not; and illegal or unregulated fishing.

Investigation into fisheries is a relatively new area for the TRAFFIC Network and it is appropriate that TRAFFIC Oceania is taking the lead in addressing this issue, one of particular importance to the Oceania region.

"There is a strong reliance on marine resources by countries of the region both for economic and

subsistence needs," says TRAFFIC researcher, Glenn Sant. "Careful monitoring of the exploitation and trade in these resources is ultimately in the interest of these countries as it would help assure their sustainable use."

According to Sant, there has been gross overexploitation in many fisheries around the globe in recent years. "If fish had legs and were visible to the general public, like terrestrial animals, you would see a more vocal public concerned about the dramatic demise in so many of our fish species," he says.

TRAFFIC Oceania's current work focuses mainly on topshell or trochus shell, green snail, pearl oyster, beche-de-mer and giant clam. The impetus for this project came from a workshop on wildlife trade which was hosted in Canberra by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service in 1990. The workshop identified the trochus shell trade as one of the major areas of concern in the region. Subsequently, at the South Pacific's 22nd Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries, delegates believed that the green snail and beche-de-mer were in

an even more critical state than the trochus shell. There appeared to be little, if any information about trade and illegal or unregulated fishing by foreign boats.

TRAFFIC Oceania is also monitoring other fisheries throughout Australia and the South Pacific. For example, as part of its fisheries work, it is liaising with the Australian government, NGOs and industry on the management of the Southern bluefin tuna fishery. It is also liaising with other TRAFFIC offices to develop a Network fisheries strategy which is likely to be completed later this year. It is working closely with WWF and IUCN/SSC marine specialist groups on fisheries issues.

"Fisheries is now one of the principal activities of our office," says Debra Callister, director of TRAFFIC Oceania. "We believe we have done some groundbreaking work in this area with a positive impact in promoting better fishing practices in the region."

Within the short period of 12 months, TRAFFIC Oceania has already gained recognition for its work. As a measure of its success and credibility in this area, Glenn Sant, was invited to be part of the Australian government's fisheries delegation at a southern bluefin tuna workshop in January in Hobart and at a regional meeting in Wellington, New Zealand in April this year. This is the first time an environmental NGO has been invited on such a delegation in Australia.

"The southern bluefin tuna has suffered massive declines since the 1960s as a result of over-fishing," says Sant. "We believe that our involvement in these meetings has had a positive impact in convincing fisheries managers not to increase existing fishing quotas."

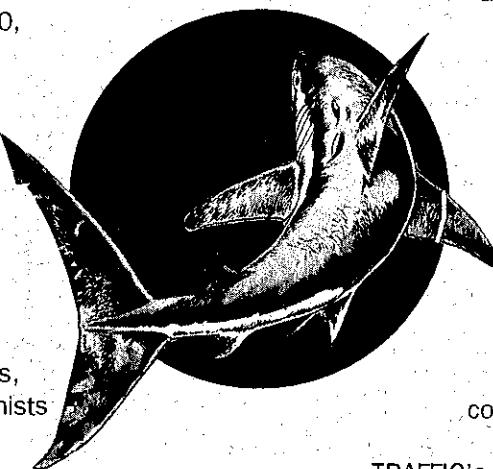
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Sharks

TRAFFIC Oceania is also preparing to plunge into the troubled waters of trade in sharks and shark products following growing evidence of a drastic decline in global shark stocks as a result of unregulated and uncontrolled trade.

In the decade from 1980 to 1990, the reported volume of annual global shark fin exports doubled, with more than 95% of fins exported to Asian countries. Approximately 700,000 tonnes of sharks and rays are killed each year. Shark meat, skins, cartilage, jaws and liver have been consumed for centuries. But the rising demand for shark products has created a boom in shark fisheries, creating concern among conservationists for the survival of these species.

"Lack of data on the trade and its effects on individual species makes it difficult for conser-



vationists and competent authorities to determine management and conservation needs," says Glenn Sant.

A 1992 report of a Japanese boat carrying 50,000 sharks illegally fished off the Galapagos Islands highlights the potential scale of the illegal fishing of shark. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

"We hope our work will contribute towards the tightening of international controls on shark fishing and trade. This would be in the long-term interests of shark conservation and therefore in the interests of the consumer countries," says Sant.

TRAFFIC's work on trade in shark fin is being developed in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC Shark Specialist Group.

Is trade endangering the bitter aloe?

For over 200 years, aloe "tapping" has been a small but important industry in South Africa's eastern and southern Cape Province. It employs over 200 people in the Herbertsdale region alone, where much of the collecting and initial processing takes place.

Most commonly associated with sunburn remedies, aloe is also in demand for use in skin creams, beverages - to give them a bitter taste - in nail biting remedies and in the treatment of skin damaged by X-rays and radioactivity. Gels derived from aloe leaves are commonly used in cosmetics and the dried leaves are often used for decorations.

So far this industry has appeared to be managed at a sustainable level. Leaves are gathered from the lower third of the plant which allows for continued growth. Tappers avoid over-exploitation by rotating their harvests and extracting from individual plants at 18-month intervals. Because of their economic value, farmers



Woman collecting *Aloe barbadensis*, used to treat skin problems. The most exploited, however, are the aloe bitters.

preserve wild aloe habitats which might otherwise be converted to other uses.

However, increasing exports and concerns about the impact of harvesting on the species' tolerance to fire could pose threats to its conservation. In 1992 alone, almost 300 tonnes of aloe bitters (the crystal remaining when the juice extracted from the aloe leaves is dehydrated), and 45,000 dried aloe pieces were exported. The vast majority of these exports, worth close to US\$1 million, involved a single species, *Aloe ferox* or the bitter aloe.

The considerable demand for aloe, mainly from Germany, Japan and Italy, has prompted TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa to assess the value of this resource to the local economy and the conservation implications of the growing trade in aloe bitters.

TRAFFIC's report on the trade by David Newton, national representative in South Africa, will be published later.

Rhino and tiger trade in China : is the ban working?

In response to growing international pressure, China announced, in May 1993, a ban on the trading of rhino horn and tiger bone. The ban specified an immediate halt to the production of commercial medicines containing these animal derivatives, and an end to the sale of existing stocks of such medicines by 30 November 1993. In addition, it became illegal to trade or transport rhino horn and tiger bone.

The Chinese ban was announced within days of the USA government's decision to certify Taiwan and China under the Pelly Amendment to the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967. Certification is the preliminary step to invoking the Pelly Amendment which permits the US to impose trade sanctions on the country concerned.

Two months earlier, the CITES Standing Committee had expressed concern that escalating demand for rhino horn and tiger bone for use in traditional Chinese medicine continued to fuel poaching of these endangered animals, driving them dangerously closer to extinction. Conservationists believed insufficient efforts were being made by the main consumer countries of such animal products – China, Taiwan and South Korea, in particular – to bring this illegal trade under control.

Jørgen Thomsen, director of TRAFFIC International said, "While the Chinese ban is a step in the right direction, continuous monitoring of the commerce will be needed over the next few years to ensure that it is having the desired effect."

Consequently, the TRAFFIC Network has started conducting in-depth investigations of the market in China. Thus far, it has investigated four of the eight principal known herbal medicine markets in China – wholesale outlets for "raw herbs" (animal and plant products) and over 380 pharmacies and department/gift shops in 13 major cities over a period of three months in 1993/94.



Animal market in Chengdu, Sichuan, China

TRAFFIC concludes that, implementation of the ban does not seem to be uniform throughout the country, but it has been "substantive". The high degree of awareness of the illegality of such sales is testimony to government efforts to notify the community of the ban. Despite this, some merchants continue to sell rhino horn, tiger bone or medicines containing these ingredients, although many claimed they were trying to get rid of their stocks. There was evidence of some attempts to circumvent the ban by mislabelling commercial medicines, for example falsifying the list of contents. Inspections have led to confiscation of medicines containing rhino horn and tiger bone.

The TRAFFIC investigation reported, however, that a covert market will persist to the extent that continuing demand (both domestic and international), combined with opportunities for smuggling and clandestine sale, allow it to continue.

"The ongoing threat of sanctions in case of lax enforcement of the ban is likely to be an effective means of keeping the pressure on China," said Thomsen. "However, it is equally important that the international community offer China technical and financial assistance to assure the country's long-term and sustained implementation of CITES and improved management of its wildlife," he said.

Swiftlets in the soup

The soaring demand for swiftlets' nests in East Asia is imposing considerable pressure on the populations of the birds producing edible nests, according to an investigation of the trade in Hong Kong, which has long been the main market for swiftlets' nests.

A recently released TRAFFIC report, *International Trade in Swiftlet Nests with Special Reference to Hong Kong*, by Amy Lau and David Melville, documents that local consumption of the nests has tripled over the past 30 years. Imports showed a 48-fold increase from HK\$9.5 million (about US\$1.2 million) in 1975 to HK\$459 million (about US\$59 million) in 1991. The price per kilogramme of nest increased 20 times during this period.

In 1991 alone, some 17.5 million edible swiftlets' nests were exported to Hong Kong. In 1989, an estimated 19.9 million swiftlets' nests were exported worldwide. The leading exporter is Indonesia, followed by Malaysia and Singapore.

Prices of these nests vary from an average of HK\$ 1691 (US\$218) per kilogramme, for nests imported from Malaysia, to an average of HK\$10,398 (US\$1,346) per kilogramme for the nests from China and Vietnam. This wide discrepancy is attributed to the fact that the more expensive nests are likely to be the more valued "white" ones as opposed to the "black" ones.

Undeterred by the high prices, more and more people are consuming this delicacy both as a food and as a prophylactic health tonic. The cup-shaped nests, made from the birds' saliva are used to help in recovery from illnesses like tuberculosis; or in the treatment of various ailments ranging from chronic coughs or asthma to heart complaints, cancer and even AIDS. However, little scientific research has been done to substantiate such claims.

In the past, collectors generally

restricted their harvesting, taking into account the birds' breeding cycles. Today, however, dramatic increases in demand and prices have led to indiscriminate collection often continuously throughout the year, resulting in marked declines in some populations and to the total extinction of others. For example, in Sarawak, at Niah Cave – probably the largest swiftlet colony in the world – a 48% decline of black-nest swiftlets was noted between 1935 and 1987, and in Baram, a 43% reduction of edible nest swiftlets was observed over a 17-year period. Similarly, in Thailand, there was seen to be a 33% decline in the swiftlet population at Songkhla Lake in the 1970s. At this rate, some experts believe, the species could die out within five to ten years.

"The nests have been harvested in Asia for centuries but never on the intensive scale of today," said Steven Broad, director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia. "It is unlikely that present populations of edible-nest swiftlets, Germain's swiftlets and black-nest swiftlets will be able to sustain the current high levels of harvesting indefinitely."

Broad said that there is an urgent need to discuss with the relevant authorities the kinds of controls and management schemes that might work, as well as to regulate the trade so as to conserve the bird populations at sustainable levels.

Attempts at nest "farming", particularly in Java, Indonesia, are



Warden holding white and black swiftlet nests in Gomantong, Sabah, Malaysia.

helping to maintain some local populations of the more lucrative species of edible nest swiftlets but on a limited scale.

"The findings of the TRAFFIC report point to the need for a concerted international effort to monitor the status of the species and the trade in their nests throughout the region," said Jorgen Thomsen, director of TRAFFIC International. "The potential usefulness of an Appendix-II listing on CITES - the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora - should be explored."

WWF has produced a short video news release entitled, *Bird's Nest Trade in Southeast Asia*, which was released for broadcast on 18 May.

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TRAFFIC's mission statement

The IUCN TRAFFIC International mission statement is to prevent illegal trade in wild animals and plants from threatening their survival.

TRAFFIC's mission statement is to prevent illegal trade in wild animals and plants from threatening their survival. We do this by working with governments, the private sector and other organizations to:

- Monitor and analyze the illegal trade in wild animals and plants;
- Identify trends and patterns in the illegal trade;
- Develop and promote policies and practices to combat the illegal trade;
- Promote sustainable use of wild animals and plants;
- Encourage the conservation of wild animals and plants through the prevention of illegal trade.

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September 1995



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INSIDE:

- *Moving into Russia*
- *The whale meat trade*
- *Anti-poaching budgets plummet in Africa*
- *Taking stock of Africa's legal ivory caches*
- *TRAFFIC teamwork helps nab smugglers*
- *The complex case of the American Black Bear*
- *Publications list*

Fishing "free-for-all" in Caspian Sea threatens sturgeon species

Many sturgeon are under siege, with demand for their eggs often far exceeding the number of mature fish and the resources to protect them.

The quest for sturgeon eggs — the highly coveted and lucrative black caviar — is threatening the survival of some species. The situation is particularly dire in the former Soviet Union, a region home to most of the world's sturgeon and where poaching is so common that the fish are dubbed "swimming currency."

"It is a free-for-all now," said Tom De Meulenaer, the Director of TRAFFIC Europe. "Everybody is fishing. In certain rivers, you can catch only one sturgeon a year while 30 years ago they were abundant. There has been a toll from one river to the next."

As part of its fisheries work, TRAFFIC Europe is assessing the status of the caviar trade in Russia and other states in the region, the European caviar markets and the illegal sturgeon catch and trade.

The need is clear. At a recent international conference on sturgeon biodiversity and conservation, dozens of experts from across the globe talked about sturgeon biology, status and reproduction. But comprehensive trade data and market knowledge were notably absent.

"It was very obvious to me that what we lack is an understanding or grip of the market — its forces, size and nature," De Meulenaer said. "There are bits of information sitting with a lot of experts but there is no good compilation or analysis of it, so there is not even a clear idea of the size of production or demand.

I think we can help in clarifying the situation."

Doing so could help efforts to determine how best to conserve sturgeon. It could also help bolster a move to protect threatened sturgeon under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

To date, four of the estimated 27 species of sturgeon are listed in the CITES Appendices, which means international commercial trade is banned or must be regulated. Still, experts believe 13 other species are close to extinction and that nearly all remaining sturgeon species are threatened by over-fishing, poaching, pollution or habitat loss.

Many of North America's species have suffered precipitous declines. The European Sturgeon is extinct in most of its range. Beluga, the giant of all sturgeon, has disappeared from the Adriatic Sea and rivers in Italy and possibly the Danube Delta as well. The Beluga of the Caspian Sea and its tributaries could soon follow.

The Beluga Sturgeon is the most sought after of all. There are records of Beluga up to 8.5 metres long and weighing 1,300kg. A fully grown Beluga can hold up to seven million eggs, although 800,000-one million is the average. However, mature Beluga Sturgeon have become rare: The Beluga, Russian and Stellate sturgeons of the Caspian supply 90 per cent of the world's black caviar.

The Caspian, the world's largest lake, was bordered by only Iran and Russia prior to the collapse of the USSR. The Soviets did most of the

continued on page 9

Update

Turtles and tortoises face threat in Southeast Asia

Trade in Southeast Asian tortoises and freshwater turtles has escalated and changed dramatically in recent years. Once mostly for subsistence, current harvest is motivated by international demand, predominantly in East Asia and particularly China.

Today, the annual trade involves hundreds of thousands of tortoises and freshwater turtles.

In late July, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia took the lead in efforts to help conserve the tortoises and freshwater turtles by documenting these findings in the new Species in Danger report *Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles: the Trade in Southeast Asia*.

The report follows extensive fieldwork to assess the distribution, status and exploitation of 41 species in seven Southeast Asian countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

The surveys showed that tortoises and freshwater turtles are harvested as food and pets and to release in Buddhist rites or use in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). In TCM, turtle and tortoise products are used to treat ailments such as tumours and infection of the pancreas.

In Vietnam, TRAFFIC found up to 90 per cent of the trade destined for China. Up to 300,000kg of live animals are traded annually, with a value of at least US\$1 million. In Lao PDR, trade in softshell turtles is illegal, but harvesting occurs and is expanding rapidly.

However, so little is known of the status of most species in the trade that it is difficult to quantify the effects. The new report includes recommendations for further study of particular countries and species, such as the small Chinese Three-striped Box Turtle which is in such high demand in Vietnam that even juveniles are bought.

The report also calls for possible listing under CITES of at least five

heavily exploited species.

TRAFFIC helps Lao PDR consider joining CITES

In June, TRAFFIC and IUCN assisted in a Lao PDR workshop on wildlife trade problems in the country and possible solutions.

The joint assistance came at the Government's invitation after considerable internal discussion following a 1993 TRAFFIC and IUCN project offering guidance on the practicalities of joining CITES.

The workshop, organised by the Lao Department of Forestry, attracted representatives from all the relevant government departments. A debate on pros and cons of joining CITES took place, with the final consensus being in favour.

The Department is now expected to seek formal Government approval for the country to join. Meanwhile, enforcement measures and domestic legislation will be reviewed.

The country retains considerable areas of natural forest cover and regionally important populations of threatened species. Prior research indicates that domestic use of wild animals and plants continues to play a key role in Laotian society. That role and some wildlife populations are being increasingly affected by international demand for wildlife.

The medicinal trade

Recent TRAFFIC surveys have revealed the medicinal trade in endangered species in Australia, Belgium, New Zealand and the UK and, in some cases, led to police raids.

TRAFFIC Oceania documented availability of traditional Chinese medicines purporting to contain threatened or endangered wildlife in both New Zealand and Australia in June. The species included bears, leopards, musk deer, rhinos, tigers and Saiga Antelope.

In Australia, TRAFFIC Oceania found these medicines in more than

two-thirds of 119 shops visited. In New Zealand, it found the products in just under 50 per cent of the 30 shops surveyed.

The findings paved the way for TRAFFIC Oceania, WWF Australia and WWF New Zealand to call for strengthened border enforcement in both countries and for retail sale of such medicines to be illegal.

In Belgium, TRAFFIC Europe assisted authorities in the raid of 30 shops in seven cities during February. Manufactured products claiming to contain endangered or threatened species were found in 25 shops and some 500kg of items were seized.

In the UK in the same month, TRAFFIC International assisted in simultaneous raids of 12 pharmacies and supermarkets in three cities. The

TRAFFIC Dispatches

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TRAFFIC is the joint wildlife trade monitoring programme of The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)* and The World Conservation Union (IUCN). It works globally to ensure that trade in wildlife remains sustainable and in accordance with national and international laws and treaties.

The TRAFFIC Network works in close co-operation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

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*WWF continues to be known as The World Wildlife Fund in the USA and Canada.

raids, which followed earlier surveys by TRAFFIC, uncovered bones said to be from tigers, half a rhinoceros horn and hundreds of medicines claiming to contain rhino horn, tiger bone or bear bile.

Whale meat trade

Japan still plays the largest role in East Asia's substantial whale meat trade, according to recent TRAFFIC East Asia surveys of whale meat markets in the region. The results also showed continuing illegal trade in whale meat in South Korea.

Japan stopped officially importing whale meat in 1992, but stocks remain from past whaling and imports. Each year, the country also catches about 300 Minke Whales as part of scientific whaling. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) banned commercial whaling in 1985, but scientific whaling remains legal.

In April, TRAFFIC researchers surveyed 891 shops and stalls in 13 Japanese cities. The availability of whale meat was pervasive and the sale prices per kilo reached US\$500.

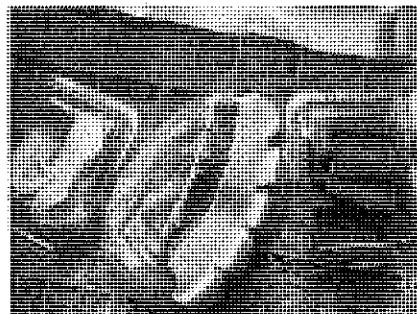
Japan claims to have frozen stocks of legally obtained meat from Sei, Minke, Fin, Bryde's, Sperm, Baird's Beaked and Pilot whales as well as Dall's Porpoise, Striped Dolphin and other dolphins. As the species of origin of whale meat cannot be determined without DNA analysis, TRAFFIC bought 53 samples for such analysis at a later date.

Of concern is that the demand for and high sale prices of whale meat in Japan could serve as smuggling incentives, and there are means by which to smuggle. The legal stocks, for example, create a possible loophole for laundering of illegal stocks. The legal catch of cetaceans could also lead to potential illegal trade: Once illegal meat is cut into pieces, merchants can claim it came from legally obtained cetaceans.

In South Korea, where the taking of all cetaceans is illegal, TRAFFIC found domestic sales of whale meat

in the country's oldest and most famous seafood market in Pusan in April. Stallkeepers were selling a variety of whale meat just as in 1993 when TRAFFIC first documented this illegal trade.

TRAFFIC East Asia staff under-



Whale meat samples purchased during the surveys in Japan.

took the surveys on behalf of WWF International and WWF-US in preparation for the annual IWC meeting held in May and early June.

At the meeting, the delegates noted some of the problems highlighted by TRAFFIC's surveys and passed a resolution calling on IWC members to develop mechanisms using DNA analysis to randomly test and identify whale meat in their marketplaces.

TRAFFIC in Russia

TRAFFIC Europe significantly expanded its scope with the opening of an office in Russia, thanks to support from WWF Germany.

The creation of this office will allow in-depth monitoring of the largely uncontrolled wildlife trade in Russia, which still has some of the largest and most intact ecosystems worldwide.

A recent survey by TRAFFIC Europe indicates that Russia has experienced massive increases in illegal wildlife trade in recent years, with the opening of state borders, relaxation of Customs controls, reduced funds for nature protection, impoverishment of many and new opportunities for private enterprise.

As a result, Russia has become one of the world's biggest suppliers

of wildlife products for use in traditional Chinese medicine.

Moves at the top

Alexey Vaisman has joined the Network as the National Representative at TRAFFIC Europe-Russia. Vaisman served previously in the Russia Ministry of Environment as Principal Specialist of the Chief Department for Nature Reserves Management.

Lothar Schillak became the National Representative in Germany, a position that had long been vacant. Schillak is also Species Conservation Officer for WWF Germany. From 1993-1995, he was Head of the Environment-Ecology Department at GKW Consult.

Chen Hin Keong became the new TRAFFIC Southeast Asia Director. He joined the Network from IUCN Headquarters, where he had been Programme Officer for the Asia-Pacific Programme since 1993. As Programme Officer, he co-ordinated the development, design and management of the programme.

He replaced **Steven Broad**, who returned to his permanent post as Assistant Director at TRAFFIC International in the UK. Broad replaced **Stephen Nash**, who had accepted a three-month assignment as the Enforcement Officer at the CITES Secretariat in Geneva and has since returned to his home country of Canada.

Massimiliano Rocco became the National Representative in Italy. Previously, Rocco had undertaken consultancies for both TRAFFIC Europe-Italy and WWF Italy. He replaced **Marco Pani**, now at the CITES Secretariat.

Marcus Phipps is the new National Representative at TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei. Phipps formerly worked for three years at Orangutan Foundation International as Asian Regional Director and at Orangutan Foundation Taiwan as Executive Director.

Elephant poaching: who can afford to stop it?



An in-depth study by the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group and TRAFFIC finds funds for African Elephant protection plummeting and poaching on the rise in some cases.

© WWF/Luc Bertau

Many African countries may have the will to protect elephants from poaching, but simply lack the resources to do so — a situation expected to get worse. In some countries, the law-enforcement budgets for national parks and protected areas have plummeted by some 90 per cent in recent years.

The ever-deepening resource crisis is probably the most significant factor in why poaching for ivory continues, despite the 1990 international ban on ivory sales. This conclusion follows extensive study by the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group and TRAFFIC of ivory trade and elephant poaching.

The findings — published in the new AfESG report *Four Years After the CITES Ban: Illegal Killing of Elephants, Ivory Trade and Stockpiles* by H.T. Dublin, T. Milliken and R.F.W. Barnes — include increases in elephant poaching, Far Eastern involvement in Africa's illicit ivory trade and human-elephant conflict.

Many law enforcement budgets for conservation have repeatedly faced the budget axe or failed to keep pace with inflation. Budgets in the majority of protected areas are now less than 5 per cent of the very minimum US\$200 needed per square kilometre. Staffing levels have not fared any better, largely because of economic

reforms.

The link between the plummeting budgets and rise in illegal killing of elephants could be statistically established only for Tanzania, but the chronic and frequently dramatic declines are clearly important. While the number of elephants poached annually is dramatically fewer than prior to the ban, this new trend requires vigilant monitoring.

In addition, continued increasing losses of elephants in Africa are expected because of the economic gloom now shrouding so much of the continent.

"Budgets are down to less than US\$5 per square kilometre in most major elephant areas," said Tom Milliken, the director of TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa and co-author of the report. "The bottom line is that we may be able to document poaching increases all over Africa within the next few years. It really has nothing to do with the ban; it has everything to do with resources."

The research, which was undertaken with financial support from WWF International and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, included in-depth studies in nine countries: Cameroon, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The situation in 16 other range states was examined through

postal questionnaires and discussions at an AfESG meeting. All of the information was collected during six months in 1994 for the period 1988 to 1993.

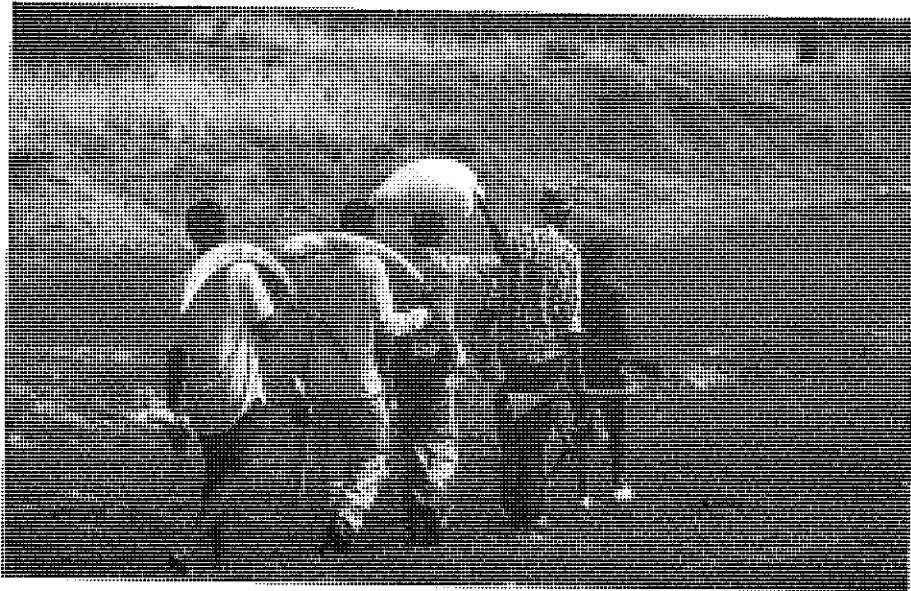
In each of the countries, budgets for elephant protection declined in the areas studied. In Tanzania, funding in the particular area studied fell 97 per cent between 1989 and 1993 to US\$12,850, with just 0.38 cents spent per square kilometre.

In Zimbabwe, there was an overall increase in the operational budgets in terms of local currency during those years, but in real terms the funds plunged 88 per cent to US\$74,000, leaving only US\$2.63 available for each square kilometre.

Although data for Tanzania was incomplete, it is generally accepted that poaching has increased in the country since 1992. Poaching is now reported in most of Tanzania's districts and game reserves.

In Zimbabwe, which has the most comprehensive legislation and reliable data, elephant poaching increased significantly in 11 of the 14 sites surveyed during the ban's first two years and eight of the sites showed additional, but minor, increases in the following two years. For all 14 sites, the number of carcasses found totalled 48 in 1988-89; 167 in 1990-91; and 175 in 1992-93.

Elephant poaching: who can afford to stop it?



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©WWF/Luc Bertrand

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The researchers note the funding crisis cannot be emphasized enough. Most African elephant range states are implementing harsh economic reforms that have not spared national law enforcement and wildlife management. While anti-poaching measures have historically received significant help from abroad, many western donors have withdrawn their support in apparent belief that the ban alone would halt the poaching. Other donors have redirected support to conservation of Africa's rhinos.

Interestingly, the research showed where large-scale removals of rhino occur, poaching of elephants soon follows — a correlation first noted prior to the ban in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire and Zambia.

This pattern has continued with, for example, poaching of elephants in Zimbabwe increasing where poaching already decimated once healthy rhino populations.

"The desire of people in the developed world is to have elephants, but they have to recognise the cost," said Holly Dublin, co-author of the report, AfESG Chairwoman and WWF Senior Conservation Adviser.

"Based on the very minimum need of US\$200 per square kilometre, that cost is US\$1.1 billion to cover all the elephant's range or US\$222 million for protected areas alone — every single year. The real need is likely double that. If the developed world cannot substantially help meet that cost, then it has to leave the management decisions to Africa."

Inadequate resources also play a large role in logistical difficulties and the general scarcity of data that serve as blockades to effective analysis of the ban's impact on poaching.

TRAFFIC and the AfESG found the budget cuts and general economic decline have led to "a state of imminent breakdown" in many wildlife management authorities. This, in turn, has led to the common inability of many wildlife authorities to account for operating budgets, staffing and buying of resources.

Not only finances are at issue, though. Even imprecise accounting

for elephants is often absent. Also, most do not have the wherewithal to quantify how many elephants are killed each year for their ivory. Too often, range states cannot account for

There is also evidence that Taiwanese and South Koreans are increasingly involved in illicit ivory trade in Africa, which is a post-ban development of major concern. These

Too often, elephant range states do not have the resources to account for their live elephants, much less their dead ones.

their live elephants much less their dead ones. Just as the live elephants must be counted regularly, careful monitoring of elephant deaths, the respective causes and marking and storage of resulting ivory (*see next page on stockpiles*) are necessary.

In addition, legislation aimed at protecting elephants often fails to do so. In many cases, basic wildlife provisions are outdated and have lost much of their relevance. In Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Nigeria and even under new legislation in Cameroon, the practice of designating elephants as both "totally protected" and "partially protected" based on the size of their tusks creates serious confusion once an elephant is reduced to parts or products.

Meanwhile, illegal ivory trade clearly continues. The researchers document the seizure of at least 16 tonnes of ivory in the nine countries since the ban took effect. Outside of Africa, more than 8,700 ivory items were confiscated originating from these same countries.

The major pre-ban markets such as Europe and the USA have largely disappeared, but seizures indicate that some traditional markets could still exist and new markets may be emerging. The seizures in transit countries and intelligence information from producing countries suggest Taiwan, China, Singapore and South Korea have been among the final destinations for ivory from Africa in recent years.

new players appear to be filling the vacuum left by the collapse of traditional ivory trading structures.

In addition, ivory is increasingly being processed in Africa for direct export to old markets or new ones in Asia. The output, often semi-worked ivory blocks for making name seals, has been recorded in cases involving Cameroon, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi and Tanzania.

The researchers warn of growing risk of an Asian-run, Africa-based industry for processing ivory developing into an high-volume enterprise stimulated by dropping ivory prices in Africa and the increasing commercial presence of Asian nations.

The research by the AfESG and TRAFFIC also revealed that conflict between elephants and humans has increased in recent years, most likely because of the increases in human populations and the resulting loss of elephant habitat. As elephants infringed more on crops and homes replacing habitat, the numbers killed legally began to climb. The number of people killed by elephants has risen as well.

As this conflict between humans and elephants continues, the possibility looms large that disenchanted villagers could begin co-operating with ivory poachers. The state programmes to control problem animals could also begin having substantial impacts on elephant populations.

TRAFFIC takes stock of state ivory caches

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa staff are travelling the continent to assess and ultimately help secure legal state ivory stocks. This is no small task: some countries hold thousands of ivory items.

TRAFFIC is in the front line of efforts to help adequately address government-held ivory stocks in Africa, an issue that policy makers cannot ignore much longer.

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa has an extensive project under way to identify, log, register and, where appropriate, mark ivory held legally by governments in the region. The project is in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat and wildlife authorities in various African states.

"The existence of ivory stocks in range states poses security and law enforcement problems, but it needs to be regarded as an economic and political issue of major importance as well," said Tom Milliken, Director of TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.

So far, the project has taken Milliken or his staff to the warehouses of Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Cameroon and Malawi. Data has also been collected for Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The stockpile in Uganda may be next.

Some countries have well-defined systems of identifying their ivory and invest routinely in ivory protection and storage. But in other countries, such as Cameroon, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Tanzania, stocks are far from secure and government ivory has disappeared. Thieves broke into Tanzania's strongrooms in 1993 and made off with more than 300 ivory tusks.

TRAFFIC's work could assist in security of the stockpiles. The data recorded on a stolen tusk could help identify it, for example, once it resurfaced elsewhere. The project could also help distinguish between legal and illegal ivory in the future.

The project has revealed other complications posed by inadequate storage facilities for ivory. Sudan's stockpile, first registered in 1988 as part of the now defunct CITES Ivory

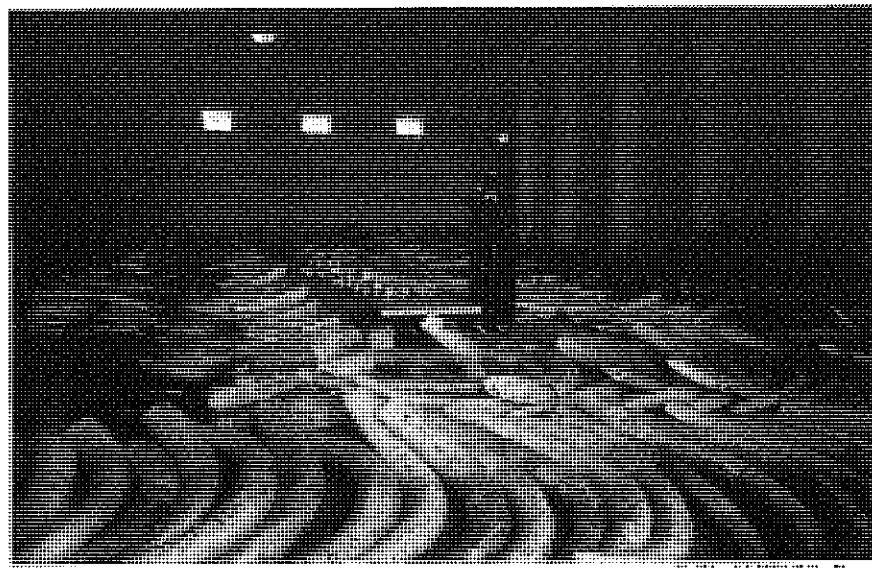
Export Quota System, has lost almost 15 per cent in weight due to moisture evaporation caused by the dry climate.

"Just to weigh and mark Sudan's 10,874 tusks took two weeks of hard labour," Milliken said. "Some tusks were so brittle that they shattered like glass when inadvertently dropped."

And the size of the stocks is far from constant. TRAFFIC research shows ivory stocks are growing in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia

tonnes and seven countries outside Africa held another 683 tonnes. Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe held about 158-162 tonnes of the continent's total. TRAFFIC estimates that these six African countries now collectively hold at least 249 tonnes, while 13 other countries hold 310 tonnes.

However, there is no data for 18 range states or even current data for seven of the 13 African countries included in the earlier estimate. Further research is likely to show that Africa's ivory stockpiles total some



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and Zimbabwe because of seizures, state management programmes and natural deaths. Each year, many east and southern African countries add at least one, and often up to five or six, tonnes of ivory to their stockpiles.

Conversely, in countries in west and central Africa, laws are inadequate or allow states to immediately dispose of acquired ivory onto local markets, officially or otherwise. Still, in-depth TRAFFIC fieldwork indicates Cameroon, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe collectively hold nearly 100 tonnes.

Further statistics from Milliken indicate that at the time the ivory trade ban took effect in 1990, 13 African countries held at least 271

500 tonnes, according to Milliken.

As stockpiles continue to grow, so has the demand that the issue be addressed. Faced with certain defeat, Sudan withdrew its proposal to transfer its elephant population to Appendix II at the CITES meeting in 1994 and thereby be able to sell its stockpile of ivory. Nevertheless, delegates endorsed an intra-African meeting to discuss stockpiles and other elephant-related issues raised at the meeting.

But the issue of ivory stocks will not be resolved easily. As budgets for conservation continue to decline, pressure is likely to increase for African countries to be able to benefit from all of their natural resources — including their ivory caches.

TRAFFIC team key to bust of smuggling ring

Teamwork between TRAFFIC Oceania and TRAFFIC International played a key role in the successful breakup of an international smuggling ring involving the eggs of cockatoos and exotic birds.

The teamwork followed increased collaboration between the Network and Police and Customs agents in New Zealand, Australia and the UK.

The joint effort began when Crawford Allan, the Enforcement Assistance Officer based in the UK at TRAFFIC International, travelled to Australia to give a presentation at the Australasian Wildlife Law Enforcement Seminar hosted by the Australian Nature Conservation Agency. The agency, which acts as the CITES Management and Scientific Authority in the country, sponsored Allan's visit.

The conference enabled Allan and TRAFFIC Oceania staff to introduce TRAFFIC's work to dozens of law enforcement officers from New Zealand and Australia.

That opportunity evolved into TRAFFIC providing its expertise to a joint Australian, New Zealand and UK investigation tracking the illegal exchange of Australian cockatoo eggs with the eggs of exotic birds, such as South American Macaws and African Grey Parrots, from New Zealand and the UK.

Allan provided the initial tip that enabled the breakup of the ring, in

which smugglers wore special vests with pockets built in to carry and conceal the eggs.

Like the exotic birds and cockatoos themselves, the eggs are prohibited or regulated in international commercial trade under CITES. Australia has also banned export of all native birds since 1960 and import of all exotic wildlife.

Then, raids and arrests began in each country.

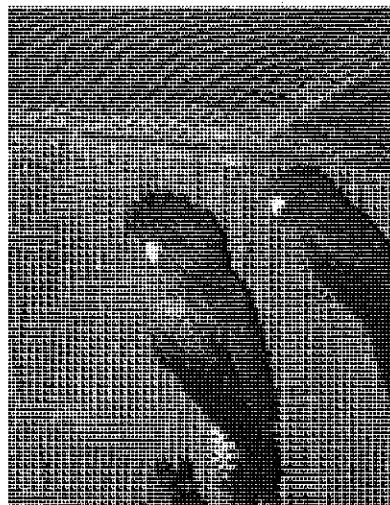
"The arrests sent shock waves through the avicultural community in the UK and elsewhere, signalling to smugglers that illegal practices will not be tolerated," Allan said. "International co-operation between enforcement bodies, combined with increasing use of technology such as microchips and DNA testing, are major obstacles to illicit trade."

In Australia, one egg courier was caught in the airport in Perth literally wearing 29 eggs. The British man, Christopher Owen, became the first person in the ring to be tried. He received a six-month jail sentence and a fine of AU\$1,000. Owen's suppliers were also prosecuted. New Zealander Michael Graves was jailed for five months; Australian William Grumball was jailed for 18 months.

In the UK, Customs and Excise raids, with support from TRAFFIC International, led to charges against five people and the seizure of 16 Australian black cockatoos. Other

detained cockatoos were returned once found to be captive-bred.

The birds were seized from the home of Alan Vaughan Griffiths in South Wales. Griffiths and others allegedly involved have since been charged with conspiracy. Further enquiries are under way in all three



© C. Mackay

One of the 16 black cockatoos seized during the UK raids.

countries, and TRAFFIC continues to assist.

"One strength of TRAFFIC is our international Network, which lets us move information between offices and law enforcement agencies in a timely but discreet manner," said Debra Callister, TRAFFIC Oceania Director. "This case illustrates just how effectively the Network operates and the benefits that can result."

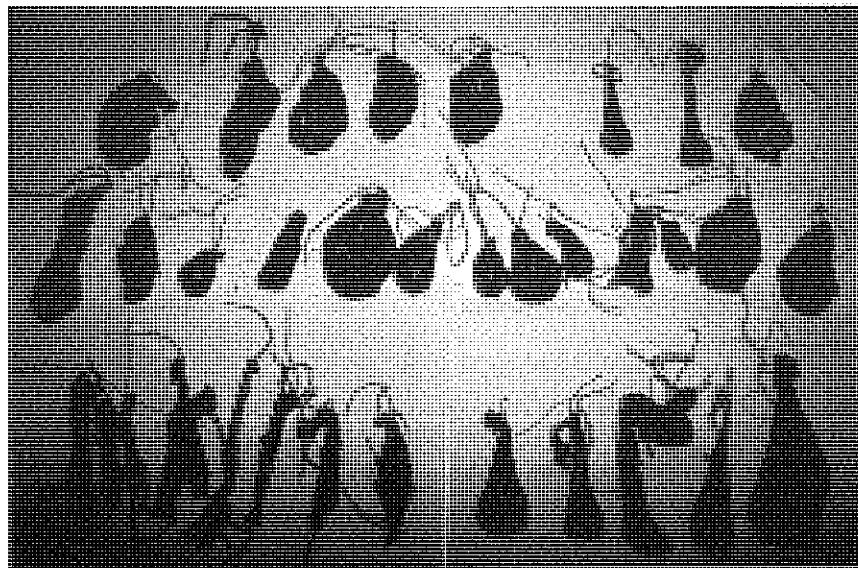
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The complex case of the American Black Bear



The US legislative patchwork governing the trade in American Black Bear parts may serve as a barrier to effective conservation, according to a new TRAFFIC USA study.

Investigations by US wildlife and law enforcement officials indicate sophisticated networks may operate in the trade of American Black Bear gall bladders for use in traditional Chinese medicine. To date, though, there has been little reliable information on the extent of trade and its impact.

TRAFFIC USA is helping efforts to fill that void. Its report, *Status, Management and Commercialization of the American Black Bear*, is the most comprehensive picture yet of the trade — legal and illegal.

"The demand for gall bladders is considerable and Asian bears that have supplied the bulk of the market are in decline," said Debra Rose, co-author of the report. "The medicinal trade has already influenced the conservation status of a number of species. We want to make sure that does not happen to the black bear."

Meeting that goal may seem easy. North America is home to more than 600,000 black bears and all but the Louisiana and Florida populations are considered to be healthy.

International trade in the bear and its parts should also be well regulated. It has been listed in CITES Appendix II since 1992 because its gall bladder is virtually indistinguishable from that of Asia's protected bears.

As TRAFFIC USA found, however, there are obstacles to determining the scale and impact of the trade in black bear parts.

The office began its research for the report in 1992, a time when there were frequent reports in North America of bear poaching and heightened public interest because of the CITES listing. One finding is that the listing has led to surprisingly little new data on the trade, although it requires a permit for any import or export of the species and its parts.

Since the listing, the USA has issued three permits for the export of black bear gall bladders while Canada reports issuing about 10. These low numbers could indicate that there is no significant international commerce in black bear parts after all, although traders in Asia had been increasingly identifying their bear parts as coming from the American Black Bear. The numbers could also indicate that international trade has been simply driven underground.

In the USA itself, TRAFFIC found the trade occurs throughout the bear's range and is increasing. It is prevalent in cities with large populations of Asians, such as Chicago, New York, Portland, Seattle and San Francisco. This commerce,

however, is just as complicated to assess because many gall bladders and other bear parts in the trade come from legally hunted bears and sale of these parts is not always illegal. Regulation and monitoring also varies widely, sometimes not occurring at all.

The research methods included sending a 13-page questionnaire to wildlife regulatory agencies across the USA and Canada. All but the province of New Brunswick replied and many of the 62 respondents provided other documents, such as black bear management plans.

Pulling together the responses, TRAFFIC USA found a complicated patchwork of legislation. For example, 12 states and four provinces and territories allow the sale of black bear gall bladders legally obtained there, but four of these prohibit hunting or do not even have black bears.

The number of bears legally killed in the remaining 12 indicate that more than 11,000 black bear gall bladders could have entered the market legally in 1991 alone. But only three of these states — Idaho, Maine and Saskatchewan — could provide data on the numbers actually sold.

A further 28 states allow the sale of bear parts legally acquired elsewhere. But few of the range states and provinces mark and register black

©W.J. Cook/NPS

bear gall bladders, so proving their legitimacy or determining their origin is often impossible. This and other conflicts in laws could prompt legitimate traders to become smugglers.

TRAFFIC USA concludes that poor monitoring and inconsistent enforcement of the bear gall trade make it difficult to determine if poaching or the trade is posing a significant problem.

As the situation is now, states and provinces with weak wildlife laws and inadequate enforcement or penalties could become laundering centres for bear gall bladders, important because the bear's range is not contiguous and some populations are small.

"We have half the bear population of the whole world," said Andrea Gaski, the Senior Programme Officer at TRAFFIC USA. "I can go into southern Virginia and maybe see a bear. You cannot see wolves or mountain lions,



© J. Lariviere/WWF/BIOS

but you can still see these huge carnivores. It is something we can look to with pride, but we need to address the trade before it becomes a problem."

Sturgeon (continued from page 1)

harvesting, but strictly enforced controls. Today, it is ringed by five states and two independent regions that mostly lack effective fishing controls. The result has been a rapid sturgeon decline in only five years.

The states themselves are reaping the profits of over-harvesting. As a Soviet Republic, Azerbaijan's annual caviar production was restricted to four tonnes. As an independent state, it plans to produce some 30 tonnes.

In addition, Iran is the only state with resources to police fishing. TRAFFIC Europe is receiving reports of widespread illicit caviar trade.

"It is travelling by road and train all around the Caspian Sea," De Meulenaer said. "There is a lot in Astrakhan — the caviar production capital — but other countries like Turkey and Iran are also suffering. There is a lot of smuggling from Iran into Russia and then on to Europe. Tins of caviar are coming here from Yugoslavia and Poland is mentioned

repeatedly."

Since 1990, the number of sturgeon in the Caspian Sea may have declined by two-thirds. Illegal catch accounts for some 90 per cent of all sturgeon taken. In Astrakhan, several thousand poaching incidents were recorded in 1994 and 52 tonnes of illegally produced caviar was confiscated.

Fraud is also taking place, De Meulenaer said. The Beluga Sturgeon constituted only 2 per cent of caviar produced from the Caspian in 1993. Once canned and transported out of Astrakhan, however, 25 per cent had a Beluga label. Even more Beluga caviar may have "appeared" as the caviar continued towards its final market destination, most often the EU or Japan. Illegal caviar can retail at dramatically lower prices, with caviar valued at US\$700 per kilo selling as low as US\$150 per kilo.

The sturgeon of the Caspian Sea already faced ecological stress from pollution. They also lost more than 85 per cent of their breeding ground

Some states have already banned sale of bear gall bladders while there is limited support for such a move at the federal level.

Since publication of the report earlier this year, there have been positive steps addressing some of the problems. New York State adopted regulations requiring all bear parts sold in the state to be tagged, which will help monitoring efforts. The Canadian Province of Saskatchewan banned the sale of black bear gall bladders not registered by 1 July 1995.

The trade in gall bladders has also led TRAFFIC USA into new territory. The scope of its research on the black bear included all of North America, a first for the office since it opened in 1979.

Said Gaski: "Traditionally, we have done more international work. Now, we are looking in on ourselves more and it is a real positive thing, leading into our larger role someday as TRAFFIC North America."

by damming of the Volga River.

Sturgeon in the Amur River are frequently poached and could face a similar blockade to their spawning sites soon. The Chinese Sturgeon and Paddlefish already face such a barrier in the Yangtze River.

Sturgeon experts and conservationists are increasingly looking towards the farming of sturgeon as the only means of saving those left in the wild. Such efforts are under way in the USA and in Europe. Russia itself has long supplemented the population in the Caspian Sea with larvae from hatcheries. To date, 19 species have been bred successfully.

But this has had an insignificant impact on the over-harvesting of sturgeon in the wild. Aquaculture without regulation and monitoring of trade in wild, threatened sturgeon serves only caviar connoisseurs.

TRAFFIC Europe's analysis may well lay the foundation for that link to be finally made, and before it's too late.

Documents and publications

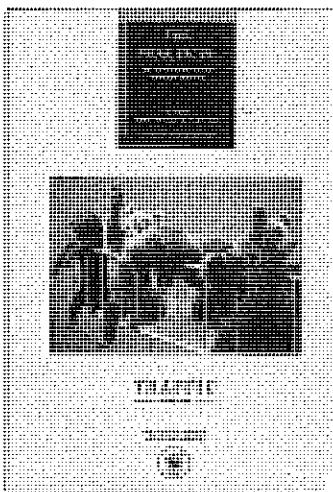
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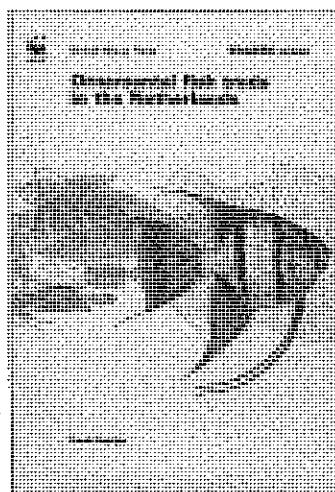
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TRAFFIC DISPATCHES

January 1996



The World Conservation Union

INSIDE:

- *Raids net hundreds of illicit medicines*
- *Pilot intelligence project in Zambia*
- *Buyers beware*
- *Focus on Taiwan*
- *Giving TCM a voice in hope of co-operation*
- *Marine invertebrates at risk in the South Pacific*
- *Publications list*

South Africa's implementation of CITES in need of overhaul

Implementation of wildlife trade controls in South Africa can best be described as *ad hoc*, a situation that enables traders to thwart laws aimed at protecting or regulating trade in both native and exotic wildlife.

One key finding of a new study by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa is that South Africa has yet to adopt national legislation to implement the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and provincial laws fail to fill the gap.

The findings, detailed in the forthcoming report *South Africa's Wildlife Trade at the Crossroads: CITES Implementation and the Need for National Reassessment* by Ashish Bodasing and Teresa Mulliken, come at an opportune, and perhaps critical, time for making improvements because of the restructuring of government and policy currently under way.

"Given the importance of wildlife resources, it is essential trade controls be tightened to prevent over-utilization and perhaps even extinctions", said David Newton, TRAFFIC National Representative in South Africa. "As South Africans debate their new constitution and environmental legislation, they should take this opportunity to ensure that wildlife trade controls are entrenched at the national level and implementation is improved."

The Government of National Unity has recently revised regional boundaries, but the legal framework and administrative structure for controlling wildlife trade remain the same. In addition, the future of CITES administration in the nine new provinces is uncertain, with

signs that further decentralization of government functions could occur —a move that would make CITES implementation less of a priority at the national level than ever before.

The study included examination of existing legislation, administrative procedures and South Africa's CITES annual report data as well as that from other CITES Parties. It also utilized information gained from numerous interviews and TRAFFIC's involvement in more than 120 wildlife trade investigations in South Africa in the past three years. While the report, to be released in February 1996, draws largely upon data from the past, the problems highlighted are still, with rare exception, ongoing.

The research revealed a failure to institute and enforce permit requirements for all CITES-listed species; inconsistent provincial controls on the trade in native wildlife; poor coordination between provinces; lack of enforceable interprovincial wildlife trade controls; an absence of training in CITES issues; little or no inspection of wildlife shipments; and a wide variation in penalties for violators, with some so low as to provide little disincentive to illegal trade in wildlife.

Many species listed in the CITES Appendices, particularly Appendix III, fall outside the purview of the provincial ordinances. Some native species, typically invertebrates and plants, have just as little protection because of the inconsistencies in legislation from one province to another.

Stag beetles, for example, occur in the wild only in the Cape, where

continued on page 7

Update

Sharks on display

The Sydney Aquarium launched a yearlong display in December on shark conservation in collaboration with WWF Australia and TRAFFIC Oceania. The display includes an array of sharks and highlights concerns about the threats they face, such as the worldwide demand for shark fins in Asian cuisine. It also includes text about TRAFFIC's work on the trade in shark and other wildlife products. It is expected to be viewed by more than one million visitors to the aquarium.

Raids net hundreds of illicit medicines

London Metropolitan Police seized several hundred traditional Chinese medicines purporting to contain endangered species from a warehouse in west London on 30 November. TRAFFIC International assisted in the operation. The illegal medicines included products claiming to contain tiger bone, rhinoceros horn, pangolin, Saiga Antelope horn, bear bile and tortoise shell. In addition, bags of American ginseng and boxes of dried orchids were seized.

A related business was also raided in Hong Kong, where two packets of medicines claiming to contain tiger derivatives were found. The representative of the company in the UK may be prosecuted.

USA launches pilot medicinals project

TRAFFIC USA materials on Asian medicinals are being distributed in Los Angeles as part of a US Fish and Wildlife Service public information campaign on endangered species medicines.

The materials include a brochure in English, Chinese and Korean hoped to be distributed by local businesses, community centres and government offices. Information will also be given to teachers. Los

Angeles is home to one of the most diverse and oldest Asian communities in the country.

TRAFFIC addresses magistrates

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa (TESA) addressed magistrates, public prosecutors and other law enforcement authorities at two workshops in Malawi organized by the USAID-funded Protected Areas Conservation Strategy Project.

While attention to preventing poaching and illegal wildlife trade usually focuses on the performance of law enforcement personnel in the field, the judiciary plays an equally important role with prosecutions and sentencing. If penalties fail to serve as effective deterrents, scouts in the field become demoralized as criminals return to operation.

In an address, TESA Director Tom Milliken drew attention to a TRAFFIC analysis of the sentences given in 81 cases involving ivory trade infractions between 1989 and 1994. In comparison to the findings of similar studies in neighbouring countries, Malawi's penalties were extremely lenient.

The workshop analysed Malawi's wildlife legislation enacted in 1992 and made significant progress in raising appreciation of the seriousness of wildlife crime and the need to impose the newly strengthened penal code.

Staff moves

A new Executive Director is being sought for TRAFFIC International after Jorgen Thomsen left the post. Thomsen, who had held this post since 1990, moves to Conservation International in the USA this month after nearly 10 years with the Network. His leadership has been inspiring and he will be sorely missed. Assistant Director Steven Broad will be the Acting Executive Director until further notice.

TRAFFIC Oceania Director Deb Callister has left her position to pursue postgraduate studies. She made an invaluable contribution to TRAFFIC's work during her seven years with the Network. Glenn Sant, Senior Research Officer, is Acting Director. The office also has two new staff members. Jane Holden is the new Research Officer and Kristen Wallaee-Crabbe is Office Assistant.

Gina De Ferrari has joined the Network as Director of TRAFFIC USA. Formerly, De Ferrari served as senior staff on the US House of Representatives Committee with jurisdiction over wildlife matters, such as the Endangered Species Act. Andrea Gaski was promoted to Director of Research.

TRAFFIC Dispatches

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TRAFFIC is the joint wildlife trade monitoring programme of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)* and IUCN-The World Conservation Union. It works globally to ensure that trade in wildlife is at sustainable levels and in accordance with national and international laws and treaties.

The TRAFFIC Network works in close co-operation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

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* WWF continues to be known as World Wildlife Fund in the USA and Canada.

Pilot project under way in Zambia

One of the principal goals of TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa is to strengthen law enforcement of national wildlife trade controls and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) throughout the region. TESA Director Tom Milliken reports on how a TRAFFIC pilot project is helping meet that goal in Zambia and could soon become a model for other countries.

Zambia is one of the few African countries that has developed an independent law enforcement unit specifically charged with addressing wildlife trade infractions. The Anti-Corruption Commission's Species Protection Department (ACC-SPD) has established an impressive record since its creation in May 1990 and stands out as one of Zambia's remarkable institutions.

With funding provided through the US Fish and Wildlife Service's African Elephant Conservation Fund, TESA began a collaborative, capacity-building project with the ACC-SPD in 1994 to enhance its management of critical intelligence information and other data.

Under the direction of TESA Programme Officer Ashish Bodasing, the TRAFFIC Intelligence Information System has been developed and integrated into the daily operations of the ACC-SPD.

Based upon a computerized database holding a wide range of information gathered during past operations, the purpose of the system is to make timely, up-to-date

cross-referencing of all intelligence data an integral part of the ACC-SPD's work.

"By making the wealth of information gleaned from the past a proactive element in current operations, this system holds the potential to greatly enhance the success of law enforcement investigations and prosecutions", said Bodasing who has made five trips to the Lusaka-based ACC-SPD so far.

To assess the effectiveness of the project, TESA organized a midterm evaluation facilitated by Hasan Moinuddin at the Lechwe Lodge in Kafue, Zambia. Three TESA representatives and six people from the Anti-Corruption Commission, including Director of Operations Isaac Mbewe and Edwin Sakala, the Chief Investigations Officer, participated in the evaluation.

The workshop evaluated the project's five key areas: procurement and installation of hardware; design and implementation of the system; provision of appropriate training; the ACC's intelligence gathering system; and project management.

While a number of implementation problems were isolated that negatively impacted on the project's sustainability, corrective measures were identified and are being implemented.

In addition, detailed work plans covering all aspects of the operation were developed, establishing clear goals and objectives for all players during the next 12 months.

In a letter to TESA, Mbewe "found the workshop to be of tremendous value and all those who participated are busy working on the work plan. Because of the importance of the system, we feel that there is a need for (the TESA) team to continue to contribute to it."

Paul Russell, original founder of the SPD and the current Director of Training and Human Resource Development, added: "Those officers involved in operations are going to appreciate the value of the system as an important aid to their investigations. It is an extremely worthy project, and one which can be emulated by other law enforcement institutions regionally." ■

TRAFFIC,WWF warn tourists to beware of buying endangered species products

The TRAFFIC Network and WWF offices around the globe called in December for tourists to beware of buying products made from endangered species.

The warning came as many people prepared to travel for Christmas or the winter holidays. It coincided with the release of a TRAFFIC guide on what *not* to buy in 20 popular tourist destinations.

In many cases, wildlife and wildlife products can be legally offered for sale in destination countries, but bringing these products home can often require a special permit or be

illegal under national or international laws and treaties. By buying unwisely tourists can unwittingly become part of a trade that is illegal and threatens many species in the wild.

The guide includes dozens of tips on products to be cautious about buying, such as ivory trinkets, coral jewellery, decorative sea turtle shells and certain snake and lizard skins products. The destinations included in the guide span the world, from Turkey to Argentina.

The TRAFFIC Network is spearheading or participating in similar



campaigns targeted at travellers in Australia, Kenya, the UK, USA and elsewhere. ■

Interview: focus on Taiwan

Despite decades of political isolation, Taiwan has emerged as a major economic force in the Asia-Pacific as well as an important market for wildlife and wildlife products, including endangered species. Taiwan became the focus of international attention in 1994 with the US imposition of trade sanctions because of Taiwan's role in the illegal trade in rhino horn and tiger bone. The sanctions were lifted less than one year later in acknowledgment of the progress made. Marcus Phipps, TRAFFIC's National Representative in Taiwan talks with TRAFFIC Dispatches about the role of TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei in Taiwan, recent successes on the conservation front and the challenges that remain.

Dispatches: What can you tell us about the wildlife in Taiwan?

Phipps: As one might expect on an island once known as "Formosa" or the Beautiful Isle, there is a rich diversity of flora and fauna. The island is home to 61 species of mammals, over 400 species of birds, (about 40% resident), 92 species of reptiles, 30 species of amphibians, 140 species of freshwater fish and an estimated 50,000 species of insects, according to the Council of Agriculture. It also supports over 4,000 species of vascular plants and six forest types, all in an area less than 36,000 square kilometres.

Dispatches: Is there any legislation protecting the wildlife?

Phipps: The Cultural Heritage Preservation Law was the primary legal instrument for wildlife protection prior to 1989. It mandated the creation of a nature reserve system and designated 11 species of rare plants and 23 of rare animals for protection. However, protection given to individual species, particularly non-native, was inadequate.

In 1989, the situation changed substantially with the introduction of the Wildlife Conservation Law, which classified 1,045 species of native and exotic fauna under three levels of protection: endangered; "rare and valuable"; or as "requiring conservation measures". The Law includes most animal species listed in Appendix I and some listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). However, it applies only to fauna and there is still no legislation that protects rare or endangered plant species other than the

Cultural Heritage Preservation Law.

Dispatches: What types of activities does TRAFFIC undertake in Taiwan?

Phipps: TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei was established in 1991 with the co-operation of a local organization, the Society for Wildlife and Nature. We engage in investigations of the trade in specific species, with the best example being our 1992 study of the market for rhino horn, *The Horns of a Dilemma: The Market for Rhino Horn in Taiwan*. This type of research, especially on animal products that are utilized in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), is still an important part of the office's work programme. However, perhaps even more important is the role we play in facilitating communication between Taiwan and the international community.

This role is linked to Taiwan's political isolation and consists of two parts. The first is as a liaison between Taiwan authorities and the CITES Secretariat, national CITES Management Authorities and even other international organizations.

The second part, less formalized, includes communicating with local stakeholders such as the TCM community and NGOs. A great deal of our work involves translating into Chinese and disseminating international conservation information; commenting on domestic legislative and regulatory initiatives; training government personnel; and producing materials for the training of enforcement officers. In other words, capacity-building is a major component of our work.

Dispatches: What is the most challenging aspect of TRAFFIC's work

in Taiwan?

Phipps: On a strictly technical level, the most challenging aspect of our work is to encourage the government to adopt necessary legal measures to adequately implement CITES. Current legislation goes part way, but there are still certain gaps, especially between the domestic list of protected animals and the CITES Appendices and the lack of adequate protection for the rare and endangered plants.

On an interpersonal level, reconciling the different cultural contexts in which the relationship between man and natural resources is viewed is challenging in the extreme. Many of the terms of reference that we as a conservation organization take for granted are new and alien here. It is useful being confronted with these differences almost daily because it forces you to think issues through time and time again.

Finally, basic monitoring of markets for animal species, including non-protected species, is difficult now as well. International criticism and the decision of the USA to sanction Taiwan under the Pelly Amendment have made wildlife trade issues very sensitive here.

Dispatches: The international community has heard little about the changes that led to the lifting of the sanctions in June 1995. How has the situation on the ground changed since 1994?

Phipps: Taiwan's efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade have focused on three major areas: the legal framework, enforcement and public education.

The 1989 Wildlife Conservation Law had a number of shortcomings and loopholes. It lacked effective

punishment for holders of unregistered endangered species, whether live or products; it was not tough enough on wildlife smuggling; and it contained no punishments for the individuals or companies claiming their products contained endangered species unless the contents could be proven.

The revised Wildlife Conservation Law, one of the strictest in Asia, took effect in October 1994. The violators now face up to five years in prison and fines up to US\$60,000. The punishment for professional offenders is even more severe: up to seven years in jail and US\$100,000 in fines. Punishable offences include smuggling protected species or their products; poaching protected animals; display with the intent to sell; and falsely labelling merchandise as containing protected wildlife or its products.

The Pelly process provided the medium for the biggest public awareness campaign possible. The general public here is now well aware that wildlife conservation is an important international issue. But awareness does not equal understanding. The impression that the general public has, including many in the government, is that conservation is the same as protection. The principles of sustainable use have been lost in the controversy created by the Pelly sanctions.

Dispatches: Did TRAFFIC play a role in these changes?

Phipps: TRAFFIC East-Asia-Taipei has concentrated on communicating the objectives and mechanisms of CITES and other international wildlife conservation efforts to government officials and other interested groups here. The office is frequently asked to advise on various international conservation policies and to comment on domestic legislative and regulatory measures. We were often consulted by the government as it sought to understand and meet criteria set by the USA for lifting of the Pelly sanctions.

Dispatches: TRAFFIC's own research has shown that legislation is just the first step. Are enforcement

initiatives under way?

Phipps: In 1993, the government set up a six-member unit to take charge of police investigations into wildlife crimes. The local police and customs officers also increased efforts to crack down on wildlife smuggling.

A proposal has been set before the Cabinet to create a special section within the National Police Administration that would focus on issues relating to wildlife. These efforts appear to have had an impact as the number of cases of wildlife smuggling uncovered have decreased. However, in many ways, the easy work has been done. The publicity and increased vigilance by authorities generated by the sanctions has likely discouraged opportunistic and occasional smugglers. But this still leaves experienced professionals who will be harder to apprehend.

Uncovering these people will take a lot of time and skill as evidenced by a recent Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau case that took months to bring to a close and involved the efforts of more than 40 investigators. These efforts led to the arrest of three individuals and the seizure of NT\$100 million (about US\$4 million) worth of ivory and rhino horn in central Taiwan.

In this context, the term "enforcement initiative" requires a broad definition to include inter-agency co-operation, communications and training. TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei took part in the initial inter-agency taskforce that was created at the cabinet level to combat illegal wildlife trade. In September 1994, we also held a workshop on CITES implementation attended by over 30 participants from relevant government agencies.

The office is also involved in preparing Chinese-language training and identification materials. These include a CITES briefing book; a Chinese translation of the Canadian Wildlife Service's *CITES Identification Guide - Birds*; and an introduction to wildlife trade issues that are of specific concern to Taiwan for enforcement officials.

Dispatches: How are these changes

perceived by the TCM community?

Phipps: For several years now, the TCM community has felt itself under siege and complained of being made a scapegoat by both the government and the conservation NGOs. They have repeatedly stated that conservation groups do not understand the concepts and practice of TCM. This is, in large part, true.

It is also true, however, that the TCM community in Taiwan has limited understanding of CITES and its objectives, as well as some of the conservation problems posed by commercial use of wildlife. A good example of this is the widespread belief that captive-breeding is somehow a panacea that can remove threats to medicinal species endangered in the wild.

TRAFFIC East-Asia-Taipei, in co-operation with the Council of Agriculture and Department of Health, produced 10,000 copies of a 16-page introduction to wildlife conservation issues related to TCM. The booklet has been mailed to all of the registered TCM practitioners in Taiwan. In addition, a number of presentations have been given to different TCM associations around the island to discuss the impact of CITES and domestic legislation on TCM. From these meetings, we have noted increasing recognition on the part of TCM practitioners that this issue will not go away and that a more co-operative relationship needs to be developed between TCM practitioners, conservationists and the authorities.

Dispatches: Taiwan's political status prevents it from joining CITES and other international wildlife conventions. How does this affect the government's efforts to understand and get assistance with international wildlife trade controls?

Phipps: Taiwan is not recognised as a sovereign political entity by the United Nations or the majority of UN member states. As a result, it is unable to participate formally in UN-related organizations or treaties like CITES and is also excluded from organizations such as Interpol. This has meant Taiwan has had to develop other informal

channels to communicate or participate.

This has created difficulties and advantages. For many years, the activities of Taiwan's wildlife traders were largely ignored and Taiwan was not called to task for its failure to follow international practice.

This changed dramatically during the late 1980s and early 1990s as Taiwan's economic importance grew and made it impossible to ignore. Suddenly, the international community, notably the CITES Standing Committee and the US government, were demanding that Taiwan act like a responsible state, while refusing to acknowledge it as a state. This was an incredibly frustrating experience for both the government and the people of Taiwan.

Having said that, the international conservation arena is not the forum to deal with the Taiwan/People's Republic of China issue. The conservation issues are complicated enough without further politicization. It is also important not to let debate over fairness of international pressure overshadow the conservation issue underlying it.

As late as June 1995, only two weeks before President Clinton's announcement lifting the ban, a Taiwanese national, reputed to be a major rhino horn dealer, was arrested in northern India for possession of rhino horns with intent to sell. Neither the imposition nor the lifting of the sanctions should obscure a need for sustained efforts to control trade in endangered species and their products in Taiwan.

Although many observations have been made on the negative impact of the Pelly sanctions on Taiwan's international image, the sanctions have not been without a positive influence. Along with the sanctions, the US government offered technical assistance to agencies involved in controlling the wildlife trade in Taiwan. International conservation agencies have recognized the need for participation by NGOs from Taiwan to compensate for its lack of political status.

Dispatches: The trade in tiger and rhino parts has dominated reports

about wildlife trade in Taiwan. What other utilization of wildlife occurs or is of concern?

Phipps: Actually, rhino horn and tiger bone play a very minor role in TCM but rhino horn, in particular, has important symbolic value and is a life-saving drug. Other medicinals are much more likely to be prescribed on a regular basis. Wild-sourced animal-based ingredients of immediate concern include Saiga Antelope horn and bear gall bladder. Species that require more investigation include seahorses and freshwater turtles and tortoises. We have not even started to look at plant species yet. There is no shortage of work to be done on the TCM front.

However, TCM is only one form of wildlife consumption: there are many others. Fisheries issues are of increasing concern around the globe and Taiwan, with a large distant-water fishing fleet, is no exception. Tuna and other commercially important species are the usual target when we think of fisheries issues. However, marine invertebrates, reef fish and molluscs can be extremely lucrative in trade terms while over-harvesting can decimate individual populations and damage habitats. People often do not consider timber and non-timber plant products to be wildlife either, but unregulated trade can pose a threat in this area as well.

CITES-listed species will still be our main concern, but we would like to look beyond levels of consumption and also look at rationale for consumption and the current supply channels. If possible, these should be incorporated into mechanisms designed for regulating consumption to enhance their effectiveness. The ideal, of course, would be self-regulation that would eliminate the need for future CITES listing in the first place.

Dispatches: The Board of Foreign Trade in Taiwan and the Taiwan Council of Agriculture have expressed concern about the impact of unregulated trade in wild orchids on legitimate orchid growers. Is there a role that TRAFFIC could play in assessing this trade?

Phipps: Trade in plant species poses a different problem from trade in fauna and a different approach is required. Smuggling of specimens of rare orchid species for individual collectors occurs, but the main profit is in high-volume sales of artificially propagated plants. CITES recognizes the potential role properly regulated artificial propagation can play in conservation of wild flora.

Our office is encouraging Taiwan authorities to create an orchid nursery registration system. This would encourage nurseries to acquire their parent stock in a legal manner and make it easier to track the origin. It would also provide an opportunity to better regulate the international trade in CITES-listed plant species.

Dispatches: What types of activities does TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei plan for the future?

Phipps: Revision of the Wildlife Conservation Law increased the enforcement efforts and numerous public awareness campaigns have had an effect on those smuggling activities that earned Taiwan the appellation "black hole of wildlife". This does not mean all the problems have been solved, but that Taiwan is more in line with most nations. However, Taiwan's reputation for wildlife smuggling was a long time in the making and will not disappear overnight. It will require a long-term commitment on the part of both government and citizens to continue to make wildlife conservation a priority.

One of our main goals in Taiwan is to see the adoption of a balanced wildlife conservation policy that recognizes both potential benefits and risks involved in trade in plants and animals. An important part of this will be proper implementation of CITES, which we will continue to work towards.

TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei will also continue to monitor the trade in individual species of concern and work with both the government and non-government sectors to improve control of trade in wild plants and animals in Taiwan. ■

CITES implementation *continued from page 1*

their collection and export are banned. In 1994, TRAFFIC began receiving reports that these beetles were appearing in international trade. TRAFFIC found that they lacked protection in other provinces and, therefore, could have been legally exported from there to the international market.

At other times, the lack of co-ordination means that provincial authorities are simply not aware of what is occurring in other provinces. In addition, absence of internal borders means that interprovincial trade controls exist only on paper.

These flaws enable knowledgeable dealers to "province hop", purposefully conducting wildlife trade in one province that would be illegal in another. In one case, an application to import an Appendix II Saker Falcon was denied by one province but then approved by another.

A common problem with all of the provincial ordinances is that the power to grant and accept permits for trade in CITES-listed species is discretionary: nothing in the texts binds the permit-issuing authorities to comply with the conditions of the Convention. Any statutory obligations to verify the validity of permits issued by foreign governments are absent as well.

Adequate staff and resources are pivotal to effective implementation of the Convention. However, none of the provinces assigns CITES responsibilities to staff on a full-time basis or provides training courses on complexities of the Convention and species identification problems. Access to information is poor.

The study identified numerous flaws in South Africa's regulation of trade in species protected under the Convention. For example, any recorded international commercial trade in wild-caught Appendix I species should be minimal as they are banned from such trade except under exceptional circumstances. Yet with respect to live Appendix I animals, authorities issued permits

for trade in 533 mammals, 174 birds, 67 reptiles and 16 amphibians collected in the wild or for which the origin was stated as "unknown" from January 1991 to April 1995.

In the case of the Cheetah, au-



ANNE ELLIOTT/NP/DFID

thorities allowed the import of 85 Cheetahs and the export of 110 in this period. Thirty imports were for commercial purposes, which could violate CITES in the absence of mitigating circumstances. The purpose for importing 20 others was not stated at all.

Twenty-two of the Cheetahs were imported for "breeding purposes", only allowed if the export was not detrimental to the wild population and the import not primarily for commercial purposes. However, one importer of six wild-caught Cheetahs from Namibia in 1992 may have simply restocked a hunting concession because permits for the export of 17 trophies, including seven Cheetahs by the same person, were granted during the period. Perhaps more telling is that the person received export permits for two Cheetah trophies within eight days of receiving the Cheetah shipment from Namibia.

TRAFFIC's research indicates that enforcement of wildlife trade

controls at the borders needs to be improved as well. South Africa commits few, if any, enforcement personnel to this front line defence against illegal wildlife trade. Customs personnel are usually present

at the major ports of entry, but permanent staff are only at 16 of South Africa's nearly 100 international entry and exit points. Authorities are often unable to confirm claims of captive breeding or properly identify species in trade with those on documents.

Recent cases of illegal wildlife shipments successfully entering the country involved rare orchids from Southeast Asia, parrots from West Africa and Indonesia, and crocodile skins from Zaire. In 1994, incidents of illegal wildlife shipments exported from South Africa involved tortoises, cycads, Purple-crested Turacos and one tonne of ivory.

Among African nations, South Africa has long been considered a leader in wildlife management and conservation. However, its attention to wildlife trade in general and CITES in particular has not been of the same standard.

"South Africa is at a crossroads", TESA Director Tom Milliken said. "This report will hopefully point the way forward to ensure that CITES is properly implemented in the future."

TRAFFIC recommends adopting national legislation for uniform legal cover and regulation of trade in all CITES-listed species, including their parts and derivatives.

Other recommendations include development of a national administrative structure for wildlife trade, which would need to also include commitment of adequate financial and human resources to implement CITES in the country.

TRAFFIC also recommends a co-ordinated law enforcement structure and strategy to combat illicit trade. Among issues to address would be a law enforcement working group and limiting the number of ports of entry for all wildlife shipments. ■

Unprecedented meeting gives TCM specialists a voice and could lead to co-operation

by Judy Mills, Director, TRAFFIC East Asia

TRAFFIC East Asia hosted a ground-breaking forum recently between those wishing to use endangered species as traditional Chinese medicines and those who wish to conserve those species in the wild.

The International Symposium on Traditional Chinese Medicine and Wildlife Conservation, co-hosted by the Hong Kong Agriculture and Fisheries Department and funded by the Rufford Foundation in the UK, brought together delegates and observers from around the world in Hong Kong.

The main aim of the symposium was to enlist traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) specialists in efforts to dissuade the unsustainable

Department of Health.

The pre-symposium fora enabled TCM specialists to acquaint themselves with the many facets of the international controversy over the use of endangered species' parts as medicine. In addition, the seminars encouraged airing of the TCM communities' grievances about wildlife conservation, in hope of moving forward to even more constructive exchanges at the symposium.

Topics of discussion included the pros and cons of farming medicinal wildlife, the value of *in situ* wildlife conservation, use of substitutes and the concept of sustainable use.

The 22 delegates for the symposium itself came from TCM communities in China, Japan, Hong

pation, allowing TCM specialists, for the first time ever, to be at the centre of an international forum on how wildlife conservation affects TCM and how TCM affects wildlife conservation. Interpretation was provided simultaneously in English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

Delegates repeatedly stated that the West does not understand TCM. They based this assertion, in part, on the West's call for a ban on all trade in rhino horn, used in TCM as a cure for life-threatening fever. They cited the "insulting" propensity of Westerners to claim that the primary use of rhino horn is as an aphrodisiac.

A delegate from China's State Administration for Traditional Chinese Medicine stated that "TCM is not superstition", which she felt is the West's perception of TCM. TCM is based on empirical evidence gathered over thousands of years, she said, although "empirical" in a sense different from the understanding of the term in the West. Most of China's 1.2 billion people also believe in and use TCM.

While there seemed to be a consensus that conservation of wild medicinal species would be in the best interests of TCM, delegates were also adamant that Western ideals should not legislate the East's morality or its health-care choices.

Delegates noted an increasing demand for TCM in the face of diminishing supplies of raw materials. Some blamed the increasing instances of scarcity on what they felt were over-protective measures imposed by wildlife conservationists, rather than a depletion of wild populations. Some understood that wild medicinal species are still plentiful in China, despite China's huge and long-standing consumption of TCM. Others noted how choices of wildlife medicinal derivatives had decreased significantly, but they blamed "environ-

"The Hong Kong Government hopes that this unprecedented forum marks the beginning of a joint venture that will ensure the survival of endangered wildlife and the practice of traditional Chinese medicine."

— Gordon Siu, Hong Kong Secretary of Economic Services

use of endangered species as medicine. TRAFFIC East Asia's research had shown that TCM specialists felt victimized by bans on the use of rhino horn and tiger bone, two of TCM's most revered ingredients. The resulting resentments alienated this important wildlife-user group from co-operating in the responsible use of wildlife derivatives. Such co-operation is said to be essential to prevent endangering other plants and animals of medicinal value.

To make the October symposium as useful as possible, TRAFFIC East Asia held pre-symposium seminars in Beijing and Hong Kong, and conducted a series of presentations for Taiwan's TCM specialists with the support of the

Kong and Singapore.

The 50 observers included TCM specialists from China, Hong Kong and South Korea, authorities from China and Hong Kong; staff from various TRAFFIC offices, the CITES Secretariat and the CITES Animals Committee; and conservationists representing IUCN, WWF, the Asian Bureau of Conservation and the Conservancy Association. Others included representatives from the University of Hong Kong Department of Zoology and Hong Kong's Chinese Medicinal Materials Research Centre as well as advertising and communications specialists.

The composition of delegates and observers maximized Asian parti-

mental changes" rather than overconsumption in TCM.

Delegates from China said that not all medicinal species remain plentiful in China but many do, in part, because 40 per cent of China's annual needs for medicinal wildlife are met from farmed or propagated specimens. They said farming and propagation had not only stabilized supplies but also stabilized prices.

Some delegates insisted that wildlife's only value is as a resource for use by humans: banning wildlife from human use renders it useless to humanity and takes away its value. The way to increase the value of wildlife, they argued, is to offer economic incentives for farming and propagation of it.

The delegates repeatedly said that "bans do not work". They do not work, they said, because blanket bans cause hoarding by profiteers, wealthy people are still able to buy the banned products on the black market and bans deny the use of "irreplaceable" medicines that are used in TCM.

They favoured strict government regulatory schemes for endangered wildlife medicinals rather than bans. Some suggested that government price controls on the limited legal supplies of parts from endangered species would eliminate profiteering. Other delegates at the

symposium suggested limiting frivolous use of any endangered species' derivatives to allow for use in emergency situations.

They were willing to give "breathing space" to wild species in order for them to have time to recover in the wild, but this "breathing space" would have to come in the form of regulation rather than prohibition if it were to enjoy full co-operation.

Delegates also suggested that their consumption of endangered species' derivatives is exaggerated by wildlife conservationists. They claimed that if their annual needs for endangered species were accurately documented, the world would see their contribution to depletion of wild species as minimal, perhaps making way for trade under a quota system.

Several speakers emphasized that they are health-care providers and not criminals but bans on life-saving wildlife medicinals "forced" them into breaking the law.

However, it was clear that some of these people were ignorant of how to trade legally in species listed on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) or unwilling to use the legal means that are available to do so. International commercial trade in Appendix II species is al-

lowed with a permit.

A Hong Kong observer who researches TCMs suggested creation of an international forum that could clinically test TCM ingredients so that more effort could be placed on supplying efficacious materials, while ineffective wildlife medicines could be dropped from the TCM pharmacopoeia. He pointed out that ingredients have been added and discarded from the pharmacopoeia since the inception of TCM 5,000 years ago.

There seemed to be consensus among all representatives of the TCM industry that TCM should be brought into the arena of wildlife conservation, particularly in regard to the CITES process. They asked to be better informed of wildlife conservation issues that may affect TCM and said that they, in turn, would be willing to help better document TCM's part in the depletion of wild species.

As a means of maintaining and nurturing the dialogue established at the ground-breaking symposium, TRAFFIC East Asia will publish a multilingual newsletter about wildlife conservation issues for TCM communities throughout East Asia.

The proceedings of the symposium are expected to be published by TRAFFIC East Asia in the first half of 1996. ■

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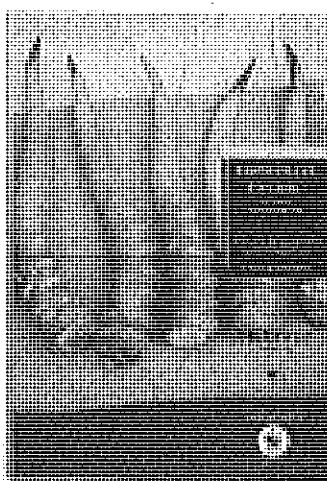
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Oceania launches report on invertebrates

Near-shore marine resources play a significant role in the lives of South Pacific islanders since they are collected easily and, in some cases, can carry a high value. Like other marine resources, they are also in high demand on the global market and, therefore, subject to over-harvesting.

A TRAFFIC Oceania study has found that few South Pacific nations have adequate management controls in place for the marine invertebrate species in high demand such as Trochus, Green Snail, pearl oyster, bêche-de-mer and giant clams.

In the case of bêche-de-mer, also known as sea cucumber or Rori and Trepang in the South Pacific, there is an urgent need for adequate management but to date only Fiji and Vanuatu regulate harvesting, according to Glenn Sant, Acting Director of TRAFFIC Oceania.

Often stocks have been over-exploited across much of the South Pacific. In the Solomon Islands, the western province stocks provide 50 per cent of the nation's production and are in severe decline. In Fiji, the status of stocks is critical.

In the South Pacific, bêche-de-mer are consumed on a subsistence basis and widely exported, mostly to Asia where they are considered a delicacy. South Pacific exporters include New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea. The major importers include Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan, with secondary markets in

Beijing, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Sydney and elsewhere.

The findings, published in the new Species in Danger report titled *Marine Invertebrates of the South Pacific: An Examination of the*



Village farmers settling juvenile clams

lack of adequate information on the domestic use and export of all the species covered in this report is a growing problem, and one that could hinder conservation efforts. In the case of Trochus, which is used in producing mother-of-pearl clothing buttons, reporting of exports from the South Pacific countries is scant or under-reported. In addition, the data that are available cannot reflect the quantities actually collected because a percentage of poor-quality shells are discarded.

Sant, author of the report, recommends restricting the size of bêche-de-mer, giant clams, Green Snail and Trochus species that can be harvested as well as limiting the number of pearl oysters and giant clams that can be taken from the wild.

There also needs to be better reporting of the specific species and quantities that are exported for all of the marine invertebrates in the study. In Fiji, clarification is especially needed of the status of giant clam stocks in light of the quantities that are being exported as exemptions to the existing export ban.

Sant also recommends assessing the ecological effects of introducing aquaculture-produced stock. While widespread throughout the South Pacific, such introductions have yet to be fully researched and, therefore, cannot be viewed as a panacea to wild stock depletions. ■

Trade, also include that demand for pearl oysters has led to extreme pressure on wild populations. In Fiji, few Black-lip Pearl Oysters are left in the wild and Gold-lip Pearl Oyster is now extinct.

Japan, a significant consumer with annual imports of up to 600 tonnes, increased its share of imports of these South Pacific pearl oysters from about 30 per cent in 1990-1992 to 52 per cent in 1993.

One finding is of great concern: a

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TRAFFIC DISPATCHES

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In danger: the USA's Endangered Species Act

by Gina De Ferrari, Director, TRAFFIC USA

Political changes in the USA may result in a serious weakening of the existing environmental laws. One of the most ominous spectres is the fate of the Endangered Species Act, the country's pre-eminent law on wildlife and the environment.

To date, 956 native species and 560 "foreign" species are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which was adopted in 1973. In regard to the native species, the Act protects habitat, prohibits "take" and regulates trade. The protection for the species found outside the USA is limited to varying degrees of import restriction.

The Act has long been criticized by people who believe their right to use natural resources is unfairly constrained by its provisions. The anti-ESA rumblings of hunters, shrimp fishermen, water and power authorities, timber companies, real estate agents, cattlemen and private property advocates, which had risen to a crescendo in recent years, have been met with sympathy by the new congressional leaders. These new legislators assumed their positions after the Republican Party won the majority of seats in the November 1994 elections.

With the full support of these new leaders, Congress enacted in April 1995 a moratorium on listing species under the ESA. Only during last-minute budget negotiations in late April 1996 did the Congress finally agree that the moratorium could be waived.

The one-year moratorium had left more than 250 species ready for listing by the US Fish and Wildlife Service still on the waiting list.

Among the waiting are the Pacific Coho Salmon *Oncorhynchus kisutch*, the Florida Black Bear *Ursus americanus floridanus* and dozens of species of plants.

Key among the new leaders are Alaskan Republican Congressman Don Young and Idaho Republican Senator Dirk Kempthorne. Young became Chairman of the House Committee on Resources, which has jurisdiction over the ESA, and Kempthorne took the helm of the Senate subcommittee overseeing endangered species.

Both Congressmen have since introduced legislation to "fix" those provisions of the Endangered Species Act that they believe overburden business interests.

TRAFFIC USA and WWF US, in co-operation with other US non-governmental groups, undertook in 1995 an analysis of the proposed legislation and, more specifically, its potential impact upon how the USA approaches the conservation of endangered and threatened wild-life species at home.

The analysis, which provided key data and information for WWF US staff to testify at congressional hearings, found that both proposed bills would weaken protection for native endangered species and their habitats within the USA and would seriously dilute the effectiveness of the Act's provisions that relate to foreign species and international trade in wildlife.

The analysis' key findings include that Congressman Young's bill—H.R. 2275, the Endangered

continued on page 6

INSIDE:

- **Bearish weather with partners**
- **TRAFFIC: moving towards the mainstream**
- **On the tail of tiger traders**
- **Scouring red for red-tailers**
- **News on Siberian tigers**
- **The case of the still vast of endangered species**
- **Timber trade under scrutiny**

Working with partners

TRAFFIC continues to work with governments and national agencies around the world.

TRAFFIC Europe-Italy has teamed up with Alitalia, Italy's national airline company, to inform travellers about wildlife products to be wary of buying while visiting other countries.

To date, the collaboration has included production of a video about CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The airline showed the video on all of its international flights for three months, from December 1995 to the end of February 1996.

Staff in Italy plan to broaden their CITES education efforts this year to include the distribution of information about the Convention in four of the country's airports, in collaboration with the Italian CITES Management Authorities.

In India, a TRAFFIC India initiative has led to the formation of a national government committee to co-ordinate enforcement agencies' efforts to protect wildlife and stem illicit trade.

The National Co-ordination Committee is headed by the Additional Inspector General of Forests (Wildlife) in the India Ministry of Environment and Forests. It includes senior representatives from the Central Bureau of Investigation, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Army, Police, Border Security Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the Department of Posts, and the Forest Department.

The Director of TRAFFIC India is also a member of the Committee, which plans to meet quarterly. The Committee held its first meeting in October 1995 and met again in March 1996.

In Germany, TRAFFIC Europe-Germany has established a "round table" with government officials to discuss and initiate joint activities to enforce CITES, also known

as the Washington Convention.

The round table will include representatives of the German CITES Authorities, Customs Headquarters and other government branches. The first project, which was agreed in the inaugural meeting of the round table in January 1996, will be to hold a regional seminar for Customs officers, lawyers and also public prosecutors later this year.

The seminar, titled "Washington and CITES in Germany: What more can we do?", is expected to be a model for similar, future initiatives in other regions of the country.

Staff moves

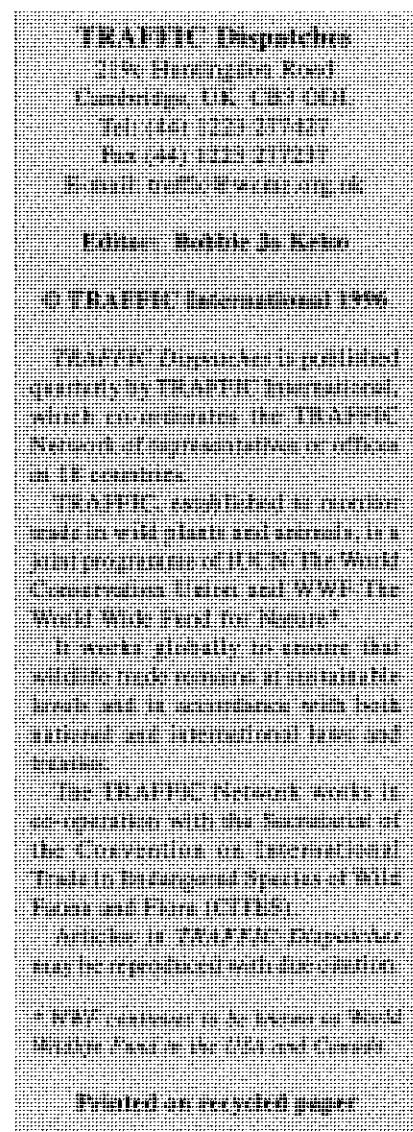
Three people have joined the team at TRAFFIC East Asia. The new Programme Officer, **Samuel Lee**, formerly worked for WWF Hong Kong in environmental policy analysis, marine conservation and public education. Before joining WWF Hong Kong in 1994, he graduated from a multi-disciplinary programme in Australia that brings social research and environmental policy together.

The Administrative Assistant is **Sean Lam**, who earned a degree in Chinese Language and Literature at the University of Hong Kong. She is pursuing a Master's degree in Literacy and Cultural Studies at the same university. **Sue Kang** has been hired as a consultant in South Korea. She has a degree in English and literature from Ewha Women's University in Seoul. TRAFFIC East Asia now speaks all of the region's major languages but Mongolian, including Cantonese, Japanese, Korean and Mandarin. English, too.

At TRAFFIC Europe-Germany, **Roland Melisch** is the National Representative. A biologist, he also serves as WWF Germany's Species Conservation Officer. Formerly, he worked for the Asian Wetlands Bureau-Indonesia Programme. **Lothar Schillak**, his predecessor,

now heads the WWF Germany Temperate and Boreal Forest Section. TRAFFIC Europe also has a new representative in the Netherlands. **Jikkie Jonkman** worked for Greenpeace Spain and Greenpeace Netherlands. She also serves as Species Officer for WWF Netherlands. **Arnold Van Kreveld** is now Forest Officer at WWF Netherlands.

Ximena Buitrón has joined TRAFFIC International as South America Plants Officer. She is based at the IUCN Regional Office for South America in Ecuador. She is a graduate of the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador and holds a degree in biological sciences.



Moving towards the millennium

In March 1996, the Directors General of WWF and IUCN announced the appointment of Steven Broad as the new Executive Director of TRAFFIC International. During over 12 years of association with the TRAFFIC Network, he worked on a wide range of CITES-related issues and illegal trade investigations for the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Unit (now part of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre) before joining TRAFFIC International on its re-establishment as a formal co-ordinating office for the TRAFFIC Network in 1990. He then worked as the Network's investigations co-ordinator, before his appointment as Assistant Director of TRAFFIC International in 1991 and later as the Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia in 1993.

by Steven Broad, Executive Director, TRAFFIC International

Over its twenty year history, TRAFFIC has gained and maintained a place at the forefront of attempts to tackle conservation problems relating to the trade in wild plants and animals.

TRAFFIC has matured greatly in the past five years in particular, following a philosophy of developing strong regional programmes in key parts of the world. The Network's commitment to assisting in the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) remains a major focus, but our activities have diversified enormously, particularly with attention being paid to the complex issues of medicinal trade in wildlife, timber trade and fisheries.

Although funding TRAFFIC's work programmes is never easy, the level of support from various WWF sources has been maintained and the list of TRAFFIC's supporters in this issue of *TRAFFIC Dispatches*

is testament to success in diversifying the Network's funding base. Meanwhile the links with our partner organizations, IUCN and WWF, at regional and international levels are stronger than ever.

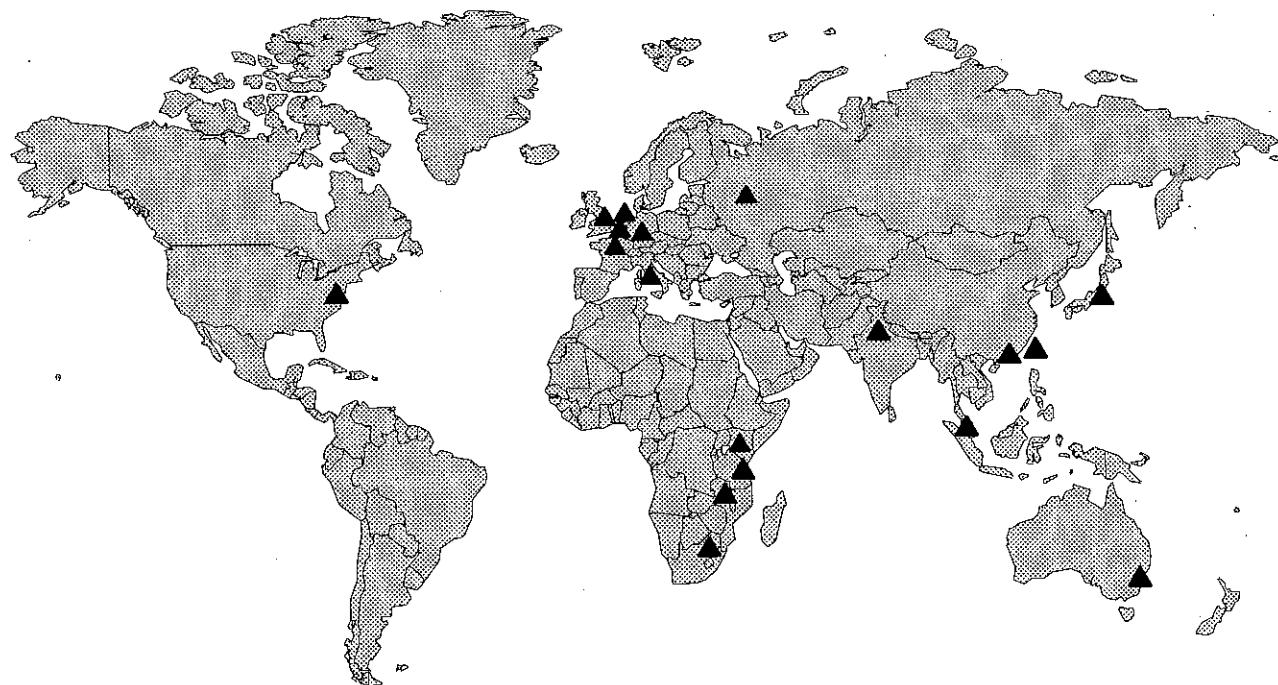
These changes and the very many conservation achievements supported by the Network's efforts in recent years owe a great deal to the energy and vision of Jorgen Thomsen, who served as Executive Director from 1990 to the end of December 1995.

So, where next for TRAFFIC? Aside from the considerable task of managing a highly decentralised organization, directing the Network provides some great challenges for the years leading to the millennium. Ensuring that the current regional programmes continue their impressive work in a focused manner is a primary task, but there is also a clear need to extend TRAFFIC's work back into Latin America, where our regional office was

closed in 1995 because of financial difficulties. Wildlife trade-related conservation problems in West and Central Africa, where TRAFFIC's work has been limited, certainly deserve close scrutiny.

Pursuing major initiatives on the fisheries and medicinal wildlife trade will test TRAFFIC's ability to work effectively in new programme areas. In addition, the challenges facing the implementation of CITES are as great as ever before.

Sadly, the conservation issues that TRAFFIC struggles with will not disappear in the foreseeable future. Increasingly the real test of the organization's effectiveness, and my greatest challenge for the coming years, is to achieve more balance between TRAFFIC's traditional role of demonstrating conservation problems on one hand and a greater involvement in identifying and assisting in the needed development of effective long-term solutions on the other.



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TRAFFIC is working around the globe to document the trade in Tiger products and ultimately help save the remaining Tigers from extinction.

The task is far from simple: Tigers left in the wild may number as few as 5,000 and they face continuing demand for their parts in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Virtually every part of the Tiger has been used in TCM, but the bone remains the most coveted. Tiger bone is commonly used to treat rheumatism, however other indications include weakness and stiffness or paralysis, especially in the lower back and legs.

The trade in Tiger bone is not restricted to Asia. It spans the globe. So does the TRAFFIC Network. During 1995 and the first quarter of 1996, TRAFFIC's market surveys, investigations and enforcement assistance led to many achievements on the conservation front.

TRAFFIC probes uncovered hundreds of manufactured medicines claiming to contain Tiger bone and other wildlife derivatives being sold in Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

In Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, the findings helped lead to police raids and seizures. In the UK, where the most recent raid and seizure took place in March 1996, at least eight of the shopkeepers have since been successfully prosecuted, receiving fines of up to £3,000.

TRAFFIC continues to monitor this illegal trade and is assisting the authorities in identifying smugglers and determining methods of illegal entry for these products. The Network is also developing a comprehensive manual to help Customs officers and other law enforcement officials better identify Tiger bone in trade.

In India, TRAFFIC investigations helped lead to numerous seizures of Tiger bones and skins. The probes also led to the arrest of an important international gang of poachers and uncovered the key smuggling routes between India, Nepal and East Asia.

TRAFFIC continues to be a leading force in identifying poachers and smugglers and stopping this illicit trade in the country, which is home to the world's largest remaining Tiger population.

In Russia, TRAFFIC opened an office in Moscow to help monitor and address the problem of growing and uncontrolled wildlife trade in the region. Political changes in the former Soviet Union have led to reduced funds for conservation and new incentives for illegal trade.

Initial research in Russia indicates that the country has become one of the biggest suppliers to the international medicinal market for wildlife



products, including those from the Tiger. A TRAFFIC probe revealed the export of an array of wildlife products, from the gall bladders of bears to Tiger parts. It also found an extensive domestic trade.

Staff at TRAFFIC Europe-Russia are now working to identify the key trading routes. Such effort is particularly important in the Russian Far East, where the survey found a Tiger skin sold for up to US\$15,000 and a skeleton for US\$5,000. Most of the wildlife products are taken out of the Russian Far East by sea or railway on the Chinese border.

East Asia is a centre of world demand for consumption of wildlife, and another key supplier to the international market. In Taiwan, TRAFFIC staff played a key role in the strengthening of wildlife legislation and controls. In Japan, investigators found Tiger bone wine and pills widely available in retail shops. The Japanese medicine industry has since set up a voluntary registration scheme for trade in these products, but the sales remain legal and staff at TRAFFIC are still pressing for controls.

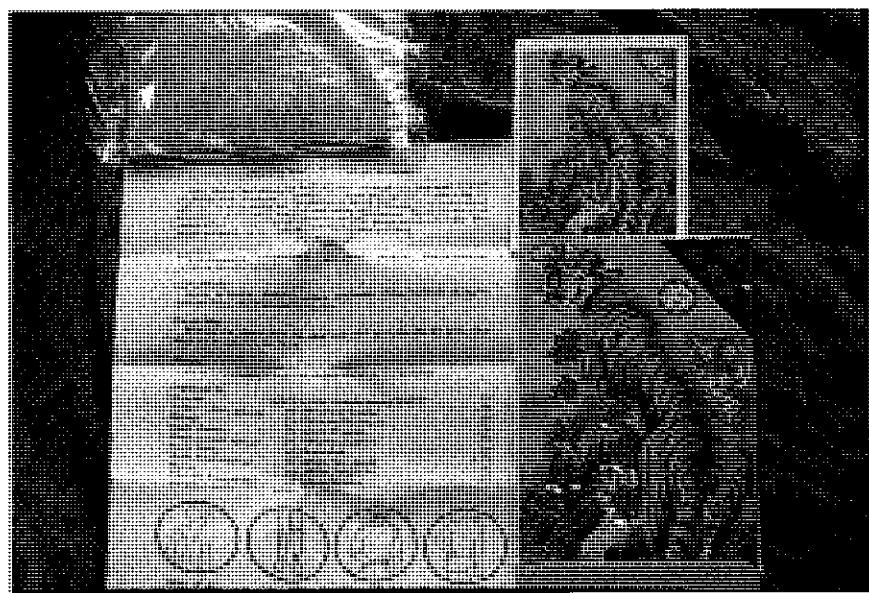
TRAFFIC East Asia's regional office in Hong Kong and the national offices in Japan and Taiwan continue to monitor the region's domestic markets for Tiger bone products. This focus includes China, traditionally the largest user of Tiger bone worldwide.

The Network has also become a leader in seeking support directly from TCM communities for wildlife conservation measures. TRAFFIC East Asia co-hosted the first international symposium to initiate constructive dialogue between wildlife conservationists and TCM specialists in the region. As a means of nurturing the dialogue established there, TRAFFIC East Asia will launch a multilingual newsletter this year about wildlife conservation issues for TCM communities in East Asia.

In Southeast Asia, wildlife medicinals are consumed locally, sold to a growing number of Asian tourists or exported. Field investigations by TRAFFIC of the medicinal trade in endangered species such as Tigers are ongoing in Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam. Examination of the existence of such commerce in Malaysia and Singapore is also a focus.

In the USA, TRAFFIC materials on the use of Asian medicinals are being distributed in Los Angeles as part of a US Fish and Wildlife Service public education campaign.

The city is home to one of the country's most diverse and oldest Asian communities. The materials include a brochure in Chinese, Korean and English that is expected to be distributed by local businesses, community centres and government offices. ■



Killed for a cure: An Indian Tiger *Panthera tigris tigris* (far left) and Tiger bone medicines (left) seized during the raids in the UK, and other countries, the sale of medicines claiming to contain parts of threatened and endangered species is illegal, even if they cannot be proved to actually contain these ingredients.

Crawford Allan/TRAFFIC

In danger: the USA's Endangered Species Act

Continued from page 1

Species Conservation and Management Act of 1995—would make it very difficult for the USA to fulfil its obligations under CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The Convention, which the USA joined in 1975, requires member countries to prohibit or regulate trade in more than 34,000 plants and animals.

Congressman Young's bill would severely limit the authority of federal officials to seize and impound wildlife and wildlife products exported or imported in violation of CITES, if they are not listed under the ESA. However, the bill would also make it more difficult to list any species already in the CITES Appendices by first requiring a

"finding" based on substantial evidence that the Convention does not provide adequate protection for the species in question.

In addition, written consent from relevant foreign governments would have to be obtained before the USA could place a foreign species on the US endangered or threatened species list or issue a regulation for the conservation of a foreign species, including those already listed under CITES. Only an order from the US President could override lack of consent.

The bill would also prohibit the USA from taking any enforcement action based solely on a CITES Secretariat notification or resolution of the 131 Parties to CITES. This restriction would prevent the USA

from acting in a timely fashion in an emergency involving illicit trade in wildlife.

The other bill—S. 1364, the Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1995—was introduced by Senator Kempthorne in October 1995 and contains similar provisions.

The analysis showed that these amendments, if approved, would not only cripple the USA's ability to implement CITES, but also make it difficult for the country to add foreign species to the country's endangered species list.

If these bills had been in effect in 1973, the USA would have had to obtain the concurrence of China, the Soviet Union, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Nepal before listing the Tiger.

The analysis revealed that if a country allowed hunting of any critically

endangered species, the ESA could no longer provide a flat prohibition on the importation of trophies of that species—a change southern African countries have advocated. Instead, Young's bill would create a "rebuttable presumption" that sport hunting of a species allowed under the laws of a range state is beneficial to the survival of that species. As a result, prohibitions would not apply to hunting trophies as long as they are taken and exported in compliance with the laws of the country in question.

Congressman Young's bill was approved in October 1995 by his committee in a 27-17 vote without significant change in the provisions affecting foreign species.

However, the Speaker of the House of Representatives has yet to bring the bill before the full House. Since then, two members of Young's committee, including New Jersey Republican Congressman Jim Saxton who is also Chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans, have introduced moderate bills to amend the ESA. Saxton is among those committee members who voted against Young's bill in October.

In the Senate, no action has yet been taken on the proposed bills. However, Republican Senator John Chafee of Rhode Island is a long-time friend of the environment and Chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, which has jurisdiction over the ESA.

Debate is likely to continue through this year, and possibly into the next. The battle still promises to be an uphill one for environmentalists, but polls show voters are worried that Republicans are too eager to roll back environmental protections and, in an election year, elected officials are leery of unpopular legislative changes. There is reason to hope the proposals to prevent the USA from meeting its international commitments under CITES can be defeated. ■

The ESA at a glance

- Number of listed species: 1,514
- Number of species protected: 855
- Number of foreign species: 500
- The first ever listing: Dugong, dugongidae, fisher, marten, otter, crayfish, insect, plant and snailshell.
- Listed species of native species are covered by separate laws: 112 different species have draft recovery plans.
- Species are listed by scientific name and status of listing.
- The status of 27 percent of the other native species is unknown, primarily because of limited and failing enforcement by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service, July 1995

Rounding up rattlesnakes

An American tradition prompts concern

Mid-March marked the start of "rattlesnake roundup" season in the USA, a time when perhaps 20,000 rattlesnakes are collected for events that are economically and socially important to local communities and those involved in the trade but of increasing concern to conservationists.

Rattlesnake roundups and hunts have been an institution for more than 40 years in at least eight states, according to a new report prepared for TRAFFIC USA. The report, *A Critical Evaluation of Rattlesnake Commercialization: Roundups and the Rattlesnake Trade*, is one of the most comprehensive on this issue to date. It documents the harvest and trade in different parts of the country and includes data from first-hand monitoring of rattlesnake roundups in Texas, New Mexico and Pennsylvania.

Roundups are public events held on weekends. They charge admission and include a rattlesnake show, food concessions and, in some cases, amusement rides and competitions for the longest and most snakes. The snakes at these events are not simply for show: many are destined for the food stands.

The rattlesnake roundups can generate significant revenue. For example, the Sweetwater, Texas roundup brings in annual proceeds of tens of thousands of dollars for charity causes.

The roundups prompt concern because collection of snakes, with rare exception, remains unregulated in the USA. In addition, the growth of a subsidiary trade in rattlesnake curios and manufactured leather products independent from the roundup collection has increased without official control.

Rattlesnakes and their parts are big business in the USA and on the international market. A one-pound Western Diamondback Rattlesnake *Crotalus atrox*, one of four species hunted in the eight states, can sell for US\$21 and the raw skin for



Two roundup participants pose next to a giant statue of the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake outside the Chamber of Commerce in Freer, Texas. More than 70,000 people attend the town's annual roundup, now in its 32nd year.

US\$12. This snake, a mascot for some Texas roundups, is hunted in Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma.

The total rattlesnake trade could involve as many as 125,000 snakes a year. The magnitude is probably driven by the market demand for skins, but additional profits are made from the meat, head, rattles, gall bladders and entrails.

Also of concern are methods for collecting and keeping the snakes, some of which can be ecologically destructive and, in some states, may be harmful to the rattlesnake populations that are exploited year after year.

For example, in Northern Texas and Oklahoma, collectors commonly spray vaporized gasoline deep into rattlesnake dens to force the snakes to emerge, a practice believed to harm the environment and injure or kill other burrowing animals as well. After capture, the snakes are often packed tightly for transport and then display at the roundups, with many crushed to death as a result.

The TRAFFIC report, which was

released in mid-February when the collection of rattlesnakes usually begins, recommends that states regulate the harvest by requiring a licence for commercial collection. In addition, the licence should restrict the size and number of snakes that can be harvested; require the hunters to report on the number, species and location from which the snakes were taken; and regulate handling, transport and treatment of those collected.

Other recommendations include banning the use of gasoline during collection and undertaking further research into the magnitude of trade in the southeastern USA and, in particular, its impact upon the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake.

TRAFFIC USA and WWF US have since recommended that a workshop be convened to discuss issues surrounding the commercial exploitation of rattlesnakes in North America, with hunters, roundup promoters and organizers, snake handling clubs, skin traders, conservationists and both state and federal agencies as participants. ■

Fitzgerald and Painter/TRAFFIC

Looking ahead

Forthcoming publications

The international trade in seahorses

Species in Danger Series, July 1996

The trade in seahorses, both dead and alive, includes many millions of seahorses each year and involves at least 32 countries and territories, from Ecuador to Australia. In addition, this previously unstudied trade appears to be growing and could pose a threat to seahorses.

Seahorses are used in traditional Chinese medicine for a variety of ailments, including lethargy and pain, respiratory disorders such as asthma, and sexual dysfunctions such as impotence. They are also in demand in the aquarium and curio trade.

This report provides a global overview of trade, with emphasis on China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. It presents information on fishing methods, trade routes, the volumes and values of the seahorses in trade, the key players and the various issues of conservation concern.

The plight of the Great Indian Rhinoceros

Species in Danger Series, August 1996

The Great Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* is perhaps the most endangered of India's wild species: the number remaining in the wild is believed to be less than half the number of Tigers and one-tenth the number of elephants.

This rhinoceros is now found only in select pockets of eastern India and Nepal. In India, 77 per cent of the rhinoceros' population is restricted to Kaziranga National Park. While the park is the best protected area for rhinos in India, it is estimated that from 1980-1993 no fewer than 23 were killed by poachers every year. In Manas National Park, once home to the second largest rhino population in the country, the situation of the Indian rhino is extremely grave.

This report by TRAFFIC India examines the upsurge in poaching in recent years; new poaching techniques such as the use of electrocution; and the trading routes for the rhino's horn. It also addresses mortality and population trends of the rhinoceros, where possible.

TRAFFIC East Asia will soon publish its first newsletter on wild-life-conservation for traditional Oriental medicine (TOM) specialists in South Korea, thanks to funding from the TOM industry itself.

Members of the industry in South Korea say that they are in need of more information *in Korean* about how wildlife conservation and TOM affect one another. While those in the English-speaking world may be well informed about the relevant issues, the specialists who do not read English say they have been surprised when the wild medicinal products on which they depend have become endangered. They wish to be kept informed about wildlife conservation issues that may impact TOM in the future.

The Korea Oriental Medicine Association and the Korea Pharmaceutical Traders Association will fund publication and distribution of the Korean-language newsletter in its first year. The premier issue is expected to be published before June 1996. TRAFFIC East Asia staff hope the newsletter will encourage the industry to integrate wildlife-friendly practices into the way they do business.

TRAFFIC staff thank the following supporters for making our recent events possible:

Taxidermist pleads guilty

The case of the "roll call of endangered species"

Sentencing of a taxidermist is expected in May after he pleaded guilty in the UK to illegally importing and exporting some of the world's most endangered wildlife, including the skulls of a Great Philippine Eagle *Pithecophaga jefferi*, Siberian Tiger *Panthera tigris altaica* and Babirusa *Babirousa babyrussa*.

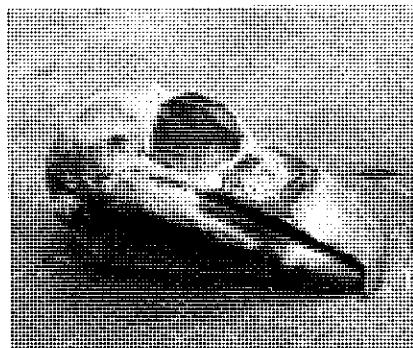
The Dutch taxidermist, Nicolaas Peter Peters, pleaded guilty in March to eight select charges that followed the discovery and seizure of more than 500 specimens from his remote home in Wales during August 1995. Peters could face a maximum sentence of seven years in prison and unlimited fines.

TRAFFIC assisted in the raid, which capped an investigation by Police and Customs, helped by TRAFFIC and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The legitimate face of Peters' business was selling glass eyes for taxidermy. He also apparently ran an import and export enterprise in endangered species for taxidermy.

The find of the Siberian Tiger, Philippine eagle and Babirusa skulls were of particularly great concern. Tigers may number as few as 5,000 today. The status of the Great Philippine Eagle, formerly known as the Monkey-eating Eagle, is even more grave. It is one of the most endangered birds of prey, with perhaps only 50-200 remaining in the wild. The forests of the Sierra Madra mountaius in Luzon are its last remaining stronghold.

The Babirusa is one of the most endangered animals in Indonesia, occurring only in wildlife reserves and national parks in Sulawesi. Its exact population has been difficult to determine because of its timid nature, but was estimated to number only 500-1,000 in 1978.

All three of these animals are prohibited in international trade under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



Philippine Eagle skull

Crawford Allan/TRAFFIC
Lemur *Lemur catta*; five Squirrel Monkeys *Saimiri sciureus*; five Rhesus Macaques *Macaca mulatta*; one Senegal Bushbaby *Galago senegalensis*; five Common Marmosets *Callithrix jacchus*; a Humboldt Penguin *peniscus humboldti*; and three Lesser Flamingoes *Phoenicopterus minor*. In addition, he plead guilty to illegally importing 42 skins of 15 species of Philippine birds. All of the species are prohibited or regulated in international trade under CITES.

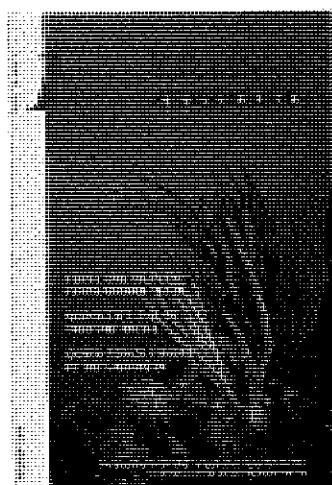
The specimens were among hundreds of others found packed into rooms and freezers at Peters' home near Newtown in the county of Powys—a find likened to a "roll call of endangered species" by Crawford Allan, the Enforcement Assistance Officer at TRAFFIC International, while at the scene. ■

The TRAFFIC Bulletin

Global news on the trade in wildlife resources.

The latest in legislation, investigations and seizures. And, as always, in-depth reports.

- *Concerns about the Queen Conch fishery in the Caribbean*
- *Poaching figures for South Africa's rhinoceroses*
- *Efforts needed to control trade in China's threatened species*
- *Hong Kong fines medicinal shop owner US\$66,000*
- *Trade in Morocco threatens the Mediterranean Spur-thighed Tortoise*



TRAFFIC Bulletin, March 1996

The world's only journal devoted exclusively to wildlife trade issues. **Read it.**

Timber trade under scrutiny

by Nina Marshall, Senior Programme Officer, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa

The timber trade is arguably one of the most significant causes of forest degradation and loss worldwide. Temperate, tropical and boreal forests are all under pressure from both local and international interests because of direct timber exploitation as well as encroachment resulting from logging roads and camps.

Threats to the world's natural forests directly related to timber trade not only include the loss of species and genetic material, but also soil erosion and a decreased ability to

Since 1990, various TRAFFIC offices have carried out research within these three focal areas. The activities to date are diverse, and include in-depth country profiles and analysis of particular species.

Trade reviews of particular note include TRAFFIC India's effort to document the trade in Agarwood *Aquilaria malaccensis*, a tree that occurs in India and parts of Southeast Asia. Its timber is harvested to extract a product resulting from the fungal infestation of the heartwood. Agarwood is regarded as threatened

the trade in hardwoods in Kenya. This study included the collection of information on species in trade, trade routes, markets, the forests where the timber originated and the volume of timber appearing in trade both from Kenyan forests and the neighbouring countries of Uganda and Tanzania.

While Kenya's forest area is shrinking rapidly because of the conversion to agriculture and for settlement, the timber trade plays a significant role in its degradation.

This work by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa complemented the efforts of a variety of institutions concerned with forest conservation by quantifying the trade, documenting trade dynamics and by making recommendations for future courses of action to make Kenya's hardwood timber industry sustainable. The findings were published in the 1994 *Species in Danger* report *Hard Times for Hardwood: Indigenous Timber and the Timber Trade in Kenya*.

Efforts to document the illegal practices in the timber industry have been spearheaded by a TRAFFIC Oceania project in the Asia-Pacific region. The project, which focused on Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Thailand, enabled TRAFFIC Oceania to document many illicit trade practices.

These included illegal logging, timber smuggling, undervaluing, misclassification of species and transfer pricing. The latter involves buying or selling goods at below-market prices, with an intention to maximize profits in the country of import and/or transfer profits to a country with lower tax rates.

The findings, published in the *Species in Danger* report *Illegal Tropical Timber Trade: Asia-Pacific* in 1992, brought needed attention to the situation. They highlighted how illegal practices were costing the producer countries millions of US dollars in tax revenue and also



function as effective watershed catchments.

The TRAFFIC Network began its work on the timber trade in 1990 amid increasing evidence of illegal and unregulated trade in timber, much of which comes from natural rather than plantation forest.

In keeping with TRAFFIC's expertise in trade monitoring, three specific areas were identified for the Network's efforts. These are increasing the transparency in the trade by collecting information on timber trade routes, markets, prices and trading practices; documenting illegal and fraudulent practices in the timber industry; and improving the quality of data on the individual species appearing in the trade, so that monitoring can be improved.

throughout much of its range, and is highly sought after.

TRAFFIC India documented the unsustainable trade in Agarwood, particularly the trade in its resinous wood chips and oil used primarily as perfume in the Middle East. The findings, published in the TRAFFIC India report *Trade in Agarwood* in 1994, were instrumental in providing quantitative data to support the tree's inclusion in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1994. The CITES listing requires member countries to regulate trade in this tree species and its products.

Also of interest is a country trade study undertaken by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa to document

undermining efforts to develop sustainable forestry management in the region.

TRAFFIC has also been involved in the policy arena, most notably in the CITES context. All TRAFFIC offices participate in the review of proposals to amend the Appendices prior to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

In 1994, this effort was devoted to several timber species and genera traded in large volumes such as the mahoganies (*Khaya* spp., *Swietenia macrophylla* and *Entandrophragma* spp.), as well as other species traded in lesser quantities such as African Blackwood *Dalbergia melanoxylon* and Mun Ebony *Diospyros mun.* TRAFFIC also prepared a guide on CITES and tree species for the 1994 CITES meeting on behalf of WWF UK.

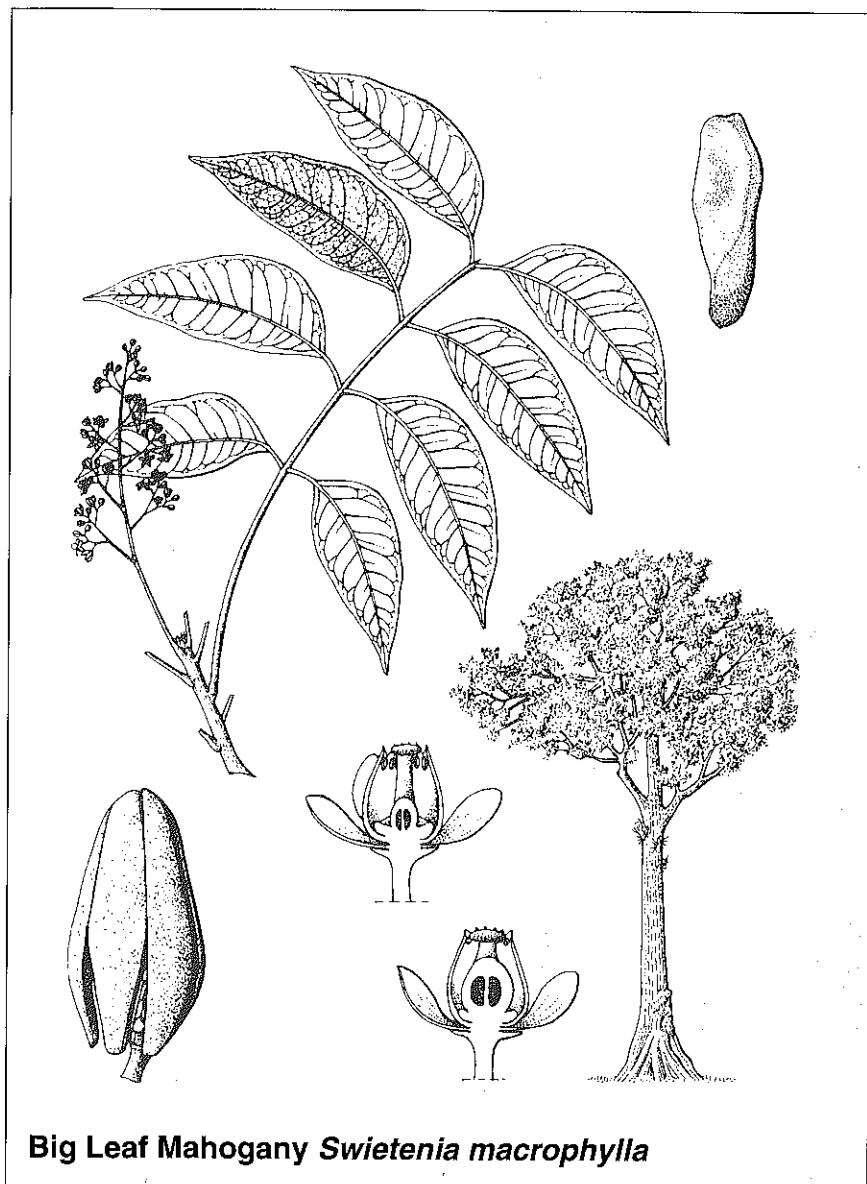
The work on these species has extended beyond the Conference of the Parties to CITES, with staff continuing to collect data on the species mentioned above.

The Network also participates in the CITES Timber Working Group, which was established at the 1994 Conference of the Parties to address implementation of the Convention with regard to timber species. The group will meet twice and then present its findings and recommendations at the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

At the Timber Working Group's first meeting in November 1995, the group reviewed the trade in the tree species listed in Appendices II and III. It discussed the control and identification of derivatives and parts of certain tree species.

In addition, the group discussed the potential contribution of various international organizations to the CITES process as it relates to tree species, and reviewed mechanisms to improve the co-ordination and consultation between these groups and CITES.

The discussions resulted in a number of recommendations that will be presented in 1997. In regard to parts and derivatives, the group developed definitions for logs, sawn wood and veneer sheets, and agreed upon standard reporting units for



Big Leaf Mahogany *Swietenia macrophylla*

Drawing courtesy of Pudoc Scientific Publishers

these items and others such as wood carvings and furniture. The group also decided to recommend that all CITES permits and certificates, invoices and bills of lading should include scientific names to facilitate identification of species in trade.

Numerous recommendations were agreed regarding issues of implementation. These include the modification of permitting procedures to accommodate timber trade practices, such as placement of shipments in bonded warehouses or the export of a shipment from a country before designating a buyer.

Issues to be addressed at the next meeting of the working group, scheduled for October, will include the disposal of confiscated timber and other implementation issues.

TRAFFIC's ongoing projects on the timber trade include an analysis in South Africa of the trade in wood

carvings, many of which are imported from West Africa for sale in tourist curio shops. Efforts are under way to identify the native species utilised, quantify the trade and also assess the trade in imported species—an exciting challenge given the diversity of carvings available on South Africa's market.

This project marks TRAFFIC's first examination of the wood carving trade. However, the scope will not be restricted to South Africa. Plans are under way to address the trade in the Pacific region, an area with a tradition of carving and an increasing rate of forest loss.

In the future, TRAFFIC plans to carry out additional trade reviews of species valued by the timber industry, and will continue to use its expertise in supporting the work of CITES. More country studies are expected as well. ■

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TRAFFIC DISPATCHES

October 1996



WWF



The World Conservation Union

INSIDE:

- *Current Congress: Increased attention*
- *The East Asian trade in deer gall bladders & bile*
- *Moving for better CITES implementation in South Africa*
- *Special section on TRAFFIC's Decade*
- *Poison snuffing along the Texas-Mexico border*
- *Under siege: India's rhinoceroses*

Bush meat study gets under way in east and southern Africa

The trade in bush meat is perhaps the least documented but most far-reaching wildlife trade in east and southern Africa. It is believed to involve more people than any other wildlife activity and to have the greatest impact on wild animal populations, including wildlife in protected areas.

Likewise, the official trade in game meat is one of the region's fastest growing economic activities. This trade is the formal, legal counterpart to the more informal, largely illegal trade in bush meat, however the relationship between the two is poorly understood.

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa (TESA) has launched an 18-month study of trade in bush meat and game meat, with a 230,000 ECU funding package from the European Union's Environment in Developing Countries budget line (B7-6200). The study will document the dynamics of these trades, their impact on wildlife and protected areas and their role in rural communities and economies. It will focus on the trade in seven diverse countries: Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

"The response to our bush meat trade study within the region has been enthusiastic," said Tom Milliken, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa Director. "Governments and organizations are eager to fill the information void on this important subject, and we are grateful to the EU for providing the means to do so."

The bush meat issue has long been overshadowed by more high profile

African wildlife trade issues. In addition, most formal studies have concentrated on lowland forest areas in west and central Africa, creating a perception that this trade impacts only Africa's tropical forested areas. However, the trade is a significant conservation, economic or cultural issue in the non-forested areas of east and southern Africa as well.

All seven of the countries to be studied have implemented economic reforms, which often cause the price of livestock meat and other basic commodities in the formal sector to escalate. These reforms also result in budget cutbacks for wildlife authorities. In addition, most of these countries are experiencing cycles of acute drought and low agricultural productivity, factors which lead to increased pressure on wildlife populations to provide meat for the rural populations in affected areas.

A growing amount of anecdotal evidence suggests that the bush meat trade is expanding and having an increasingly negative impact on wildlife populations throughout the region. Under pressure to address this issue but faced with diminished resources, wildlife authorities are often unable to shift management priorities before key wildlife species or protected areas become critically affected. The lack of information on the dynamics of this trade makes this situation even more acute.

In Malawi, for example, there is growing evidence that the country's protected areas are now a major source of local bush meat. There is

continued on page 13

Queen conch wins increased attention

Caribbean inhabitants have a long tradition of eating the meat of the Queen Conch *Strombus gigas*, a beautiful marine mollusc inhabiting sandy areas and grass beds in the Caribbean Sea. In recent years, however, overfishing has led to population declines throughout much of the Queen Conch's range.

A review of trade in the Queen Conch by TRAFFIC International, in collaboration with the IUCN Species Survival Commission and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, helped raise awareness of these declines at the International Queen Conch Conference. The review and a subsequent article in the *TRAFFIC Bulletin* were circulated at the conference held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in July 1996.

Concern that international trade in this species might not be sustainable had prompted the Animals Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) to call for a study of Queen Conch status and trade.

The resulting "significant trade review" summarises the current status of the species, which has been listed in Appendix II of CITES since 1992. TRAFFIC's analysis showed that large volumes of Queen Conch meat were being traded internationally, often without the required CITES permits.

At the international conference, participants expressed their support for CITES, which was seen to have contributed to the conservation of this species. Those in attendance also adopted "the Declaration of San Juan", agreeing to establish a working group to develop a common management strategy for the Queen Conch resource. More effective CITES implementation in the con-

text of a regional management plan should help secure future Queen Conch populations.

Taxidermist receives jail sentence, fine

A Dutch taxidermist received a two-year prison sentence in the UK in June after pleading guilty to illegally importing and exporting some of the world's most endangered wildlife species, including the skulls of a Siberian Tiger *Panthera tigris altaica*, Great Philippine Eagle *Pithecopaga jefferi* and Babirusa *Babirousa babyrussa*.

The sentence is believed to be the longest ever received for this type of crime in Britain.

TRAFFIC assisted in the seizure that led to the guilty plea by the taxidermist, Nicolaas Peter Peters. The raid followed an investigation by UK Police and Customs, with the assistance of TRAFFIC and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Peters, who operated a large-scale import and export taxidermy business, plead guilty to illegally exporting the skulls of Siberian Tiger and Babirusa and illegally importing the Philippine eagle skull.

He also plead guilty to illegally exporting an Allen's Swamp Monkey *Allenopithecus nigriviridis*, two Crab-eating Macaques *Macaca fascicularis* and a Stump-tailed Macaque *Macaca arctoides* as well as the skulls of a Ring-tailed Lemur *Lemur catta*, five Squirrel Monkeys *Saimiri sciureus*, five Rhesus Macaques *Macaca mulatta*, one Senegal Bushbaby *Galago senegalensis*, five Common Marmosets *Callithrix jacchus*, a Humboldt Penguin *Spheniscus humboldti*, and three Lesser Flamingoes *Phoenicopterus minor*.

In addition, Peters plead guilty to illegally importing 42 skins of 15 species of Philippine birds.

Moves at the top

Manoj Misra became Director of TRAFFIC India in June 1996. Misra has more than 16 years experience in national park protection and conservation as a member of the Indian Forests Service. Most recently, he served as Additional Director with the World Bank-supported Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project.

Simon Habel is the new Director of TRAFFIC Oceania. He worked for the Asia/Pacific Programme of WWF-US. Previously, he worked for WWF Australia, where he worked closely with TRAFFIC Oceania on CITES-related issues.

TRAFFIC Dispatches

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TRAFFIC is a programme of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and IUCN-The World Conservation Union, established to ensure the wise use of wild plants and animals. TRAFFIC works to combat illegal trade in threatened flora and fauna and to coordinate with domestic and international law enforcement agencies.

The TRAFFIC Network works in close cooperation with the Secretariats of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the UN Environment Programme and the World Conservation Strategy.

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The East Asian market for bear gall bladder and bile: an update from the front

In September 1996, TRAFFIC East Asia submitted an update on the East Asian trade in bear gall bladder and bile for consideration at the meeting of the CITES Animals Committee later that same month. After the submission, which was also forwarded to the relevant governments, representatives of the Chinese government met with TRAFFIC representatives to discuss the update's findings. At the same time, a government delegation from South Korea flew to Hong Kong to explore the update's recommendation that Korea consider adopting Hong Kong's gall bladder registration system. The next issue of Dispatches will report on the results of these meetings. The following article contains extracts from the update given to the Animals Committee.

During 1996, TRAFFIC East Asia repeatedly found bear bile for sale in the departure areas of some of China's international airports, just as it had in 1995. Surveys in Hong Kong also revealed widespread availability of manufactured medicines from China containing bear bile. Meanwhile, South Korea has been intercepting increasing numbers of bear gall bladders snuggled in personal luggage.

TRAFFIC East Asia's report, *The Bear Facts: the East Asian Market for Bear Gall Bladder* published in 1995, documented widespread availability in China of bear bile from the thousands of bears on the country's bear farms. While gall bladders were still offered for sale illegally, the abundance of farmed bear bile seemed to have kept black market prices for gall bladders from poached bears relatively low.

Nonetheless, researchers found that farmed bile was illegally exported and appearing on retail markets in other Asian countries such as South Korea. Almost all the species of bears on the farms are listed in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which means international commercial trade in the parts and derivatives of these bears is banned, except in rare circumstances.

The products found this year in China's airports were clearly marked as bear bile and offered openly for sale in airport shops frequented by departing passengers after they exited passport control. Passengers carrying bile with them on flights out of China would not only be contravening CITES, but also in all likelihood the domestic laws of the country of destination.

Clarification is being sought regarding China's legislative controls for the export of these products. TRAFFIC first brought this problem

to the attention of China's CITES Management Authority and also Customs and Excise officials in writing in February 1996. A Customs and Excise official responded in April that the situation had been investigated and the trade stopped.

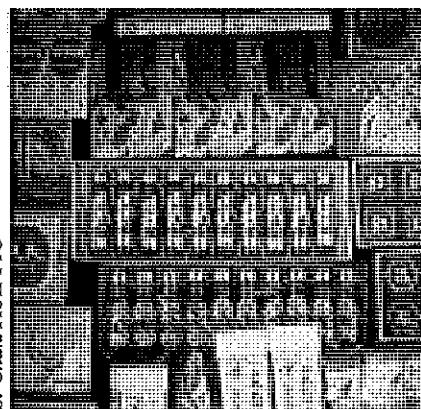
Since then, TRAFFIC East Asia and WWF Hong Kong staff have again documented farmed bear bile being sold at Beijing Capital Airport. TRAFFIC reported this availability to China's Customs and Excise officials and its CITES Management Authority in June and July 1996, but no reply had been received as of mid-August 1996.

The open availability of farmed bear bile at international airports in China demonstrates the lack of an effectively implemented regulatory system to ensure that farmed bear bile is not exported illegally from China. None of China's farms is registered with the CITES Secretariat as required by CITES Resolution Conf. 8.15 for commercial captive breeding facilities of Appendix I wildlife seeking to export products under the captive-breeding exemption provided for in Article VII.4. The Secretariat has also not received any registration applications to TRAFFIC's knowledge.

China has also not demonstrated that its bear farms have met the captive breeding criteria established under Resolution Conf. 2.12, which would qualify bear bile exports from non-commercial institutions to be traded under the exemption provided for under Article VII.5. Therefore, it can only be assumed that exports of bear bile from China's bear farms violate the Convention and its associated Resolutions.

Bear bile is found in up to 80 brands of manufactured drugs in China, in forms including powder, pills, ointments and injections. However, China's CITES Management Authority lists only 20 brands of

Farmed bear bile from China for sale in South Korea during 1995



manufactured drugs containing bear bile. Of the 13 brands of medicines from China found by TRAFFIC in Hong Kong in 1996, 12 were not included in the Chinese Management Authority's list.

This suggests many medicines containing bear bile have been introduced in China in recent years, indicating an expansion of the use of bear bile in the pharmaceutical industry. Of special concern in this expanding market is the greater potential for illegal international trade in derivatives from Appendix I bear species, given that many CITES Parties do not provide for control of the trade of traditional Chinese medicines that contain parts of CITES-listed species in their legislation to implement the Convention.

Hong Kong is a case in point. While it has a government registration system that licenses and tags only those bear gall bladders proven to be of legal origin, its legislation to implement CITES does not include medicines containing parts of CITES-listed bear species. This loophole means import and domestic trade are legal and unregulated.

This year, TRAFFIC found in

Hong Kong many manufactured medicines from China containing bear bile. In all likelihood this bile comes from Appendix I bears and enters the Territory without proper CITES documentation.

The July and August 1996 investigations included a survey of the medicine sections of nine Hong Kong department stores that specialize in selling products made in China. All of the stores carried medicines containing bear bile or, in one case, bear paw.

Of the 13 brands of five different medicines found by TRAFFIC East Asia, two brands named the bile and/or paw of the Appendix I Asiatic Black Bear *Selenarctos thibetanus* as an ingredient.

In 1995, the South Korea CITES Management Authority allowed the legal import of nearly 38kg of bear gall bladder, but Customs agents also confiscated 55kg from luggage. It is almost certain that many more bear gall bladder smugglers go undetected, particularly considering recent evidence of South Korean involvement in illicit bear gall bladder trade and poaching in other countries, such as Thailand.

Among TRAFFIC East Asia's recommendations in the update are that the CITES Animals Committee should request the CITES Management Authority of China to clarify domestic, import and export controls on the trade in bear parts and products, including patented medicines.

Hong Kong should, as a matter of urgency, amend its legislation to implement CITES to include regulation of medicines containing or claiming to contain derivatives of any CITES Appendix I or Appendix II wildlife species.

In regard to South Korea, the country should implement a bear gall registration system similar to that used in Hong Kong as a means to ensure that any bear gall bladder sold within South Korea has come from legal sources.

The South Korean Government should also equip laboratories with the technology to test the origin and authenticity of new stocks of gall bladders entering the South Korean market, and adopt the use of x-rays and/or sniffer dogs to detect the smuggling of bear gall bladders in the personnel luggage of travellers entering South Korea. ■

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Meetings focus on South Africa CITES implementation

In January, Dispatches highlighted the findings of a forthcoming TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa report on CITES implementation in South Africa. David Newton, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-South Africa National Representative, discusses the progress made since then in getting better CITES implementation on the national agenda.

TRAFFIC staff in South Africa recently travelled countrywide to meet with government officials and wildlife managers about the findings of the office's 1996 report on the country's implementation of international wildlife trade controls.

The report, "South Africa's Wildlife Trade at the Crossroads: CITES Implementation and the Need for a National Reassessment", synthesized almost four years of trade research in South Africa.

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa launched the report in February 1996, in the presence of the Deputy Minister of Environment Affairs, General Bantu Holomisa; TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa Director Tom Milliken; WWF South Africa Chief Executive John Hanks; and the Director of the Endangered Wildlife Trust, John Ledger.

Although documenting many examples of administrative, legislative and law enforcement shortcomings in South Africa's official resource management structures, the report emphasised that these issues should be considered in the context of South Africa's positive track record in other areas, such as elephant and rhinoceros conservation.

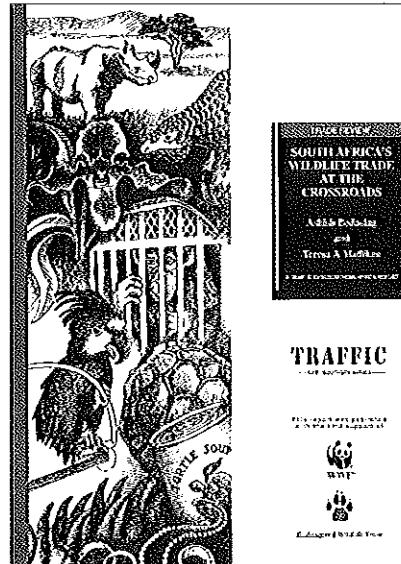
The findings, widely reported by the media in South Africa and abroad, generated heated debate in conservation circles in South Africa. TRAFFIC staff in South Africa met the criticism and congratulations directly with the countrywide mission to discuss the document with both provincial and national government departments, such as the Department of Customs and Excise, the Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism, the Department of Sea

Fisheries, and the Department of Agriculture. The main aims of these visits were to defuse tensions that may have arisen from the release of the findings and to formulate joint action plans to improve wildlife trade management in general and, more specifically, CITES implementation in South Africa.

The reception by the provincial directors has been supportive and they have committed themselves to resolving the shortcomings identified by TRAFFIC. The results of the meetings, which represent a national perspective, are being written up in a report for distribution to the department directors. The purpose is to improve understanding of the problems the departments face in creating new departmental structures with limited budgets and staff.

During TRAFFIC's visits, a number of requests were made for assistance. These requests are being formulated into a project concept document that will be distributed to the provinces and national departments for comments and alterations. The revised proposal, which aims to be as inclusive and integrated as possible for all provincial and national departments, will be used to obtain funding so that a capacity building programme can be initiated.

Environmental policy formulation in South Africa remains fluid. In June 1996, the Minister of Environment Affairs resigned and the deputy did so during August. The new minister and deputy are in the process of familiarising themselves with their responsibilities. Consequently, there is concern that the Consultative National Environmental Policy Process, the objective of which is to formulate



national environmental policy, has been seriously delayed by the change in leadership and will not be finalised according to its set agenda.

The delays in the development of national environmental policy have serious implications for provincial nature conservation authorities who face difficulties in developing their own legislation because of the risk that some aspects would have to be rewritten, if national policies differ from provincial policies. However, this has not prevented some provincial authorities, such as Mpumalanga Parks Board and Natal Parks Board, from pushing ahead with policy development, realising that national policy may need to be incorporated at a later date.

Some provincial authorities have much more fundamental problems that need to be resolved before they can turn to policy development. These range from the regular resignations of environment ministers, as in North West province, leading to lack of continuity and guidance, through to insufficient budgets, lack of housing for offices and staff, and inadequate staff capacity.

TRAFFIC's proposed capacity building initiative, to be developed in conjunction with government agencies, aims to assist the conservation departments to alleviate some of these deficiencies, especially those related to the issues of international wildlife trade controls and wildlife trade management. ■

Looking ahead

Forthcoming publications

A Global Overview of the Trade in Sharks

TRAFFIC Network, *Species in Danger* series, December 1996

People have exploited sharks for their meat, fins, cartilage, jaws and liver for centuries. However, rising demand for these products around the globe has contributed to increased shark fisheries, which are largely unmonitored and seldom regulated.



Andrea Gaskin/TRAFFIC

Sharks are exploited for their meat and fins for human consumption; skin for leather; liver oil for lubricants, cosmetics and Vitamin A; teeth and jaws for curios; and alive

for aquaria. In recent years, shark cartilage has even been suggested as a possible treatment for cancer.

Reports of declining shark populations have become distressingly common. To date, however, there have been few data available to assess the trade, status of shark harvests and the impact that these fisheries may have.

This report presents the findings of a two-year study by the TRAFFIC Network, in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC Shark Specialist Group and the Center for Marine Conservation.

It documents the result of research from the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, India and Oceania on domestic and international trade in sharks and shark products.

National and regional reports may also be published.

Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar

TRAFFIC Europe, *Species in Danger* series, October 1996

"Caviar on ice" is one of the most globally recognised symbols of wealth and exclusivity. The price of caviar makes sturgeon fishing among the most lucrative fisheries in the world.

However, catch in all sturgeon fisheries has dropped, and habitat deterioration combined with uncontrolled poaching and overfishing threaten to imperil the very source of caviar. Sturgeons may have already declined in number by 50-70 per cent.

The Caspian Sea provides 90 per cent of the world catch and is the centre of an increasingly lawless catch and trade.

Once bordered by only the Soviet Union and Iran, the Sea is now ringed by five independent states and two republics. In Astrakhan, the centre of Russia's caviar production, several thousand poaching incidents were recorded in 1994 alone.

In the past five years, the caviar trade has become increasingly chaotic, marred by massive smuggling, illegal production, fraudulent labelling, and the newly established role played by organised crime.

This report by TRAFFIC Europe presents the available data on international trade in caviar from the Caspian Sea and documents illegal trade routes and markets.

Bush meat

continued from page 1

also anecdotal evidence of bush meat trade routes between Malawi and Mozambique, and also between Tanzania and Zambia, Kenya and possibly other neighbouring countries. In Tanzania, the illegal use of long-line snares among subsistence hunters is commonplace in many areas, with lines of up to three kilometres containing several hundred snares being set up at a time.

The final report from this project is expected to include case studies of the trade in the seven countries and a list of species and areas meriting action. The findings are likely to identify undocumented pressures on a range of less conspicuous animals such as rodents or bats, as well as better-known wildlife such as elephants, giraffe and zebra.

The findings will be presented at a regional workshop where policy and management recommendations to reduce the negative impacts of the bush meat trade and a framework for future monitoring of the trade will be discussed. This information will assist policy makers in wildlife, agriculture and development to better plan for the management of protected areas and wildlife of special concern. It will also help governments and donors in formulating effective community-based management programmes for natural resources. ■



TRAFFIC Oceania covers an expanse of area and issues

TRAFFIC Oceania's area of responsibility covers one-tenth of the earth's surface and 24 countries and territories, ranging from large, diverse Australia and Papua New Guinea to small Pacific island coral atolls. This special four-page section, introduced here by TRAFFIC Oceania Director Simon Habel, highlights some achievements and future plans.

Since its inception in 1984, the office has covered a broad range of wildlife trade issues. Initially it focussed on the more traditional wildlife trades, such as those in reptiles, orchids and mammal skins. Since then, the office has broadened its scope to include the trade in fisheries, timber and traditional Chinese medicines claiming to contain threatened and endangered species.

Today, TRAFFIC Oceania is arguably the leading non-governmental conservation organization in the region working on fisheries issues. TRAFFIC's work on Southern Bluefin Tuna, for example, was instrumental in ensuring that quotas in this highly over-fished species have not risen. The office is now co-ordinating a Network-wide study of the global trade in sharks. This section explains the partnership approach we are taking to this sensitive utilisation issue.

The wildlife of the South Pacific and Australasian regions is characterised by a high degree of endemism and, in a growing number of cases, a high degree of threat. At the same time, the indigenous peoples have always relied on their natural resources for subsistence, barter and trade benefits. There is also an ongoing and probably increasing harvest and trade by non-indigenous populations or by foreign interests. The trade is sufficiently great to be contributing to population declines for species such as marine turtles and fruit bats, and threatening entire ecosystems, such as tropical forests and coral reefs.

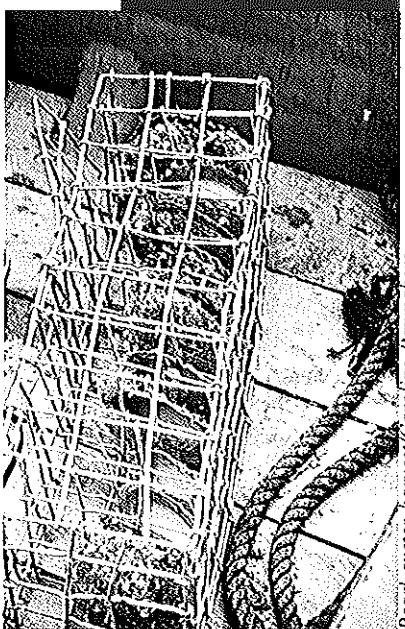
In Australia alone, legal exports of native wildlife (excluding fisheries and forestry) are worth around A\$100 million annually, and growing; add fisheries and forestry and the figure reaches into the billions of dollars. All countries in the region are reliant on exploitation of marine resources—some for domestic consumption, some for export trade, and many for both. Tropical forests are under increasing pressure from logging. In certain countries, such as Solomon Islands, the situation is critical, with forest being logged at unsustainable rates.

The endemic wildlife of the region is attractive to both legal and illegal wildlife traders. Many countries have strict policies on international trade in live wildlife. This, coupled with the desirability of the wildlife for overseas collectors, means there is an ongoing demand and illegal trade in protected species from the region, such as Australian cockatoos, Fijian banded and crested iguanas and some South Pacific parrot species. In this section, we outline the role of New Zealand in the illicit international trade in protected parrots.

TRAFFIC has long actively monitored the use of endangered species in traditional Chinese medicines. Our investigation into these products on sale in both Australia and New Zealand found many claiming to contain Tiger and rhinoceros derivatives. The accompanying article describes our work and ongoing activities to ensure that the laws of both countries will be strengthened.

TRAFFIC Oceania will continue to work closely with relevant authorities, government and non-governmental organizations. Fisheries will continue to be a focus as tuna and sharks remain under scrutiny for their management. Timber issues will be addressed as the forests of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands continue to be over-exploited. Many countries in our region have yet to become signatories to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and effort will be needed if this is to be achieved. The year ahead is full of challenges. ■

Focus on Oceania



Pearl oyster harvest/Caroline Karmakers

**TRAFFIC
Oceania**

TRAFFIC Oceania has become a key partner in an Australian government initiative to involve conservationists, both commercial and recreational fishers and others in managing the nation's fisheries. Government officials hope the approach will be a model for other nations.

research, compliance and costs. They review research proposals, draft annual assessments of the fisheries, and serve as the chief liaison between AFMA and those with an interest in the particular fishery.

"There are many challenges, but we believe the partnership approach

parental stock is now just 5 to 9 per cent of that recorded in the 1960s.

While the Southern Bluefin Tuna is one of Australia's most valued fisheries, it is highly migratory and breeds outside Australian waters—meaning that effective recovery and management initiatives require multi-nation co-operation.

In 1994, a first step was the introduction of the Convention for the Conservation of the Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) by the three major Southern Bluefin Tuna fishing nations of Australia, Japan and New Zealand. Sant also represents conservation NGOs on the official Australian delegation to the CCSBT Commission. To date, however, the conservation role envisioned for the Convention remains a long way off.

While these countries have set limits on their harvests, this quota negotiated yearly remains the same—11,750 tonnes—as in 1993. TRAFFIC Oceania estimates the quota must be reduced by at least 25 per cent if the Commission is to meet its goal of ensuring a biologically secure parental stock by 2020.

Another concern is the limited international co-operation in managing fisheries. Australia, Japan and New Zealand remain the sole signatories to the CCSBT. At least 10 other countries continue to fish Southern Bluefin Tuna and have increased their catch in recent years, particularly in the spawning grounds. ■

The partnership approach to fisheries

Involving the conservation community is the newest development in the government's approach. The initiative enables a representative of local conservation non-governmental organizations to sit alongside the government and industry participants on the committees that advise the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

At the request of the local NGOs, TRAFFIC Oceania Senior Research Officer Glenn Sant serves as this representative on the only two such committees to have NGO representation to date: the Southern Shark and the East Coast Tuna management advisory committees. Sant's position as the "permanent conservation observer" includes full participatory rights in the deliberations, except for actual voting.

"It's a milestone to have full participation across the community in management decisions because these fisheries are a public resource," Sant said. "In the past, only government fisheries managers and industry interest groups were making decisions whereas now there is broader community involvement and conservation interests at the table."

While industry representatives have served on the committees since 1992, inviting an environmental NGO representative into these forums represents a wider cast of the net.

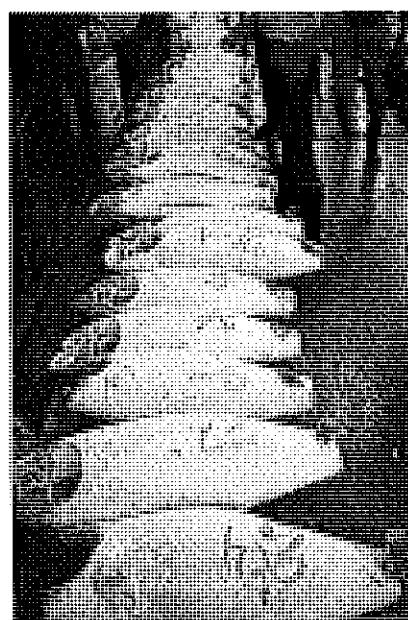
The committees advise AFMA on fisheries management arrangements,

is the best way forward," AFMA Chairman Jim McColl recently told delegates at the World Fisheries Congress in Australia.

The southern shark fishery is one of the world's oldest shark fisheries. A management plan was introduced in 1988, but only after dramatic declines in Gummy Shark *Mustelus antarcticus* and School Shark *Galeorhinus galeus*. These sharks comprised 88 per cent of the catch. Today, there is uncertainty about the status of these sharks, but the Gummy Shark is faring better than School Shark, with the stock of the latter likely to be only 13 to 43 per cent of the original level. The advisory committee has agreed that a 40 per cent reduction in fishing for the School Shark is needed, and is considering how best to achieve this.

The eastern tuna fishery predominantly targets the large pelagics, such as Yellowfin Tuna *Thunnus albacares*, Bigeye Tuna *T. obesus* and the Southern Bluefin Tuna *T. maccoyii* for a number of markets, such as the Japanese *sashimi* market.

On the conservation front, the status of the Southern Bluefin Tuna and the difficulties in managing its stock are the most alarming. In 1993, TRAFFIC documented the demand for this fish in the report *Bluefin Tuna: An Examination of the Trade, with an Emphasis on the Japanese Market*. Today, the status of the stock is no less dire. The



Glenn Sant /TRAFFIC

New Zealand: A laundering point for birds



The legal export of exotic birds from New Zealand has dramatically increased in recent years, with most being Australian parrots claimed to be bred in captivity within New Zealand.

A study by TRAFFIC Oceania into the history, scale and control of this trade has found that the country may be a laundering point for illegally smuggled Australian parrots for legal export to the global market. The study, conducted with the support of WWF New Zealand, concentrated on the country's trade in non-native birds regulated in international trade under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Australia banned the export of its native birds in 1960, except for scientific and zoological purposes, and for some pets. In addition, all of Australia's cockatoos and parrots, except for the Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus* and the Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*, are listed in the CITES Appendices.

Prior to 1989, New Zealand exported fewer than 50 non-native

CITES-listed birds each year. During 1990-1995, however, the country exported an annual average of 470 CITES-listed birds, particularly Galah parrots *Eolophus roseicapillus*, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos *Cacatua galerita* and Rainbow Lories *Trichoglossus haematodus*.

The dramatic increase in exports has been largely prompted by two events. A 1988 High Court ruling held that the country's existing ban on exporting CITES-listed birds was not supported by the New Zealand Wildlife Act or the Conservation Act. Instead, the decision on whether to grant an export permit must be individually assessed and refused only if the export would endanger the species in the wild. Upon acceding to CITES in 1989, the country also adopted the Trade in Endangered Species Act, which set new criteria for export of CITES-listed birds.

The Act's captive breeding provision is the most widely used by traders to export CITES-listed species from New Zealand. Under this provision, once the exporter

declares the birds in question to be captive-bred in New Zealand, the onus to prove or disprove the statement shifts to the authorities. However, there is no provision in the legislation allowing authorities to require DNA tests to determine the parentage of the birds. There is also no local register of aviculturists in New Zealand or the numbers, species and breeding status of the birds they hold to enable authorities to effectively assess a claim. To date, the authorities have not been able to prove even one claim false.

For example, six Red-tailed Black Cockatoos *Calyptorhynchus banksii* were legally exported from New Zealand in 1995. There is no record of the bird being legally imported and the only known successful breeding has taken place at Auckland Zoo.

TRAFFIC research indicates that only 21 of the 37 bird species exported from New Zealand breed in captivity there and the breeding status of a further 14 is unknown.

The smuggling of Australian native birds into New Zealand is well documented by seizures. Australian parrots have been intercepted in hand luggage, light aircraft or as eggs tucked into special body wear. In both 1993 and 1994, more than 100 Australian birds or eggs were seized as they were being smuggled into New Zealand. One report suggests that 1,000 Australian birds may be smuggled into the country yearly.

Penalties for illegal imports or possession of CITES-listed wildlife include up to five-year prison terms and fines up to NZ\$100,000 for individuals and up to NZ\$200,000 for businesses. However, the sentences handed down by the courts are usually substantially lighter, with short prison sentences and most fines being less than NZ\$10,000.

The full findings of the study will be published later this year with recommendations on how New Zealand could better control the trade in CITES-listed birds across its borders and therefore meet its obligations under the Convention. ■

TRAFFIC lobbies for Australian legal change on endangered species medicines

by Jane Holden, Research Officer, TRAFFIC Oceania

TRAFFIC Oceania is lobbying the Australian government to act on the office's recommendations regarding the trade in the country of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) containing endangered species.

The lobbying follows TRAFFIC Oceania's release of a report in May 1995 detailing a healthy market in both Australia and New Zealand for illegally imported medicines claiming to contain parts of CITES-listed species such as bear, leopard, musk deer, rhinoceros and Tiger. The TRAFFIC investigation found the enforcement effort directed towards stopping illegal imports of TCM was inadequate, and the legislation in both countries was ineffective to control the sale and possession of illegally imported medicines once they were inside the country. In addition, little had been done to educate consumers about the provisions of CITES or the conservation impact of the use of endangered species in TCM.

The report recommended an increase in enforcement effort, a national public awareness campaign to be designed in conjunction with the TCM-using community, and amendment of legislation to facilitate prosecution for the possession and sale of illegally imported medicines within Australia and New Zealand.

The post-publication lobbying began in July 1995 with an

unsuccessful bid to include a late addition to the Amendment Bill for the Wildlife Protection (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1982 (WPA) to make domestic trade in such products illegal in Australia.

Following the defeat, WWF Australia and TRAFFIC Oceania launched a petition and letter writing campaign calling on the Australian Government to amend the Act, and to instigate a TCM public awareness campaign. To date, more than 20,000 signatures have been collected and numerous letters written.

At the same time, TRAFFIC Oceania entered into a series of formal correspondence with the Commonwealth Environment Minister on the needed legislative changes. The reform process was delayed by a change in government in March 1996, however in July 1996 TRAFFIC formally met with the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, which administers the WPA, to discuss legal amendments and an awareness campaign.

At this meeting, the inadequacy of the existing Act was agreed upon and possible amendments discussed. These included expanding the Act's definitions section to include products labelled as containing CITES-listed species without requiring forensic proof of identity (in accordance with *CITES Res. Conf 9.6*), and making the

internal sale of CITES Appendix I and certain Appendix II-listed species, without a permit, illegal.

A second outcome of the meeting was the development by TRAFFIC Oceania for ANCA of a preliminary community awareness strategy on traditional Chinese medicines containing CITES-listed species. The strategy focused on the need to collaborate with the TCM-using community in Australia, and identified key components of such a campaign. These included an informal working group, sociological and market research, a symposium on TCM and wildlife conservation for TCM specialists, follow-up structured meetings, and a general awareness and education campaign.

To date, however, there has been little movement on either the legislative amendments or the awareness campaign by the Australian government. As of September 1996, it had been over a year since publication of the report and two months since TRAFFIC's most recent meeting with ANCA. With no action taken, presumably the illegal import of these medicines, and subsequent domestic possession and sale continues. TRAFFIC Oceania will continue working with Government and encouraging it to undertake the legal reforms and community awareness campaign in the immediate future. ■

TRAFFIC Oceania is part of the worldwide TRAFFIC Network established in 1976 to monitor the trade in animals and plants. TRAFFIC is a joint programme of WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature and IUCN-The World Conservation Union. It has offices or staff in 19 countries and works in close co-operation with the CITES Secretariat. For more information, contact TRAFFIC Oceania or TRAFFIC International.

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The Texas-Mexico border: a parrot smuggling point of serious concern

Until recently, the USA was among the world's largest importers of wild parrots, while Mexico has been a consistent major supplier. Mexico banned commercial exports of its parrots in 1982, but the illegal trade from Mexico to the USA in these birds continues.

A new TRAFFIC USA report on parrot smuggling across the US-Mexico border aims to provide baseline information to assess changes in parrot smuggling between the countries resulting from the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Wild Bird Conservation Act.

The agreement, known as NAFTA, took effect in 1994 and may increase opportunities for smuggling by promoting the opening of new border ports and increasing the flow of people and goods. The Wild Bird Conservation Act (WBCA), however, was enacted two years earlier to restrict imports of wild-caught birds into the USA, so it may increase incentives for bird smuggling from Mexico.

The report concentrates on the Texas-Mexico border as information from other states bordering Mexico was difficult to obtain. It provides data from 1990-1993, with which statistics from after the legislative measures came into force can be compared for analysis.

Among the findings are that seven parrot species accounted for 91 per cent of all seized birds during the period: Yellow-naped Amazon *Amazona auropalliata*; Yellow Headed Amazon *A. oratrix*; Red-crowned Amazon *A. viridigenalis*; Green Conure *Aratinga holochlora*; Red-lored Amazon *A. autumnalis*; Lilac-crowned Amazon *A. finschi*; and the Orange-fronted Parakeet *Aratinga canicularis*.

The smuggling of amazon parrots typically involves juvenile birds, which are often obtained by cutting down or hacking apart nesting trees.

Macaws *Ara* spp. are also smuggled throughout the year.

It is impossible to determine the number of parrots smuggled into the USA from Mexico annually, but smugglers interrogated by US border agents in three cases estimated that 20,000 to 25,000 birds were moved during a one-year period in the Rio Grande Valley alone.

During 1990-1993, at least 2,464 parrots were seized along the Texas-Mexico border in 468 cases. While there is a common perception that bird smuggling is connected with drug trafficking, only one such attempt to smuggle birds with drugs, in that case marijuana, was reported.

Two informal TRAFFIC USA surveys indicate that fears of increased smuggling as a result of the WBCA may be unfounded since the value of parrots on the US market have not increased as law enforcement personnel and aviculturalists had expected. In addition, none of

the border personnel contacted in a telephone survey reported increased smuggling. However, these results should not be considered conclusive without further research, and parrot smuggling along the border remains an issue of serious concern.

If the anticipated increase in smuggling materialises, the combined effects of NAFTA and the WBCA may have a negative impact on wild bird populations and multiply the need for increased law enforcement efforts along the border, where resources are already spread thinly. The report recommends a variety of actions to better monitor and intercept such parrot smuggling, including that analyses of parrot seizure records be conducted annually.

To obtain a copy of the report, *Parrot Smuggling Across the Texas-Mexico Border* by José Gobbi, Debra Rose, Gina De Ferrari and Leonora Sheeline, contact TRAFFIC USA. ■

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Under Siege: Poaching and Protection of the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros in India

Vivek Menon/TRAFFIC



The Greater One-horned Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) is found only in nine protected areas in Nepal and India. Only about 2,000 continue to exist in the wild.

In India, this rhinoceros is perhaps the most endangered of the country's large species. The Indian rhinoceros population numbers only about 1,500—less than half the national population of Tigers and one-tenth that of elephants. Poaching upsurges in both the 1980s and 1990s have left at least 682 of India's rhinoceroses dead, and continues today.

This article presents a summary of a report released in September in the TRAFFIC *Species in Danger* series. The report, *Under Siege: Poaching and Protection of Greater-One horned Rhinoceroses in India* by Vivek Menon, documents the results of a study by TRAFFIC India, with the support of WWF India.

The study began in 1992, and field updates continued to be received until April 1996. The report presents information on rhino populations, poaching, and the trade in and use

of rhinoceros horn.

The Greater One-horned Rhinoceros, also known as the Great Indian Rhinoceros or the Indian/Nepali Rhinoceros, is one of three remaining Asian species. All three once inhabited the Indian subcontinent, but the Javan Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros sondaicus* and the Sumatran Rhinoceros *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* became extinct in the country early this century.

The Greater One-horned Rhinoceros is much larger than the other Asian species. Both males and females have a single horn. It once ranged from Pakistan to the north-eastern tip of India, and may have existed in China, Myanmar and further east. Today, it is almost entirely restricted to seven protected areas in India and two in Nepal as a result of habitat loss and hunting.

Demand for rhinoceros horn in the Asian traditional medicine market is perhaps the single largest threat facing this rhinoceros, despite efforts by several East Asia countries to curtail the trade by imposing stiffer penalties. The continuing demand is testament to rhinoceros horn being considered a life-saving traditional medicine.

In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), rhino horn is predominantly used to treat fever. Asian rhinoceros horn is more valued than that of African rhinoceroses, although both are utilised. The horn is generally sold raw or as an ingredient in manufactured medicines. Rhinoceros horn is also utilised in Tibetan medicine, the manufacturing of dagger handles in the Far Eastern countries of Oman and Yemen, and for incidental domestic use in some countries. By far, however, the horn is most in demand for use in TCM.

In India, hunting of the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros has been

banned since 1910, and the wild population has steadily increased during this century. However, the rate of this increase has slowed in recent years, predominantly because of poaching. In most reserves, poaching has kept pace with or outdistanced natural causes in the deaths of India's rhinos in recent years. Available equipment and arms are also often insufficient to combat poachers.

The 1980s marked a resurgence in poaching that left 483 rhinoceroses dead in India. In the 1990s, poaching accelerated even further. During 1990-1993 alone, poachers killed 209 rhinoceroses or 13.8 per cent of the country's remaining population. In Kaziranga National Park, the best protected reserve, poachers killed 147 rhinoceroses. In Manas National Park, once home to the second largest rhino population in India, perhaps only about 12 now remain, compared to the 80-100 there in 1990.

Poachers are usually hired gunmen working in teams of five to six people. The team generally includes an arms dealer and a local guide familiar with the terrain. Most of the poachers are from the Naga or Bodo ethnic groups, although a number of Assamese are also involved. Although there is some evidence of extremist groups selling rhino horn to finance their illegal activities, many poachers are financed by opportunistic traders taking advantage of the breakdown in law and order.

Shooting remains the most common method of killing a rhinoceros, and the political unrest and influx of arms into Assam since the early 1980s has made it all the easier. Guards armed with bolt action rifles often come across poachers armed with semi-automatic weapons. In 1995, staff at one park in Assam seized a semi-automatic weapon with a silencer. This may be the first

recorded incident of a silencer used during a rhinoceros poaching operation in India.

Poachers are also using more novel methods, such as electrocution and poisoning.

Electrocution first emerged in Pabitora Wildlife Sanctuary in 1989 and is now used in Kaziranga National Park as well. It is used as a method wherever high tension powerlines of at least 11,000 volts pass through or near a protected area. A length of wire is connected to a bamboo rod or wire hook used to secure a connection with the powerline. The wire is left dangling on a well-established rhinoceros track. Pabitora has the highest rate of rhinoceros electrocutions, with 21 per cent of the rhinos killed there in 1993 being electrocuted.

Domestic trade in and export of Greater One-horned Rhinoceros horn became illegal in India in 1972. However, limited government auctions of rhinoceros horn stock took place legally until 1979 on the domestic market, despite the fact that horns were clearly being smuggled out of the country.

Today, India's illegal domestic trade is small and remains largely unstudied. The rhinoceros' horn is utilised in TCM and in Tibetan medicine. In the latter, rhino horn is used in six principal medicines taken for a range of health problems, which include haematemesis, renal and pulmonary disorders, and hepatic malfunctions.

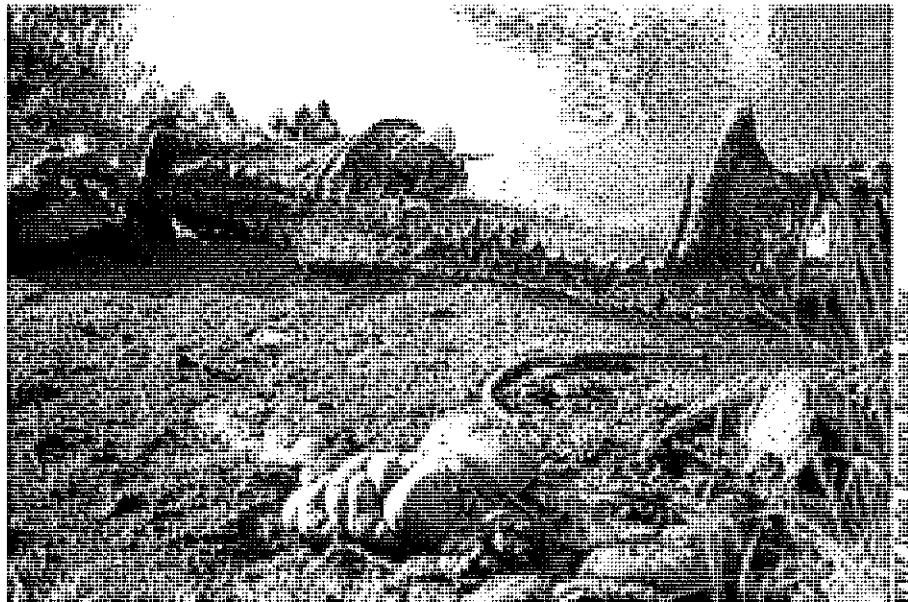
Small flakes of horn are also used in rings worn by the Assamese, mainly to ward off evil spirits. In addition, there are reports of militants using components from rhinoceros horn as a dye or fixative in the production of counterfeit money. However, most rhino horns in trade in India are destined for the international black market.

The main traders are believed to be Marwari businessmen in northeast India, although some wealthy Assamese and Bengalis play a role as well. The typical trader often deals in a number of

contraband goods, and is a known drug smuggler or arms dealer.

During this study, TRAFFIC investigators identified 125 poachers and traders, the names of whom have since been provided to authorities.

Like with poaching, disturbing trends in the trade in this rhinoceros' horn have emerged in recent years. For example, the traditional trading



routes via Calcutta and Myanmarr are being forsaken for new routes through Bhutan, Nepal and more recently through Bangladesh.

The main trading routes of today all seem to be overland out of India and then by air to Southeast Asia. This study found two distinct trader and poacher blocs, one in lower Assam and northern West Bengal and the other in central Assam. The town of Siliguri in northern Bengal is fast becoming the most important centre, a position held by Calcutta before it became a known trading centre. Dimapur on the Nagaland-Assam border and Guwahati, the capital of Assam, are also important links in the trading chain.

The Greater One-horned Rhinoceros may be more endangered today than ever before. This report contains many detailed management and anti-poaching recommendations. These include the following:

- Review and strengthen security measures in all rhinoceros areas to

minimize access to poachers;

- Put in place an intelligence network to enable existing physical security measures to function effectively. This network should ensure collection, analysis and evaluation of the field data on both poaching and trade;

- Maintain and increase motivation

- of park staff, including a review of existing pay and bonus structures of field personnel;

- Review existing management practices and introduce new ones to help anti-poaching efforts. This step should include reviewing food availability for rhinos to reduce their straying out of the park boundaries;

- Remove high tension wires within at least three kilometres of parks. If this is not possible, these areas should be patrolled as a priority;

- Survey previous rhinoceros areas for possible translocation sites and form a team that could translocate rhinoceros effectively;

- Set up special courts to try wildlife cases, and impress upon the judiciary the urgency of the need to protect the rhinoceros; and

- Strengthen enforcement measures against illegal traders and dealers. ■

Species in Danger series

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Vivek Menon

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Kristin Nowell, Chyi Wei-Lien and Pei Chia-Jai
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A summary of the status of the domestic market for rhino horn in Taiwan in February 1992, with recommendations to bring consumption of rhino horn under control.

Perceptions, Conservation and Management of Wild Birds in Trade (January 1992)

Edited by Jorgen B. Thomsen, Stephen R. Edwards and Teresa A. Mulliken
165pp. ISBN 0 947613 552.

An overview of the global trade and the commerce in the key exporting countries: Argentina, Guyana, Indonesia, Senegal and Tanzania.

The Smuggling of Endangered Wildlife Across the Taiwan Strait (July 1991)

24pp. ISBN 0 947613 32 3.

The result of an investigation to identify species illicitly traded across the Strait from mainland China to Taiwan.

Wild Plants in Trade* (December 1992)

Martin Jenkins and Sara Oldfield
36pp. ISBN 0 947613 89 7.

Based on the results of a Europe-wide survey, this report describes the legal and illegal trade in wild-collected plants and discusses the impact of collection.

The World Trade in Rhino Horn: A Review*

(September 1992)
Nigel Leader-Williams
40pp. ISBN 0 947613 86 2.

A summary of the available information on volumes and prices of rhino horn on world markets and an examination of policies to halt the rhino horn trade.

* Out of print. Photocopies available.

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TRAFFIC DISPATCHES

February 1997

IUCN
The World Conservation Union



Preparations under way for global meeting on wildlife trade controls

Government delegates from around the globe will meet in Zimbabwe during June to discuss international trade controls on more than 100 plant and animal species. Preparations in the TRAFFIC Network, which will serve as a technical advisor at the meeting, are already well under way.

The event will mark the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, which is the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. In 1994, the biennial event was the largest to date, drawing more than 3,000 participants from 124 countries.

Among the issues to be debated this year are proposals to ban international trade in all Asian and European populations of Brown Bears *Ursus arctos* and to regulate the international trade in Big Leaf Mahogany *Swietenia macrophylla*. In regard to the latter, a similar proposal in 1994 was narrowly defeated in a secret ballot, the first ever in the history of the Convention. Proposals to allow international trade in ivory stocks from African Elephants *Loxodonta africana* in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe, and the shell of Cuban populations of Hawksbill Turtles *Eretmochelys imbricata* will also be considered.

Among the chief tasks of TRAFFIC staff at this time is to act as expert reviewers of the trade information in the proposals to be considered at the meeting. TRAFFIC's analyses are compiled together with detailed reviews by the IUCN Species Survival Commission on the biological status of each species in question.

The final document, the *Analyses of Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices* is published by IUCN and distributed to all CITES Parties prior to the meeting.

The analyses project is challenging, with tight review deadlines and liaison necessary with staff in many countries. In 1994, the number of proposals was said to be the highest ever at 130. The final document totalled 266 pages.

This year the reviews will be particularly important as the first occasion on which new criteria for listing species in the Appendices will be applied. The criteria, adopted in 1994, set stricter scientific standards for species to be included in the Appendices and, therefore, regulated in international trade. As part of their reviews, TRAFFIC and SSC experts attempt to determine whether the proposed action meets the conditions of the new criteria.

Following the analyses project, TRAFFIC reviews the proposals further and forms its recommendations to the Parties on each one. In 1994, TRAFFIC's species recommendations were mirrored by the decisions of the CITES Parties for more than 90 per cent of the proposals under discussion.

Since its creation in 1976, TRAFFIC has worked to ensure the success of the Convention, which took effect in 1975. Doing so is a tall order. The treaty now has 134 member countries and regulates the international trade in some 34,000 plants and animals. However, its success is dependent not on the number of member countries or species covered, but rather on the level of national and regional implementation. Like other international treaties, signing is one step; implementation is quite another. Few member countries meet all of the basic requirements.

Aside from the Analyses project and recommendations, TRAFFIC will also produce a series of reports, including reviews of efforts to curtail illegal trade in Tiger and rhinoceros products.

INSIDE:

- *Aloe tapping in South Africa: is it sustainable?*
- *Partners launch initiative for better conservation data*
- *Study helps put sturgeon on international agenda*
- *East Asia bear bile update prompts action*
- *TRAFFIC organises bear trade symposium*
- *EU adopts new wildlife trade legislation*
- *Assisting with CITES implementation in Asia*
- *Sharks under pressure*

Research finds South Africa's *Aloe ferox* industry in need of safeguarding

Aloe ferox is one of the world's most widely used medicinal plants, particularly in industrialised countries such as Germany and the USA.

The crystallised concentrate derived from the plant's sap, known as "aloe bitters", is utilised as a laxative; purgative; for arthritis; in beverages; and even for ridding cattle of ticks and pigeons of parasites. Gels produced from the flesh of the leaves are also used in the preparation of skin and hair care products.

In South Africa, "aloe tapping" for the sap has occurred for three centuries and the aloe industry creates employment opportunities for many communities, according to a new report by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa on the country's *Aloe ferox* plant, parts and derivatives industry.

The report by David J. Newton and Hugo Vaughan culminates a four-year project by the South Africa office of TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa to assess South Africa's domestic and

export trade in *Aloe ferox* and its impact on the country's wild populations of the plant.

The research indicates that wild *Aloe ferox* plants bear an estimated 95 per cent of the harvesting pressure, with the leaves of at least 10 million and possibly as high as 17 million plants harvested per annum.

During 1981-1994, South Africa reported exporting 3,533 tonnes of crystalline bitters to 15 international destinations, with Germany as the most important.

The study found that South Africa's *Aloe ferox* industry apparently represents an example of sustainable utilisation of a wild plant resource but one that needs to be further studied as well as safeguarded.

Aloe ferox remains populous and widespread in the country. Having a vested interest in the industry, aloe tappers also normally only remove a certain proportion of the plant's leaves, ensuring the survival of the

plant for future harvesting as well as the tappers' livelihood. In addition, the harvesting industry continues to be small and has not been taken over by international interests, which has helped ensure the survival of traditional and sustainable harvest techniques.

However, the report notes that no scientific research has been conducted into the long-term survival rates of harvested plants and further research is also required to assess the impact of harvest on seedling recruitment. The authors also recommend the development of a formal management plan for *Aloe ferox*. As industrial development expands in South Africa, so, too, will demand on the country's natural resources, making it important for the conservation of *Aloe ferox* and other genetic resources to be integrated into regional management and protected area reviews.

IUCN partners launch BCIS initiative

Better data for better decisions

TRAFFIC has joined eight other IUCN programmes and partners in an initiative to improve the access to data and information about the world's biodiversity. Together, these nine partners may represent the single greatest global source of biodiversity conservation information in the world.

The initiative, officially launched at IUCN's World Conservation Congress in October 1996, aims to create the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS). The decentralised information system will serve as a barometer of threats to species, habitats and landscapes. It will also help monitor the success of conservation or protective measures.

Sources of biodiversity information are abundant but are often incompatible and dispersed among thousands of individuals, organisations and government agencies. No guide exists as to which data are available, and access to the known existing data is frequently on an *ad hoc* basis while the quality of this information is often unknown.

BCIS will identify key sources of data and establish globally accepted indicators and standards; integrate and disseminate quality data and information that will aid decision makers; and build capacity among both information providers and users.

A global data and information system was first prioritised by the IUCN Species Survival Commission in 1994. A broader approach in 1995 led to the nine-member consortium. In addition to SSC and TRAFFIC, the other founding IUCN partners and programmes are Birdlife International, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management, IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Wetlands International, and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

To date, the partners have established a steering committee; signed an agreement of principles; undertaken an assessment of their needs and capabilities; and identified pilot projects.

TRAFFIC Dispatches

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TRAFFIC is a joint programme of IUCN—The World Conservation Union and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)*. It works globally to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is at sustainable levels and in accordance with national laws and international treaties.

The TRAFFIC Network works in co-operation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

TRAFFIC Dispatches is published by TRAFFIC International to keep the Network's partners and supporters informed about our activities and accomplishments.

* WWF continues to be known as World Wildlife Fund in Canada and the USA.

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Study helps put Caspian sturgeon conservation higher on international agenda

TRAFFIC Europe's study of the international trade in caviar from the Caspian Sea has helped place the conservation of sturgeon higher on political agendas within the region and at the international level.

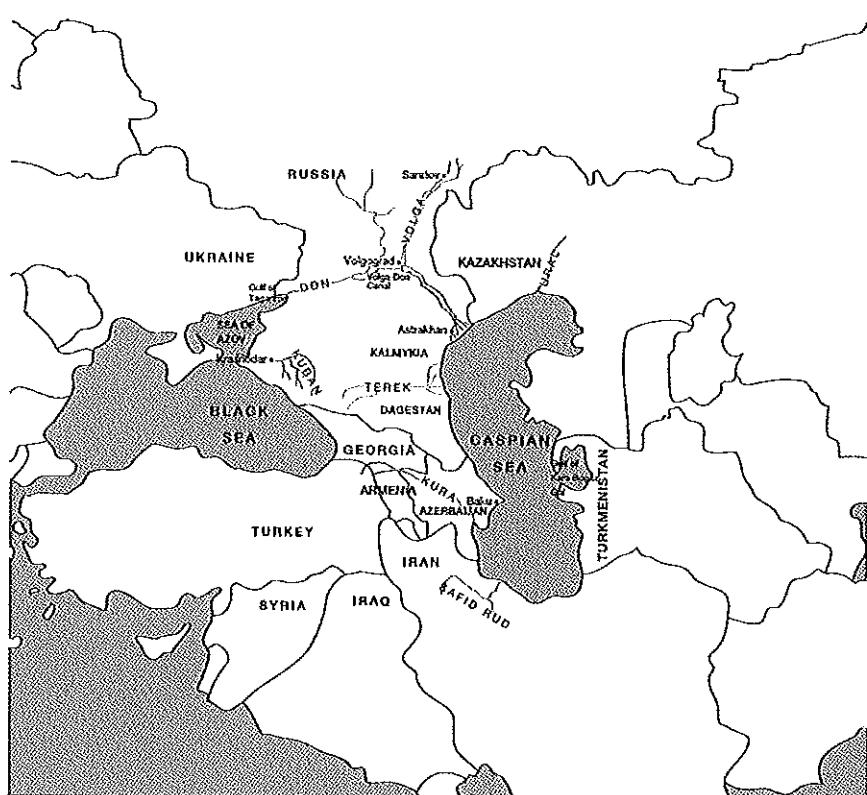
The findings of the study, released in November, contributed significantly to a proposal put forth by Germany and the USA in December for the international trade in sturgeons and sturgeon products to be closely regulated.

They may have also helped prompt a final agreement in November for better management of sturgeon fisheries among the nations bordering the sea.

The findings, published in the report *Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar* by TRAFFIC Europe Director Toin De Meulenaer and consultant Caroline Raymakers, include that up to 90 per cent of the world's sturgeon catch and caviar now comes from only three species in the Caspian: Beluga *Huso huso*, Russian Sturgeon *Acipenser gueldenstaedti* and Stellate Sturgeon *A. stellatus*. The sea itself is the centre of a lawless catch and trade characterised by poaching, illegal production and smuggling on a massive scale.

Once bordered by only the USSR and Iran, the collapse of the USSR left the shores of the sea shared by Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan. TRAFFIC found that the subsequent lifting of fishing regulations or lack of enforcement of existing ones has led to an unfettered harvest of sturgeon for caviar. Fishing on the open sea, once banned, is widespread. In addition, illicit trade has become a major method of selling caviar within the region and on the international market from sturgeon poached in the Caspian Sea basin.

The proposal by Germany and the USA is to list 24 sturgeon species in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). An Appendix II listing would require that these sturgeons and their products in international trade be accompanied by permits. To date, three sturgeon species are listed, but



none of Caspian origin.

Almost all sturgeon species are threatened to some degree and some species and populations are considered critically endangered. The proposal will be considered at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in June 1997.

The proposal followed multi-lateral consultations in Moscow organised by Russia and Germany. They included representatives from the two countries, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine as well as TRAFFIC Europe. The IUCN/SSC Sturgeon Specialist Group has played a key role in moving the CITES-listing proposal forward.

Among the many actions recommended in the TRAFFIC report is for an evaluation to determine whether more sturgeon species would meet the CITES-listing criteria. The convention offers the possibility to develop an international legal framework whereby legally and sustainably harvested sturgeon products could be distinguished from others, although TRAFFIC recognises that enforcement of any listing of such a shared natural resource would require considerable

research to ensure exports would not be detrimental to survival of sturgeon in the wild.

The report also recommended that all Caspian Sea fishing nations agree on co-ordinated management of their sturgeon fisheries. This should include development of a common fisheries policy, consideration of a ban on open-sea fishing and the setting of quotas.

In mid-November, just four days after the release of the study, Caspian Sea fishing nations were reported to have moved in this direction.

Several international news reports in November indicated that the five countries bordering the Caspian Sea agreed to ban fishing on the open sea in 1997. While TRAFFIC has not received official confirmation of the agreement, the agencies quoted the deputy chief of Russia's State Fishing Committee as saying that the countries agreed to allow fishing only in the lower reaches of the Volga and Ural Rivers and to carry out regular raids to catch poachers.

Such an agreement had been under discussion in the region, and would be a welcome step toward more effective conservation of Caspian sturgeons.

East Asia bear bile update prompts action

Push for better enforcement in China gains ground

TRAFFIC East Asia's update on the region's trade in bear gall bladder and bile has helped lead to three achievements, including adoption by the CITES Animals Committee of a resolution calling for increased efforts to stop the illegal trade in bear parts and products.

The update, presented to the relevant governments and to the CITES Animals Committee in September 1996, also led to a meeting in China between TRAFFIC representatives and officials from China's Ministry of Forestry. The ministry issues permits for trade in species listed in the Appendices of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

In addition, a government delegation from South Korea visited Hong Kong to explore the update's recommendation that South Korea adopt a bear gall bladder registration system similar to that employed in Hong Kong.

The update documented TRAFFIC's repeated findings of bear bile openly for sale in the departure areas of China's international airports during 1996, as it had in 1995. It reported on the widespread availability in Hong Kong of bear bile medicines made in China, and on South Korea's increasing number of seizures of bear gall

bladders from personal luggage.

One key TRAFFIC recommendation was for the Animals Committee to request China to clarify its controls on the trade in bear parts and products, including manufactured medicines.

The bile within the gall bladder is the most coveted medicinal part of the bear for use in traditional medicine in East Asia. In traditional Chinese medicine, medical applications include treatment of life-threatening cancers, burns and serious liver ailments. In South Korea, bear bile is widely consumed as a general health tonic.

The two-page resolution adopted by the Animals Committee calls on the CITES Secretariat to request member countries to report at the CITES meeting in June 1997 on their legislative and regulatory controls and enforcement efforts in regard to bear poaching and illegal trade in bear products. In turn, the Secretariat made this request to member countries in November.

The resolution calls on the CITES Standing Committee to strongly urge all countries "to endeavour to eliminate the illegal trade in bears parts and products" and for the committee to include international trade aspects of bear conservation as an issue of special concern at the June CITES conference.

TRAFFIC representatives travelled

to Beijing one week before the Animals Committee meeting to meet with the Chinese Ministry of Forestry officials. During the discussions, the Chinese officials said that they have finally stopped the sale of farmed bear bile at Beijing Capital Airport.

In addition, they said the ministry is working towards stopping illegal exports of bear products by taking such steps as increasing the capacity of Customs and Public Security Bureau staff to intercept these products. They said they have notified all bear farms and relevant authorities that the export of farmed bear bile is illegal.

TRAFFIC will continue to monitor the situation.

In June 1996, China had 481 bear farms in 12 provinces and regions, with 7,642 bears and nearly 4,000 of these tapped for bile production, according to the government. At least 7,000 of these bears were Asiatic Black Bears *Selenarctos thibetanus*, the parts and derivatives of which are banned from international commercial trade under CITES. To export bile from any of these farms, the Chinese government would first have to submit a successful application to the CITES Secretariat for the farm in question to be registered as a captive-breeding operation. As of January 1997, no such application had been submitted.

The South Korean delegation that visited Hong Kong included representatives from the Customs Office, the Ministry of Environment's Global Environment Division and the MOE's Ecosystem Division, the latter two of which serve as the CITES authorities in South Korea. The delegation also included representatives from the Association of Korean Oriental Medicine, formerly known as the Korean Oriental Medical Association.

The visit, arranged by TRAFFIC East Asia, enabled the officials to learn more about Hong Kong's bear gall bladder registration system, which aims to prevent illegally obtained gall bladders from entering the legal domestic market. The delegation also visited the Hong Kong government's forensic laboratory. South Korean CITES officials have since said that

Facts on traditional Chinese medicine

- TCM has been utilised for perhaps 5,000 years.
- No traditional medicine system is as widely practised. TCM is used throughout Asia and by Asian communities worldwide.
- TCM uses more than 1,000 plant and animal species, from bears to seahorses to orchids.
- More than 85% of traditional Chinese medicines are plant-based.
- Most TCM products are *not* aphrodisiacs.
- The use of TCM is increasing in all parts of the world.

they are considering adopting a similar bear gall bladder registration system

South Korea allowed the legal import of 66 kilos of bear gall bladder during 1996, but confiscated 122 kilos of bear gall bladder from travellers attempting to smuggle them into the country in their personal luggage between January and October 1996, according to data from the Customs Office.

When South Korea first joined CITES in 1993, it entered a three-year reservation on implementing the trade restrictions for those bears listed in Appendix II, such as the Polar Bear *Ursus maritimus* and most populations of Brown Bear *Ursus arctos*. While South Korea still required bear gall bladder importers to obtain a permit from the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the reservation allowed the country to not implement the terms of the Convention for those species. However, South Korea officially withdrew its reservation in October 1996.

The government says Customs have since stepped up their efforts to search for bear products at international ports and airports. In addition to the recommendation for a registration system, officials say they are also considering adopting several of TRAFFIC's other recommendations to help the country combat illegal trade in bear products.



Asiatic Black Bear *Selene arctos thibetanus*

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TRAFFIC organises international symposium

Bear specialists, policy makers, and management and enforcement officials from around the globe will gather at an international symposium in March to share information on the trade in bear parts and to better judge the conservation needs of bears.

The symposium, titled the Second International Symposium on the Trade of Bear Parts, will take place 21-23 March, 1997 at Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle, Washington, USA. It will be co-hosted by the TRAFFIC Network, the IUCN/SSC Bear Specialist Group, the zoo, WWF Canada and WWF US.

The first symposium, convened in 1994 by TRAFFIC USA, was the first of its kind to provide such an international forum on bear trade issues. More than 100 people attended from the USA, Canada, Russia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Korea and Japan.

Although the symposium was very

successful, the participants identified a critical need for a second symposium to more fully evaluate the complex issues relating to bear trade, management and conservation.

Most of the world's eight bear species have experienced dramatic population declines in recent decades, primarily because of habitat loss and conflicts with humans.

More recently, however, bears are being killed more and more often for their body parts used in traditional Asian medicines. Bear meat, paws and fat are also valued for food, and their claws and teeth for jewellery and souvenirs. The illegal trade in bear parts and derivatives has become a pressing issue in many countries.

While bear hunting and the trade in bear parts remain legal in some countries, international trade in all bears and their parts is banned or regulated

under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Among the panel topics planned at the March symposium are perspectives and complexities of the trade; regulating the legal trade; a view from the field and the courtroom on stopping the illegal trade; what forensic analyses reveal about the trade in bear parts; and international conservation initiatives or national solutions. The most recent information on the global status of bears will also be presented.

It is hoped the information shared will lead to recommendations that will contribute greatly to the discussions about trade in bear products expected at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in June 1997. One proposal to be considered at the conference calls for further restrictions on international trade in Brown Bears.

EU adopts new wildlife trade legislation

by Elizabeth Fleming and Karen Flanders, TRAFFIC Europe

The European Union (EU) adopted in December one of the most sophisticated and comprehensive wildlife trade laws in the world, *Council Regulation (EC) on the Protection of Species of Wild Fauna and Flora By Regulating Trade Therein*. The new regulation has the potential to bring about vast improvements in the regulation of wildlife trade throughout the region.

As one of the largest markets for plants and animals in the world, the EU trades in a variety of species listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). It is an important wildlife consuming market, and a decision-making centre that influences world trade patterns and international conservation policies.

The new regulation is the result of more than five years of work, which incorporated contributions from the European Commission, Parliament, EU member states, TRAFFIC Europe, WWF and other organisations. The commission first tabled a proposal in 1991 to replace the existing legislation, which had become outdated since its adoption in 1984.

TRAFFIC Europe long supported the development and adoption of improved EU legislation. It assisted European institutions, including the Parliament, Commission, wildlife trade officials, and Customs authorities to identify implementation and enforcement problems to be addressed.

TRAFFIC Europe has also joined forces with WWF and the European Commission to carry out a pan-European information campaign about the new regulation.

Highlights of the regulation

All European citizens and visitors to EU countries will have to observe the new law beginning 1 June 1997. The law regulates the import and export of some 30,000 wild plant and animal species and their products, such as crocodilian skins, parrots and corals.

From a conservation perspective, the new regulation is superior to the existing legislation. It concentrates on the protection, regulation or monitoring of

wild plants and animals that are or may be affected by trade. It aims to clear up problems within the former legislation by setting out more precise procedures, definitions and responsibilities.

At the same time, it is designed to be able to respond to future changes, such as the necessity to adapt enforcement procedures and incorporate new scientific information that may necessitate a modification of the regulation.

The regulation respects the basic tenets of CITES that trade in wildlife should not endanger the conservation status of the wild species involved and is allowable only if it is conducted legally and at sustainable levels. It aims to improve application of CITES and wildlife trade regulations in all 15 member states by:

- clarifying obligations of member states to the Convention and incorporating its provisions into the basic foundation of the regulation;
- tightening trade controls at the Union's external borders in light of the creation of the single market and the abolition of internal border controls. A limited number of ports of entry must be designated for the import and export of regulated species, and must have sufficient and adequately trained staff;
- simplifying the implementation by clarifying criteria and procedures to be followed for internal trade and the import, export, transit and re-exportation of the species covered by the regulation;
- including CITES-listed and other plants and animals on the basis of conservation merit, a reflection of increased attention to the conservation status of wild species in trade;
- improving enforcement by setting new requirements, such as that member states must set penalties for infractions and introduce penalties for seizing wildlife. In addition, an EU-level enforcement body has been established to co-ordinate and harmonise enforcement; and

• standardising co-operation and communication among the member states, Commission and the CITES Secretariat by designating particular situations in which these bodies must communicate and specifying the parties to be contacted.

The information campaign

Information dissemination will, in part, determine the effectiveness of the new legislation.

One of the biggest problems under the former EU wildlife trade legislation was a lack of understanding of its provisions on the part of the general public, traders and officials. As a result, the new legislation specifically mandates that each member state inform citizens (i.e. travellers and wildlife traders) of the provisions of the new legislation.

Committed to ensuring the success of the legislation, TRAFFIC Europe, WWF and the European Commission have teamed together to launch the pan-European information campaign about the new regulation.

The information campaign, which was announced in December in conjunction with the news of the adoption of the regulation in Brussels, will focus on two target groups: travellers and professional traders/enforcement authorities.

Travellers will be informed before and during travel about the new law and the penalties for non-compliance. The campaign will be supported by articles in the press, news features and documentaries as well as an EU-wide advertising campaign.

Professional wildlife traders, authorities and agents involved with wildlife trade will receive an explanation of the legal and procedural requirements of the legislation before it enters into force in June. Information, translated into all official EU languages, will also be given to authorities to distribute to wildlife traders.

The information campaign will kick off in May, before the new legislation takes effect and the beginning of the summer tourist travel season as well as the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in June 1997.

Fact file: EU trade in CITES species, 1990-1994

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is one of the largest conservation treaties. It regulates international trade in some 30,000 species of plants and animals through a system of permits and certificates. These statistics on the European Union's net trade in species listed in the CITES Appendices in 1990-1994 are compiled from the annual reports of CITES member countries. These data are the most recent available. All of this trade is considered legal, and indicates the importance of the European Union market in the international trade in wildlife.

Primates: The EU was the second largest importer after the USA of live primates, importing 40,068 (27%) of the 146,041 traded worldwide during the period.

Wild cats: The EU was the world's largest importer of live wild cats, importing 1,500 (44%) of the 3,401 live wild cats recorded in world trade.

Parrots: As the world's number one importer of live parrots, lorries and cockatoos during this period, the EU imported 808,896 live parrots (44%) of the 1,823,140 traded on the world market.

Tortoises: The EU was the third largest importer, after the USA and Japan. It imported 47,499 or 22% of the 214,924 recorded in global trade.

Crocodilians: The major market for alligator, caiman and crocodile skins during this period, the EU imported 1,289,912 whole skins, or 35% of the world total of 3,706,676 skins. While the total number of crocodilian skins in global trade increased during the period, the percentage of skins imported into the EU decreased from 49% in 1991 to 26% in 1994.

Monitor Lizards: The EU was the second largest importer after Japan, importing 1,377,212 skins or 13% of the total trade on the international market. The EU was also the second most important importer after the USA of live monitor lizards, importing 38,998 animals (17%) of the 228,091 recorded in world trade.

Chameleons: Second to the USA, the EU was a major importer of live chameleons, importing 52,915 or 19% of a global trade totalling 278,413 live chameleons.



Poison arrow frog *Dendrobates pumilio*

© T.Laffman, CITES Enforcement Team, Headrow

Boas and Pythons: Second in importance only to the USA, the EU imported 95,734 live boas and pythons, or 15% of the 652,124 live animals in global trade.

Poison Arrow Frogs: The EU was a major importer, after the USA, of these frogs (left), importing 3,800 or 18% of the 20,962 live poison arrow frogs in international trade.

Corals: The EU imported 2,584,192 pieces of raw stony coral or 20% of the world trade totalling 12,658,213 pieces.

Plants (Appendix I): The EU imported 62,258 of these live plants, and was the third main importer after Japan and the USA. World trade in live Appendix I plants totalled 562,758 plants. The EU was also the world's largest importer of Appendix I plant seed.

Snowdrop, Winter Daffodil and Cyclamen bulbs: The EU was the biggest importer of live Snowdrop, Winter Daffodil and Cyclamen plants and bulbs in trade, importing 56,206,509 specimens or 53% of the world trade totalling 98,355,759 plants.

* These data represent the net imports of specimens by the 12 nations that were EU members during the period. Net import figures were calculated by subtracting the total declared exports from the total declared imports.

African Elephant dialogue moves forward

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa presented in-depth information on the status of ivory stocks in Africa, illegal trade in ivory, and the historical trade in elephant hide at a recent meeting on African Elephant conservation attended by high-ranking government officials from 31 African countries.

The November meeting in Dakar, Senegal, followed a mandate from Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1994 for countries with African Elephants to meet and discuss Africa's ivory stocks and other African Elephant issues. The Convention has banned international trade in elephant products since 1990.

Government ministers and national park directors were among the delegates from African countries at the meeting, for which IUCN-The World Conservation Union and the CITES Secretariat served as the secretariat at the request of the African countries. The Secretariat served on behalf of the UN Environment Programme.

During the dialogue, delegates agreed that while the circumstances of each country and the status of their elephant populations differ, they share many challenges. For example, direct human-elephant conflicts, loss of elephant range and habitat, the impact of locally abundant elephants on biodiversity, the management of elephants

outside of protected areas, and the need to restore viable populations in some countries are all pressing issues.

Particular emphasis was placed on discussing complex issues, such as the growing government and privately held ivory stocks, the threat of a continuing and possibly expanding illegal ivory trade, and necessary controls for future legal trade in elephant products.

The delegates agreed ivory stocks held by range states pose problems for long-term management because of the high cost of storage, security issues, and the degradation of the stored ivory.

Prior to the meeting, a TRAFFIC report was circulated indicating that 29 countries legally held an estimated 409 tonnes of ivory, 29 per cent of which is held by the private sector. However, new information put on the table at the meeting increased the total to more than 462 tonnes in 33 countries, but data are still incomplete for at least five range states. The total also does not include undeclared or illegal stocks, which may exist in significant volumes. TRAFFIC's detailed report will be published in the next *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, the Network's journal.

Illegal trade in ivory continues worldwide, despite the global ban. Based on the information from TRAFFIC's database of global ivory seizures since 1989 and information of their own, the delegates agreed that illegal ivory trade is a concern, and

improvements in enforcement and management capacity should be a priority for all African Elephant range states. They also agreed to urge all CITES Parties to provide information about ivory seizures to TRAFFIC for inclusion in its database, known as the Bad Ivory Database System (BIDS).

BIDS is the only database of its kind, and may be the only quantitative means to comprehensively monitor global illegal ivory trade developments and trends in the post-CITES ban period. As of November 1996, BIDS held the details of 3,584 ivory seizures in 39 countries in Europe, North America, Africa, Asia and Oceania. An analysis of BIDS can help determine trade routes and even new smuggling techniques.

One finding is that while most international consignments of contraband ivory have usually been transported as sea or air cargo, quantities of up to three kilos of semi-worked ivory are now being sent through the post.

Delegates from Botswana, Namibia, Sudan and Zimbabwe also presented proposals for future trade in elephant products. All but Sudan have since submitted proposals to the CITES Secretariat to transfer their elephant populations to CITES Appendix II, which allows international trade through a system of permits. These proposals will be reviewed at the CITES conference in June 1997.

TRAFFIC staff thank the following supporters for their contributions during 1996:

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In December 1996, TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei hosted a workshop in Taiwan on the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Asia.

Parties to CITES has made its implementation of the Convention difficult. However, implementation problems are not limited to non-Parties.

A 1996 report by the CITES Secretariat to the CITES Animals

The session on specific issues in CITES implementation prompted some lively exchanges between participants on how different countries deal with issues. Examples of approaches adopted to meet the requirements of Article IV ranged from the decision of the Philippines to gradually phase out the export of wild-caught Appendix II species to the USA's Wild Bird Conservation Act, which requires exporting governments to adequately demonstrate to the US government that their bird exports will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild before the USA will allow the import in question.

Different approaches and attitudes toward the roles of captive breeding and artificial propagation in conservation of wildlife were also touched upon. Determining legal acquisition of founder stock has proved to be a complicated issue for both animal and plant species as has definition of commercial versus non-commercial trade.

The disposal of live confiscated specimens has proved problematic as well. Adherence to the guidelines in the CITES resolution on disposal of confiscated live animals adopted at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES can require a huge commitment of financial and other resources on the part of a confiscating government if the country of origin is unable or unwilling to expedite the return of confiscated specimens.

Although the workshop was not intended to produce recommendations or conclusions, two common threads ran through the different sessions. The first was that individual countries' understanding and implementation of CITES tends to show marked improvement as agencies became more familiar with the Convention. The second thread, somewhat offsetting the first, was the growing complexity of international trade in wildlife, with the trade in medicinal species a case in point.

Issues are emerging which stretch the role of CITES beyond that envisioned when it was first drafted more than 20 years ago. Meeting these emerging challenges will require an adaptive approach on the part of the Convention and a commitment by its 134 member countries to increase co-operation and communication. The Taipei workshop was a step in this direction.

Assisting with CITES implementation

by Marcus Phipps, TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei

The workshop, the second on CITES in Taiwan organised by TRAFFIC, brought together representatives from Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and the USA as well as more than 50 participants from the local government, research, and academic communities.

The first workshop, in 1995, focused on the mechanics of implementing the Convention, including permit issuance, fraud detection, and annual reporting. After the 1995 workshop, it was felt that Taiwan would benefit from further clarification of the formal roles of the management authority and scientific authority, with particular emphasis on the latter. The CITES management authority of each country is responsible for issuing permits and certificates for the import and export of species listed in the CITES Appendices; the scientific authority provides technical advice to the management authority.

It was also thought that more understanding of the different models adopted by CITES parties, particularly in Asia, would be of great utility in strengthening Taiwan's implementation of the Convention.

Taiwan, because of its unusual political status and lack of UN recognition, is unable to become a party to CITES or to formally participate in the CITES process. However, the Convention requires equivalent documentation from non-CITES parties for imports and also requests that they identify authorities capable of functioning as management and scientific authorities. In addition, in recent years the Parties have placed increasing emphasis on input from scientific authorities, particularly for CITES species often in trade.

Taiwan's lack of formal ties with the CITES Secretariat and many of the

Committee indicated that a significant number of Parties were experiencing problems in the functioning of their scientific authorities. It suggested that future workshops include more extensive examination of the functions of the scientific authority. The workshop in Taipei was the first to do so.

The principal objectives of the 1996 workshop were to examine the different structures for CITES management and scientific authorities being utilised in select Asian countries; to discuss key issues that constitute challenges to effective implementation of the Convention; and strengthen Taiwan's ability to effectively implement CITES through increased understanding of the roles of the management and scientific authorities in the Convention.

The workshop began with a session outlining the general principles and structure of CITES and the function and responsibilities of the two authorities as set out in the Convention. The next session consisted of individual country presentations that examined the legal basis for CITES implementation nationally; the structure adopted for the management and scientific authorities and their functions; communications between these authorities; and co-operation with other agencies.

Sessions on the second day included the relationship between CITES and non-governmental organisations and a look at specific issues in CITES implementation, such as captive breeding, artificial propagation, and implementation of Article IV, which sets out the conditions under which trade can occur in species listed in CITES Appendix II. The final session dealt briefly with issues to be discussed at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in June 1997.

Sharks under pressure

Sharks are exploited for their meat, fins, skin and internal organs, and this trade in shark products is growing and intensifying.

TRAFFIC released the most comprehensive global overview to date of the trade in sharks and shark products in December. The 106-page report, *An Overview of World Trade in Sharks and Other Cartilaginous Fishes* by Debra A. Rose, followed a two-year study that involved dozens of staff and several consultants.

The overview report includes the results of regional TRAFFIC studies in Europe, India, East and southern Africa, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Oceania, and North and South America. It has been distributed to more than 1,000 fisheries managers, shark specialists and policy makers around the globe. It has also led to more than 100 newspaper articles and items in television newscasts in at least a dozen countries.

The scope of the study, both in the issues addressed and the geographical range covered, illustrate the strength of TRAFFIC as a global network with staff on the ground in 19 countries. Most importantly, however, the results of the study provide considerable insight into the sources of supply, the nature of demand for various products and the dynamics of the trade.

Shark meat

According to data from the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), world exports of fresh, chilled and frozen shark meat more than doubled between 1985 and 1994, rising from 22,203 tonnes in 1985 to 47,687 tonnes in 1994. The number of exporting nations climbed from 18 in 1985 to 37 in 1994, while the number of importing countries increased from 12 to 36 during the same period. However, FAO data are likely to represent only a small fraction of actual world production.

Sharks have gained increasing shares in recent years of domestic and international meat markets. In Europe, South America and the USA, fresh shark steaks and fillets are commonly offered in supermarkets. In Europe, a variety of sharks feature prominently in the diets of many Europeans and declining domestic fisheries have led

to increased imports of these species.

New products are also appearing in markets. One recently established processing plant in Port Adelaide, Australia produces shark jerky from Tiger Shark *Galeocerdo cuvier*, saw-sharks (Pristidae), inako sharks *Isurus* spp., and Blue Sharks *Prionace glauca* for export to North and South Korea.

Shortfin Mako meat is considered the world's finest quality shark meat and is used for sashimi in Asia and high-value fresh seafood markets in the USA and Europe.

Shark fins

Shark fins are most commonly used in shark fin soup, a Chinese delicacy that has been used for more than 2,000 years to honour special guests or important occasions.

At least 125 countries are involved in the shark fin trade, with Hong Kong at its centre. In addition to Hong Kong, China and Singapore are the world's biggest shark fin traders. In terms of producers, Taiwan is one of the world's largest, with reported annual production averaging nearly 1,000 tonnes from 1980 to 1996 but most of this amount is consumed domestically.

During the period 1980-1995, Hong Kong recorded imports of shark fin from the 125 countries and re-exports to 75 countries. From 1987 to 1995, the most important suppliers appear to have been China, Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, the USA and UAE. According to Hong Kong Customs data, total reported imports of shark fin rose from 2.7 million kg in 1980 to 6.1 million in 1995—an increase of more than 120 per cent. However, one key finding is that much of the increase appears to be fins counted at least twice in trade, which were exported from Hong Kong to China for processing and then re-exported back to Hong Kong for consumption on the domestic market or for export. This repeat counting of the fins in trade may also appear in the trade statistics for Singapore, China and regional trade centres, such as the USA and Yemen.

In recent years, a variety of new developments have taken place in the

trade. In the USA, fin dealers report the entry of numerous new entrepreneurs into the trade, increased market development and communications and thus more competition. A resulting rise in fin prices greatly stimulated a directed shark fishery in the southeast of the country. Increased trade networks and fin prices have also led to new markets for shark fins in Africa and increased fishing effort, with Chinese fin traders from Hong Kong in West Africa supplying outboard motors and gear to local fishermen for any shark fins harvested.

Shark skin for leather

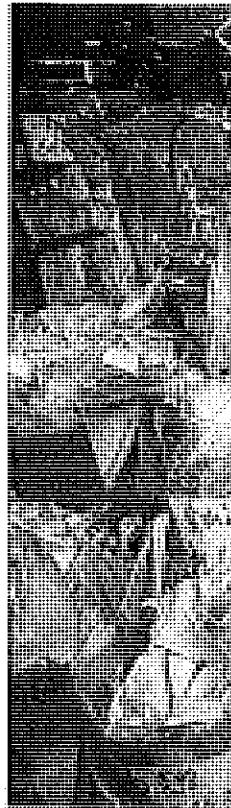
Shark skin is used to produce a variety of leather products, including handbags, watchstraps, cowboy boots and belts in a number of countries. It is also used for such purposes as sanding porcelain doll heads in New Zealand and as handle grip covers for bicycles or for saunding wooden boats in India.

In recent years, tanneries in Europe, Japan, Australia and Thailand have begun to process shark leather and attempts have been made in the Bay of Bengal region to utilise skins that would previously have been discarded. Production and trade data are unavailable for most producing countries, including those mentioned above.

Shark liver oil

The liver and body oils of sharks, such as the Piked or Spiny Dogfish *Squalus acanthias*, are used in the USA and Europe in the tanning and curing of leather.

Shark liver oil is also used in Japan in sanitary wipes for cleaning toilets, in a French perfumery, and sometimes as an ingredient in an over-the-counter haemorrhoid ointment made in the USA and distributed internationally. In Africa, shark liver oil is used or traded domestically within Eritrea, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania and Madagascar for





Dried shark fins for sale in Hong Kong

use in maintenance of traditional fishing vessels.

Shark liver oil also yields squalene, an acyclic hydrocarbon used in the manufacture of lubricants, bactericides, pharmaceuticals and cosmetic products such as skin creams. Japan has historically been one of the most important squalene producers. While export data are not available for Japan after 1980, South Korea reported importing an average of 52 tonnes annually from Japan during 1987 to 1994. It is estimated that one tonne of squalene could require the livers of 2,500 to 3,000 sharks.

One production trend suggested by TRAFFIC's regional market studies is a decline of shark liver and liver oil processing and marketing by many former suppliers, in part because of the difficulty of collecting the livers and the strong odour of the products. As a result, much of the current production has shifted to developing countries. Recently, a small enterprise has been formed in Papua New Guinea for the production of shark liver oil from gulper sharks *Centrophorus* spp. for reported export to Japan to make products to slow ageing of the skin.

South Korea appears to be among the world's largest consumers, with 364 tonnes imported in 1994 alone. While these products were found in

many countries, European markets for shark liver oil or squalene products appear to be growing. Growing European markets are also indicated by the development of new fisheries for liver oil in Spain.

Shark cartilage

Several medicinal and food products are produced from the cartilage of sharks. Chondrichthyan sodium, a chemical compound found in cartilage, is used in Japan as a treatment for eye fatigue and rheumatism, with Blue Sharks considered a good source. A chemical from shark cartilage has also been used in the development of synthetic skin for burn victims. Powder and capsules from shark cartilage have been marketed extensively, purporting to assist in the treatment of cancer.

Shark cartilage is a relatively new product on the market, and neither national fisheries agencies nor Customs agencies report production or trade volumes. Major producers include Australia, Japan and the USA. Shark cartilage is also supplied by and/or manufactured in other countries, such as Argentina, Mexico, New Zealand and possibly Kenya.

Conclusions and recommendations

Assessing the trade and conservation implications was no easy task and will

continue to be a difficult challenge in TRAFFIC's future shark-related work. The chief difficulties encountered included that the available information on catch, landings and trade is significantly incomplete and the species involved rarely specified.

Improved trade monitoring is clearly needed, but there is even more pressing need for improvements in basic fisheries management, research and data collection.

The following are highlights of TRAFFIC's many recommendations:

- All nations should apply the principles and standards in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries that address research and data collection;
- FAO and other international fisheries agencies; regional fisheries development agencies; and national fisheries agencies should initiate or improve the collection of data which indicate the species caught in commercial, subsistence and recreational fisheries;
- To assist in this effort, FAO should develop an elementary, user-friendly and simply illustrated identification manual for commonly fished species, which can be adopted or modified by national and regional agencies;
- Logbook reporting, dockside monitoring programmes and other monitoring efforts should be initiated or improved in artisanal, subsistence, recreational and large-scale commercial fisheries. This should be mandated for domestic vessels as well as foreign vessels operating in national waters or landing their catch in domestic ports;
- Regional and national fisheries agencies should develop economically feasible and sustainable management plans for shark fisheries vulnerable to over-exploitation; and
- Member countries of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) should continue to monitor the work of relevant agencies in improving the collection of data on shark fisheries and trade, as called for by CITES member countries in 1994. This could be facilitated through the formation of a CITES marine fisheries working group.

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DISPATCHES

April 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Assistance under way for sturgeon trade controls](#)
- ▶ [Moving into new media](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC USA expands to cover Canada and Mexico](#)
- ▶ [Substitutes symposium breaks new ground](#)
- ▶ [Tiger, rhinoceros medicines readily available in North America](#)
- ▶ [African Elephants: the Harare decisions and next steps explained](#)
 - ▶ [The Decisions](#)
 - ▶ [Next steps: action in the event of problems](#)
 - ▶ [Next steps: ivory stocks](#)
 - ▶ [Next steps: monitoring](#)
- ▶ [The medicinal trade in plants and animals](#)
- ▶ [Looking ahead...](#)
 - ▶ [Study of Ayurvedic and Tibetan medicine systems](#)
 - ▶ [Medicinal plant trade in Europe: a symposium](#)
- ▶ [CITES 25th Anniversary](#)
- ▶ [JEC Fund helps TRAFFIC](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Assistance under way for sturgeon trade controls

TRAFFIC is assisting preparations to help ensure international trade controls are implemented effectively for sturgeon and sturgeon products, such as caviar and meat.

As of 1 April 1998, all sturgeon and sturgeon products in international trade must have special documents under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

CITES member countries decided in June 1997 to list 23 species of sturgeon in Appendix II of the Convention, however they delayed the effective date of the listing to allow member countries adequate time to prepare. The remaining four species of sturgeon were already covered under CITES, two of them under CITES, two of them under Appendix I which bans international commercial trade.

Experts believe world populations of sturgeon may have already declined by up to 70 per cent. Today, only four species in the Caspian Sea provide up to 90 per cent of the world's caviar supply. While the CITES monitoring and control system could contribute to the long-term survival of Assistance under way for sturgeon trade controls

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TRAFFIC Europe, which produced the 1996 report *Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar*, has comprehensive plans to assist. Some components are under way while others still need funding assistance.

Among the activities under way is the frequent dissemination of updated information on the implications of the Appendix II listing. For example, a booklet about CITES implementation for these fish and their products in the European Union has been developed and will soon be published.

TRAFFIC Europe has also collected information on the identification of sturgeons and sturgeon products and reviewed availability and application of forensic identification techniques. This is important because in order to implement a CITES listing properly, enforcement authorities need to be able to determine the species from which any product originated.

A uniform marking system could help, and CITES Parties have already called for the exploration of such a system. In January, TRAFFIC Europe participated in the *First Meeting on Conservation of Sturgeons and on Enforcement Aspects of their Inclusion in Appendix II of CITES*, which recommended this type of system include such details as the species' scientific name, the country and basin of origin, and the harvest year. The meeting was held in Moscow and convened by the CITES Secretariat. A full report will be published in *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, the journal of the TRAFFIC Network.

In North America, where the USA in particular has long been a significant consumer of caviar, TRAFFIC North America will co-host a *Symposium on the Harvest, Trade and Conservation of North American Paddlefish and Sturgeon* in Tennessee in May.

The symposium, co-hosted by the Southeast Aquatic Research Institute and the Tennessee Aquarium, aims to convene representatives of state and federal fisheries, industry, and non-governmental organisations to discuss the listing and other issues likely to affect populations of North American sturgeon and paddlefish.

The meeting will provide a timely opportunity to discuss issues related to the long-term sustainability of these fish in North America, which is also a producer of caviar from both wild and farm-raised sturgeon.

► [Next](#)



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A uniform marking system could help, and CITES Parties have already called for the exploration of such a system. In January, TRAFFIC Europe participated in the *First Meeting on Conservation of Sturgeons and on Enforcement Aspects of their Inclusion in Appendix II of CITES*, which recommended this type of system include such details as the species' scientific name, the country and basin of origin, and the harvest year. The meeting was held in Moscow and convened by the CITES Secretariat. A full report will be published in *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, the journal of the TRAFFIC Network.

In North America, where the USA in particular has long been a significant consumer of caviar, TRAFFIC North America will co-host a *Symposium on the Harvest, Trade and Conservation of North American Paddlefish and Sturgeon* in Tennessee in May.

The symposium, co-hosted by the Southeast Aquatic Research Institute and the Tennessee Aquarium, aims to convene representatives of state and federal fisheries, industry, and non-governmental organisations to discuss the listing and other issues likely to affect populations of North American sturgeon and paddlefish.

The meeting will provide a timely opportunity to discuss issues related to the long-term sustainability of these fish in North America, which is also a producer of caviar from both wild and farm-raised sturgeon.

► [Next](#)



Moving into new media...

Information about TRAFFIC activities around the globe is now available on the World Wide Web, following the launch of a TRAFFIC Network web site in November.

The web site, www.traffic.org, includes details about the Network's purpose and priorities as well as updates on recent and ongoing projects and investigations.

Development of the site was identified as a priority in the strategy and action plan that guides the TRAFFIC Network's approach to communications.

The World Wide Web presents both a new and innovative means for TRAFFIC to further share information about the Network and its findings with those who can make a difference to policies and programmes on wildlife in trade.

The new TRAFFIC Network site also complements existing information about TRAFFIC on the web sites of other organisations, our partners and the web sites maintained by TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei and TRAFFICEast Asia-Japan.



The TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei site, [Wildlife on the Web \(WOW\)](#), was launched in September 1996 and has had at least 24 000 visitors. The Chinese-language site features articles on wildlife trade and other conservation issues of interest to Taiwan and the region.

Efforts to further develop the site received a significant boost in October when Liang Yi Cultural Undertakings Co. Ltd. held an exhibition of wildlife art in Taipei. The exhibition included a charity auction to benefit WOW.

The art works combined traditional Chinese embroidery techniques in wildlife paintings by four noted British wildlife artists: Ray Harris-Ching, Simon Combes, Matthew Hillier, and Alan Hunt.

The exhibition culminated in the auction conducted by Sotheby's with proceeds of NT\$500 000 (US\$17 500) going to support WOW.

TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan launched its [web site](#) in November 1996. The Japanese-language site features the newsletter produced by the office on wildlife trade issues.

Visit the TRAFFIC sites:

<http://www.traffic.org/>

<http://wow.org.tw/>

<http://twics.com/~trafficj/>

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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...and new geographical regions

TRAFFIC USA marked the start of the new year by expanding its area of responsibility to the other two countries of **North America**: Canada and Mexico. The move included a change of name to TRAFFIC North America, addition of a TRAFFIC representative in Canada and plans to initiate a trade research programme in Mexico.

The three North American countries are all major players on the international wildlife market. In addition, while all three countries have strong legislation controlling wildlife trade, there are still significant enforcement problems that impede the effectiveness of this legislation. In Canada, important moves have been made in recent years to improve capacity to effectively monitor and regulate wildlife trade. However, comprehensive wildlife trade legislation came into effect only in 1996 and the Canadian government now faces the challenge of effectively enforcing the legislation's many provisions.

"There is much to learn about the dynamics of wildlife trade in Canada, and bringing Canada into the fold of TRAFFIC's expertise and experience in these issues will improve Canada's stewardship of its wildlife resources and those of other jurisdictions," said Nathalie Chalifour, the new National Representative for TRAFFIC North America-Canada based in Ontario at WWF Canada.

TRAFFIC is also exploring the possibility of establishing presences in **Central America; South America; and West and Central Africa**. Studies of the feasibility of such a move have been conducted for each region, and TRAFFIC is now seeking funding to proceed.

- Central America has long been recognised as a significant producer, consumer, exporter and transhipper of wild plants and animals, ranging from parlor palms to iguanas. Illicit trade is thought to be substantial.
- In South America, the use and trade in wildlife and wildlife products through, within and from the region is significant. However, quantitative information on trade volumes and the impact upon the species in question is often poor to non-existent.
- In West and Central Africa, wildlife trade is very large and has a significant impact upon numerous species. Of greatest concern is the rapidly increasing exploitation of the rich forestry and timber resources of the Congo basin.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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Need for further research into Tiger bone and musk substitutes agreed

By Judy Mills, Director, TRAFFIC East Asia

Delegates from around the world came to Hong Kong in December 1997 to discuss substitutes for Tiger bone and musk in traditional East Asian medicine (TEAM), with the aim of taking commercial pressure off the Tiger and musk deer while not endangering the future of TEAM.

More than 110 participants from 16 countries and territories attended *The First International Symposium on Endangered Species Used in Traditional East Asian Medicine: Substitutes for Tiger Bone and Musk*, which was organized by TRAFFIC East Asia and the Chinese Medicinal Material Research Centre of The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The substitutes symposium came at the suggestion of traditional Chinese medicine specialists who attended an international symposium on TCM and wildlife conservation co-hosted by TRAFFIC East Asia and the Hong Kong Agriculture and Fisheries Department in 1995.

While discussion during the 1995 event was sometimes acrimonious, the 1997 symposium underscored a consensus between TEAM specialists and wildlife conservationists about the need for substitutes for medicines from animals and plants that are or may be in trouble in the wild. As important, both TEAM representatives and conservationists voiced their desire to continue the new dialogue for the sake of endangered species and the traditional medicine industry.

Also of significance was the fact that two of the main sponsors of the substitutes symposium were Asia-based TEAM companies, while the other two main sponsors represented wildlife conservation interests - a sign of the partnership emerging between members of the medicinal community and conservationists. The Rufford Foundation was the prime sponsor and patron of the symposium.



Photo credit: Michael J. B. Green

The agenda featured presentations from TEAM researchers about possible substitutes for Tiger bone and musk; Tiger and musk deer experts on the current status of the animals in the wild; conservation groups working to enlist TCM users in conservation measures; and from specialists in marketing to Asian consumers.

Tiger bone was chosen as a topic for the symposium because of the Tiger's highly endangered status, while musk was chosen because of its importance to TEAM and because the musk deer is vulnerable but not yet endangered in the wild.

Owing to the fact that the Tiger now may number as few as 5000 in the wild because of habitat destruction and over-hunting, international trade in Tiger parts is banned. In addition, China removed Tiger bone from its official pharmacopoeia and banned trade in medicines containing Tiger bone in 1993.

The bone of a wild rodent, a mole rat *Mysospalax baileyi* or *sailong*, is one of the most promising substitutes to replace Tiger bone under research at this time, according to the presenters. In fact, there is a new *sailong*-bone wine being marketed in mainland China for some of the same purposes Tiger-bone wine was once used. The bones of dogs, cows, goats and other domestic animals were discussed, as were combinations of herbs and bones.

While medicinal properties of lynx and leopard bone are being researched, their status in the wild and under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) would disqualify them as Tiger bone substitutes.

Musk, which is taken from the scent gland of male musk deer *Moschus spp.*, is used in some 300 TEAM prescriptions, in western homeopathic medicine and expensive perfumes. International trade in the musk from some populations is allowed under a system of CITES permits.



However, the annual demand for musk in China alone is estimated to be 500-1000 kilos, which would require the glands from at least 100 000 deer. While it has been estimated that some 700 000 musk deer remain in the wild, no one knows how long these species can withstand the current levels of hunting to meet the commercial demand for musk.

One presenter from mainland China said that China had harvested 2000 kilos of musk each year from its own musk deer populations in the 1950s and 1960s, but that amount had fallen to 500 kilos annually in the 1980s due to

declining musk deer populations. By the 1990s, very little of China's musk needs could be met from its own musk deer herds.

The three main musk substitutes under consideration in China at this time come from the Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus*; two civet species, *Viverra zibetha* and *Viverricula indica*; and from synthetic materials, one speaker said. IUCN/SSC Deer Specialist Group member Michael Green, who is considered to be one of the world's foremost authorities on musk deer, told the delegates that the harvesting of musk without killing the deer may be a viable option to provide real musk while providing incentives for local people to protect the deer and its habitat. However, he noted that this option would require strict regulatory systems to guard against over-exploitation.

TEAM researchers who spoke emphasized that they must find substitutes that are not simply similar but identical in effect to Tiger bone and musk. Other presenters addressed the challenge of getting both practitioners and consumers to accept substitutes once they are proven effective.

Successful substitutes would have to be effective, low-cost and without side effects. In addition, substitutes must not endanger other plants and animals in the wild. For example, while the mole rat or *sailong* is considered to be a pest species in parts of China and may number up to two million in total, some populations have declined to the point where they are considered rare. In addition, the conservation implications of harvesting large numbers for medicinal use have yet to be fully explored.

One TEAM representative who spoke during a round-table discussion at the end of symposium said he had once believed that wildlife conservationists were trying to "kill" the TEAM industry. Now, he said, he understands that the survival of TEAM is inextricably linked to wildlife conservation initiatives. At the same time, conservationists were heard saying that the symposium left them with a new understanding of TEAM and the importance of enlisting TEAM interests in the initiatives to conserve wild species.

The organizers hope the partnership recognised between TEAM representatives and wildlife conservationists during the December symposium will ultimately help save the Tiger from extinction, and prevent the musk deer and other wild species of medicinal value from going the way of the Tiger.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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Tiger, rhinoceros medicines readily available in North America

TRAFFIC is recommending that the Canadian, US and Chinese governments increase law enforcement and take other measures to help stop illegal international trade in Tiger and other endangered species medicines.

The action follows publication of a new TRAFFIC North America report documenting the ready availability in both Canada and the USA of products claiming to contain Tiger, rhinoceros and other endangered species.

Of the products with manufacturing information on the label, all were labelled as having been manufactured in China, despite that country's 1993 ban on the manufacture and export of Tiger and rhinoceros-based medicines.

The report, *While Supplies Last: The Sale of Tiger and Other Endangered Species Medicines in North America, 1996-1997* documents the findings of TRAFFIC surveys in the Chinese communities of Toronto, Vancouver, Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Seattle.

The report's release came only one week before the start of the Year of the Tiger in the Chinese lunar calendar. This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), under which international trade in all Tigers and their parts and derivatives is banned.

Of the 110 shops surveyed, 43 per cent offered Tiger-bone products for sale, including wines, plasters and manufactured medicines. In total, 50 per cent of the shops offered for sale medicines claiming to contain Tiger, rhinoceros or Leopard products.

As CITES member countries, both Canada and the USA prohibit import of Tiger, rhinoceros and other endangered species products. In addition, legislation in both countries prohibits domestic commercial trade. However, prosecutions of those selling these illegally imported products are few, if any,



Photo: I. Ledgerwood

because the burden of proving the products actually contain the species rests with the government. Doing so is difficult. For example, to date forensic tests are unable to detect the presence of ground up Tiger bone. Once these products get past the enforcement net at the borders, the market flourishes.

The widespread availability of these medicines in North America illustrates the need for Canada and the USA to develop national strategies to address illegal trade in such medicines.

TRAFFIC also recommends that the USA and Canada adopt legislation to prohibit the import, export and sale of products claiming to contain endangered species, whether or not these products actually contain the species in question. In March 1998, Canada introduced a regulatory proposal with labelling provisions. The process began with public consultations. The US Legislature is also considering adopting labelling legislation. Such legislation was recommended as an action for all countries at both the ninth and tenth CITES meetings.

Action must also come from China. Despite the ban, TRAFFIC has found such medicines for sale around the globe and in China itself. China is best placed to lead a global investigation of the true origin of these products. To help, TRAFFIC has provided the names of manufacturers found during the course of the investigations.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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CITES and African Elephants

The decisions and next steps explained

Several decisions regarding African Elephants and trade in elephant products were taken in June 1997 at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. These decisions are far-reaching and there is no doubt that elephant conservation has entered a new era. The decisions have also raised a number of important questions addressed in this briefing by Tom Milliken, Director of TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.



Photo: Nina Marshall/TRAFFIC

Was the African Elephant transferred to Appendix II?

No. Effective 18 September 1997, only the African Elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe will be in Appendix II. The African Elephant populations of 34 other African countries remain in Appendix I, as does the Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus*.

Does this mean that Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe can immediately trade ivory and other elephant products?

Beginning 18 September 1997, all three countries may export sport hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes and live elephants to "appropriate and acceptable destinations". Zimbabwe will also be able to export elephant hides, and leather goods and ivory carvings for non-commercial purposes. Non-commercial purposes means, for example, curios purchased by tourists as personal effects. Zimbabwe was the only one of the three proponent countries to request such trade.

In regard to the limited resumption of trade in raw ivory as agreed by the CITES Parties, it will not be allowed to take place until at least 21 months from the date of the Harare decision, and only then under agreed quotas and if specific criteria and conditions are met and certified by the CITES Standing Committee. The Standing Committee is the executive body of the Convention made up of government representatives from each region of the world. The

earliest this trade in raw ivory could take place would be 18 March 1999.

What are the conditions which need to be met before exports of raw ivory can resume?

The most important conditions call for the remedy of deficiencies in enforcement and control measures identified by the CITES Panel of Experts in the three African countries and in Japan; the support and commitment of the relevant range states to international co-operation in law enforcement; and the establishment of an international reporting and monitoring system to track illegal hunting of elephants and illegal trade in elephant products.



Photo: Jorgen B. Thomsen

The CITES Standing Committee must ensure that all of the conditions have been met, and establish a mechanism whereby trade in ivory can be halted and the African Elephant populations of the three countries can be returned to Appendix I in the event of non-compliance with the agreed conditions or a proven escalation in illegal hunting of elephants and/or trade in elephant products due to the resumption of trade.

The three African countries must also withdraw their reservations to the 1989 Appendix I listing of the African Elephant. A reservation is an official objection allowed under the terms of the Convention.

If these conditions are met, how much ivory can each country export?

The quota for Botswana was set at 25.3 tonnes, for Namibia at 13.8 tonnes, and for Zimbabwe at 20 tonnes. This is the maximum volume of ivory eligible for export. These quotas are regarded as experimental, and the impact of their export will be closely monitored. Any subsequent export of raw ivory would need the approval of a two-thirds majority of CITES member countries at a future Conference of the Parties. The next meeting of the Conference of the Parties will be held in November 1999 in Bali, Indonesia.

Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe have agreed to restrict exports to raw ivory of certifiable national origin which has been marked and registered in accordance with CITES procedures. Ivory which was confiscated or is of unknown origin will not be eligible for export.

Can the ivory be purchased by anyone and exported anywhere in the world?

No. Japan has been designated as the only country that can receive exports of raw ivory from Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Shipping to any other destinations will be prohibited. Japan was selected by the three African countries as the sole importer not only because it is a traditional market for ivory, but also because ivory products produced by Japanese manufacturers can all be consumed nationally without leaving the country. Thus, the re-export of worked ivory products to other destinations can be prevented, which simplifies trade monitoring and eliminates a potential avenue for illegal trade to develop. Indeed, it was a condition of the transfers to Appendix II that Japan prohibit export or re-export of any ivory for commercial purposes.

Are there any other safeguards in place to ensure that illegal ivory will not filter into the system and that elephant conservation benefits?

Yes. In addition to the conditions noted above, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe have also agreed to restrict the sale of ivory to a single, government-controlled centre in each country, and to export all purchased ivory in a single annual shipment from each country through the most direct route possible to Japan. All countries have further pledged to allow independent monitoring of the sale, packing and shipping process to ensure compliance with all conditions. Finally, all three countries have promised that all net revenues from the sale of ivory will be directed back into elephant conservation for use in monitoring, research, law enforcement, other management expenses or community-based conservation programmes within elephant range.

What did the CITES Parties agree with respect to stocks of ivory held by other African Elephant range states?

Elephant ivory continues to accumulate in most range states for a variety of reasons. TRAFFIC and the CITES Secretariat have estimated that more than 470 tonnes of legal ivory is held by government or private individuals. In 1994, the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties mandated that African Elephant range states begin a dialogue process and try to resolve the issue of Africa's growing stocks of ivory. As a result, representatives of the range states met to discuss African Elephant conservation issues, first in Senegal and then in Zimbabwe. At the June 1997 CITES meeting in Harare, the CITES member countries accepted a subsequent proposal from these range states to allow for the once-off purchase for non-commercial purposes of government stocks of ivory. The ivory, however, must be declared to the CITES Secretariat within 90 days of the end of the CITES conference. After this 18 September 1997 deadline, TRAFFIC has been mandated by the Parties to undertake an independent audit of all declared stocks of ivory.

What will happen to the ivory which the range states declare to the CITES Secretariat?

Although the precise mechanism and many of the details need to be determined by the CITES Standing Committee, the basic idea is for donor countries and organizations to step forward and purchase the ivory for non-commercial purposes. This means that the ivory could not be re-sold in any form and most likely would be destroyed. Disposal of such stocks of ivory would eliminate the security problems and financial liabilities that ivory stocks currently pose to African governments responsible for their safekeeping.

If that happens, who will get the money and how much will they get?

The CITES decision explicitly requires that range states direct any revenues generated from this once-off disposal of ivory stocks into conservation trust funds in each country to support conservation, monitoring, capacity-building and local community-based conservation programmes. In this way, the disposal of such ivory stocks will directly generate resources for the conservation of African Elephants. The precise details of how much money could be generated by such a scheme, including the price for the ivory, remain to be worked out. Ultimately, it will depend on the response of the donor community. The CITES decision specifically notes that the donor community previously failed to fund the Elephant Conservation Action Plans that all range states had produced at the urging of donor countries and conservation organizations following the 1989 listing of the African Elephant in Appendix I. It is hoped that this initiative will be more successful.

Will all of this attention on ivory stocks and the eventual resumption of even a limited ivory trade endanger other populations of elephants?

Some degree of illegal killing of elephants has continued in many range states since 1989 when the ivory trade ban was enacted. While poaching is at a lower level than prior to the ban, in some countries, the illegal off take may have increased in recent years due to a variety of factors, such as reduction in funding for anti-poaching measures and the number of enforcement personnel in the field. Whether or not the recent decisions taken at the CITES conference will further stimulate illegal killing of elephants remains to be seen, but such concerns need to be, and have been, taken seriously. Before any trade in ivory can commence, the CITES Parties have committed themselves to establish a comprehensive international monitoring system to track illegal trade in ivory throughout the world and the illegal killing of elephants in range states.

How will the monitoring system work?

The CITES Parties recognised TRAFFIC's Bad Ivory Database System (BIDS) as "the appropriate instrument for measuring the pattern and scale of illegal trade in ivory and other elephant products". BIDS was independently developed by TRAFFIC in 1992 to hold records of ivory seizures and confiscations that have occurred anywhere in the world since 1989. Already, through TRAFFIC's own efforts, BIDS contains more than 4,150 records, indicating that some 100 tonnes of ivory has been seized in over 40 countries worldwide since 1989. Now, all CITES Parties will be obliged to routinely provide data on ivory seizures to TRAFFIC, a development which will greatly enhance data collection and make BIDS an even more effective tool for monitoring illegal trade in elephant products on a global basis.

There is, however, no standardised monitoring system to measure current levels and trends of illegal elephant killing in African and Asian elephant range states. The CITES Parties mandated that such a system be established, and the African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups of IUCN's Species Survival Commission and TRAFFIC are charged with developing a uniform reporting protocol and database. The monitoring system will not only focus on the number of elephants being illegally killed, but also attempt to measure the effort and resources being applied to protection and detection in the field, as well as other factors that influence elephant mortality such as civil strife, the flow of illegal arms and ammunition, drought and the loss of habitat. The major challenge for such a system will be to assess the true relationship between any illegal killing of elephants and the international ivory trade.

Taken as a whole, will the various decisions made at the CITES conference improve the conservation of African Elephants?

There is little doubt that far-reaching decisions were made at the CITES conference, and that elephant conservation has entered a new era. While there appears to be broad commitment, both within and outside of Africa, to make the CITES decisions work to the benefit of elephant conservation, these new developments will need to be carefully monitored and evaluated to ensure their success. There is tremendous potential to put African Elephant conservation on a far more equitable footing with a broader range of options designed to generate substantial revenues for conservation purposes. At the same time, the mandate to establish far-reaching and effective programmes for monitoring the impact of the CITES decisions is also a major step forward, and a sign of the Convention's maturity. And finally, the African Elephant range states dialogue process will continue, providing a ready forum for all stakeholders to share their experiences in facing the challenge. There is an inherent element of risk in charting new directions, but the fact that the situation will be subject to a thorough review during the next two years and at the next CITES Conference of the Parties should ensure that if problems do arise, elephant populations would not decline seriously before corrective

measures could be taken in an expedient manner.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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The Decisions

In June 1997, the CITES Parties agreed to:

- transfer the African Elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe from Appendix I - the highest level of protection under CITES- to Appendix II, which allows international trade under a system of permits;
- allow all three countries to export elephant sport hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes, and live elephants, beginning September 18, 1997;
- allow Zimbabwe to export elephant hides and leather goods and ivory carvings for non- commercial purposes, beginning on the same date;
- allow a one-time export of iiory stocks from these three countries to Japan in 1999, but only if specific and strict conditions are first met; and
- under a specific procedure, allow for one-time registration for non-commercial disposal of ivory stocks held by African countries with elephants.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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Next steps: action in the event of problems

In March 1998, the 40th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee agreed that in the event of non-compliance with the decisions' conditions or escalation of illegal hunting or trade as a result of resumption of legal trade in raw ivory, it will ask the CITES Depository Government - Switzerland - to propose to transfer one or more of the three elephant populations back to Appendix I unless the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties is less than six months away; and request Botswana, Japan, Namibia and Zimbabwe to immediately cease authorising commercial trade in raw ivory.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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Next steps: ivory stocks

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa recently finished auditing the ivory stocks of 15 African countries participating in a one-off procedure under CITES for the non-commercial disposal of such stocks to benefit elephant conservation in their countries.

Under the procedure, which was established by the Parties in June 1997, only countries with African Elephant populations can participate and first they had to declare their ivory stocks to the CITES Secretariat by 18 September 1997. The decision also called for TRAFFIC, in co-operation with the Secretariat, to undertake an independent audit of each declared ivory stock.

The audits followed a training workshop for consultants and staff convened in October by TRAFFIC in collaboration with the Kenya Wildlife Service. The workshop resulted in a standard methodology for the audits, which were conducted over a three-month period beginning in November 1997.

Upon finishing the audits, TRAFFIC determined that Togo's stocks were not eligible because they were held privately. All or part of the stocks declared by the other 14 countries were accepted, though privately held stocks in the Central African Republic and Sudan were excluded from the final total.

TRAFFIC presented the audit results to the CITES Standing Committee at its meeting in March. The Committee accepted the results and agreed that the representatives of the eligible countries should now discuss how they want to proceed.



Photo: R. Barnett/TRAFFIC

The auditor's view in the stockrooms of Malawi (above) and Botswana (below). In total, the 14 countries' declared and audited ivory stocks now eligible for non-

commercial disposal comprise 39 947 ivory tusks and pieces.



Photo: R. Barnett/TRAFFIC

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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Next steps: monitoring

TRAFFIC and IUCN/SSC are moving ahead with establishment of systems to monitor the trade in elephant products and illegal killing of elephants, as mandated by the CITES decisions in 1997.

TRAFFIC and SSC presented a joint report to the CITES Standing Committee in March on how best to establish the systems.

To assist in developing the report, which was accepted by the Committee, TRAFFIC and SSC first convened a workshop of experts in December 1997 in Kenya. Further input was also sought within TRAFFIC and the SSC African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups on issues raised during the workshop.

To meet the challenge posed by the decisions, TRAFFIC's Bad Ivory Database system will become the cornerstone of an expanded integrated information system called the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS). The primary means of collecting data will be through a standardised form on seizures to be distributed soon by the CITES Secretariat.

The monitoring system for illegal killing of elephants will have three components: a national reporting protocol for each range state, a representative sampling of specific sites within both African and Asian Elephant range states, and a verification process for anecdotal reports of elephant killing. Data for the system will come from a variety of sources, particularly a national reporting form being developed.

The systems' success will depend in part upon donors and others to help ensure that the needed resources are available for the systems and to enable CITES Parties to participate effectively.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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Factfile: The medicinal trade in wildlife

The medicinal trade in plants and animals is one of the TRAFFIC Network's top priorities for research and action during 1997-2000. The goal: to support conservation of wild plants and animals used for medicinal purposes through the collection and analysis of biological and trade data and the development and dissemination of information and advice on the medicinal trade.

- The World Health Organization estimates that up to 80 per cent of the world's population relies on plant and animal-based medicines for their primary health care needs.
- Medicines made from wild species are used as remedies for a variety of health problems, from the common cold to cancer.
- The utilisation of wildlife medicinals is particularly widespread in developing countries where traditional medicines containing wild animals and plants are common.
- Wildlife-based traditional medicine systems include Muti medicine in Africa, Jamu medicine in Southeast Asia and Ayurvedic and Unani medicines on the Indian subcontinent. However, none is so widely practised as traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). TCM utilises more than 1000 plant and animal species, from bears to seahorses to orchids.
- Derivatives of wild plants and animals are not only widely used in traditional medicines. Today, they are increasingly valued as raw materials in the preparation of modern medicines and herbal preparations utilised around the globe.
- The demand for wildlife medicinal products is rising and is likely to continue to do so well into the 21st century, largely as a result of growing human populations and the increased popularity of natural remedies in the industrialised world.
- Rising demand for wildlife medicinals has led to increased and often unsustainable rates of over-exploitation.
- Faced with the combined pressures of increased exploitation and reduced habitat and numbers, a growing number of medicinal species are becoming threatened or in danger of extinction. These include all species of rhinoceros, Tigers, and American Ginseng.
- Although a great deal of information on the medicinal trade is available from published pharmacopoeias and ethnobiological studies, in most cases little is known regarding harvest and trade volumes, trade controls, market dynamics and the conservation impact.
- The importance and potential impact of the trade in medicinal species is increasingly receiving attention at the international level. Member countries of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, have acknowledged that

many traditional medicines rely on wild species and called for work with medicinal communities to eliminate the use of endangered species and to develop awareness of the need to avoid over-exploiting others.

- Projects on wild plants and animals utilised as medicine are under way or planned by each of the seven regional TRAFFIC programmes and TRAFFIC International. These are many and varied, including broad reviews of specific uses to identify and predict possible threats and indicate possible solutions.

Photo: D. Gagnon/WWF



American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius*

For nearly three centuries, the root of this herbaceous plant has been collected in the wild and exported mostly to East Asia, where it is processed for domestic and international use in traditional Chinese medicines. Among its many uses, the root of this plant is utilised as a tonic for the lungs, stomach, spleen and heart.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)

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Ayurvedic and Tibetan medicine study

A comprehensive project that aims to help sustain the medicinal plant resources of the Indian Subcontinent is planned by TRAFFIC India.

A key component will be an in-depth review of Ayurvedic and Tibetan medicine systems to identify sources of the plant material in use, market structures, trade dynamics and whether key species can sustain current medicinal demand.

The project is part of a package of TRAFFIC medicinal plant projects funded by Bundesministerium Für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (BMZ) via WWF International to address dwindling medicinal plant resources and the effects on wild populations of plants and health care systems. The focus will be on work in geographical areas where medicinal plants are major but also potentially threatened raw materials of local health care systems.

The projects, all of which will be undertaken during 1998-2000, also include research and action to assist in the conservation of plant resources used in traditional medicine in East Asia and to support more effective management of the trade in South America's medicinal plants.

At the international level, efforts will promote attention to and action on medicinal plant trade issues.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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Medicinal Plant trade in Europe: a symposium

Europe is one of the world's biggest consumers of medicinal and aromatic plants and plant parts, importing at least 120 000 tonnes annually. There is also significant domestic trade in and exports of Europe's medicinal and aromatic plants.

To foster needed discussions about the European trade, TRAFFIC is organising The First International Symposium on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants in Trade in Europe. One of the main goals will be to channel attention towards establishing long-term conservation strategies for wild medicinal plant species in trade.

The symposium, to be held 22-23 June at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in the UK, is being organised by TRAFFIC Europe in collaboration with WWF, the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Funding for the symposium has been kindly donated by the Rufford Foundation.

The event will include presentations of the findings from recent medicinal plant trade surveys in a number of European countries, such as Albania, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Hungary, Spain, the UK, and Turkey.

The findings of these studies will also be published as a regional overview in the TRAFFIC Species in Danger series that same month.

The symposium will be divided into five themes:

- the status of Europe's medicinal plant trade;
- from collectors to users;
- management regimes and regulations;
- conventions and international agreements; and
- workable solutions: options from the field.

For more information, contact:

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CITES at 25: a milestone for one of the world's largest conservation treaties

This year marks a milestone for CITES: the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Convention.

CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, was first signed in 1973 by 21 countries. The Convention entered into force in 1975. Today, it has 143 member countries. The most recent signatories include Cambodia, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

Like any international agreement, the success of CITES can only be as good as the national measures taken by its member countries. With 30 000 plant and animal species and a range of commodities from live elephants to plant-derived medicinal preparations subject to CITES controls, CITES implementation and enforcement can present a considerable challenge.

International trade controls and therefore CITES are not a panacea to conservation problems, as evidenced by the precarious status of the Tiger - four of five species of which have been covered under the Convention since its founding. As few as 5000 Tigers may survive in the wild, where poaching for trade is just one of the factors causing population declines.

However, the Convention has played an integral role in helping to ensure that endangered species do not become extinct as a result of international trade. Despite its name, CITES also plays a critical role in regulating trade in other species that are not threatened with extinction but could become so if international trade went unchecked.

And there are success stories. Most notable are crocodilians, the revival of which is characterised as one of the greatest conservation success stories of the last quarter century and a dramatic demonstration of the effectiveness of CITES. In 1969, all 23 species were endangered or depleted or decreasing in numbers. Today, at least one-third of crocodilians can sustain a regulated commercial harvest and only four species are critically endangered.

In many cases, international trade controls applied to crocodilians have been accompanied by well managed ranching programmes. These CITES-approved programmes produce sustainably harvested hides for the international market, garnering the support of the reptile leather industry and governments while also helping to supplant illicit trade.

The effective implementation of CITES takes active participation and commitment by governments. It also takes understanding and co-operation from producers, traders and ultimately, even the consumers. The TRAFFIC Network remains committed to a wide range of activities in support of CITES, including research, technical advice, capacity building, enforcement training, and public awareness.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)

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JEC Fund helps TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa has become the first TRAFFIC office to benefit from the JEC Fund - the Japan World Exposition Commemorative Fund-by receiving a 1997 Toyota RAV4 vehicle and a new Gestetner 2635 photocopy machine.

The JEC Fund was established after the extremely successful 1970 World Exposition in Osaka, Japan, the first such event in Asia. The exposition attracted more than 64 million visitors from around the world.

The JEC Fund supports a range of products addressing international goodwill, health, education, welfare and the conservation of nature.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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- Center for Marine Conservation
- Cho Seon Pharm. & Trading Co. Ltd.
- CITES Secretariat
- The Commemorative Association for the Japan World Exposition
- DFID-Botswana
- Dieckmann & Hansen Caviar, Hamburg
- Endangered Wildlife Trust
- European Commission, Directorates General VIII & XI
- Eu Yan Sang (Hong Kong) Limited
- Exxon Corporation
- Mr James Fairfax
- Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
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- India Ministry of Environment & Forests
- IUCN-The World Conservation Union
- IUCN Mozambique Country Office
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- SADC Wildlife Technical Coordinating Unit
- The Save the Tiger Fund (USA)
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- Society for Wildlife and Nature
- South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

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▶ [Previous](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

International trade in reptiles booms

New report examines the US connection

International trade in live reptiles has increased dramatically in the last decade, with the USA as the central player. The trade supplies a number of markets, from food to aquariums and zoos, but by far the most significant market is for live reptiles as pets.

In the USA, imports significantly declined after the passage of laws such as the US Endangered Species Act in the 1970s. However, in the last 10 years, the USA has seen an enormous increase in live reptile imports and has become a major supplier as well.

Today, the USA accounts for 82 per cent of the reported international trade in live reptiles covered under CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, according to a new study by TRAFFIC North America. The study, published in the report [The US Role in the International Live Reptile Trade: Amazon Tree Boas to Zululand Dwarf Chameleons](#) by Craig Hoover, analyzed global trade data and reviewed trade in approximately 100 species, many covered under CITES.

The findings indicate that the USA is now the world's largest consumer of live reptiles for the pet industry, importing 2.5 million reptiles annually in recent years. A single species, the Green Iguana from Central and South America, accounted for 45 per cent of the imports in 1995.

US exports are also dominated by one species, the US native Red-eared Slider Turtle. This turtle continually makes up more than 80 per cent of the eight to 10 million reptiles exported annually. The majority of Red-eared Slider Turtles are produced on farms, but it is unclear how much wild stock is needed to sustain these farms and therefore what impact they may have upon wild populations. Red-eared Slider Turtle exports have also caused great concern because of the turtle's potential threat as an invasive species that may out-compete native turtle populations. It has been introduced to Africa, Asia, the Indo-Pacific and Europe. Imports to the European Union have since been banned.

Other live reptile species featured prominently in US trade include Ball Pythons, Boa Constrictors, Savannah Monitor Lizards and two species of map

turtles, *Graptemys geographica* and *G. pseudogeographica*.

Although the USA has long monitored and regulated wildlife trade, it has focused its efforts largely on the import of foreign species rather than the export of native species. The trade in US native turtle species may be of particular concern. It supplies two very different markets: the pet trade nearly throughout the world, and the food market, primarily in East and Southeast Asia. The available data indicate the exported number of map turtles alone jumped from less than 10 000 in 1990 to at least 80 000 in both 1995 and 1996, but some of the rise could be due to better recording at the genus level than in previous years.

While legal international trade in live reptiles is on the rise, the study found illegal trade increasing as well, particularly in protected Australian and Madagascan reptiles such as pythons, chameleons and monitor lizards.

The report recommends a variety of actions, including an examination of international trade in North American turtles and turtle farming operations to assess their potential effects on wild populations, and review of legislation to assess effectiveness of implementation and enforcement in identified "hot spots" where reptile species continue to be threatened by trade.

► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

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► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second TEAM meeting

Due to the overwhelming success of the first symposium on traditional East Asian medicine (TEAM) and wildlife conservation held in Sydney, Australia last year, TRAFFIC Oceania will be co-hosting a second symposium in Melbourne in November 1998.

The second Healthy People, Healthy Wildlife symposium will be co-hosted by TRAFFIC Oceania, Environment Australia and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). It will be held at RMIT.

Like the first event, which attracted more than 160 people, this symposium will aim to increase understanding between the Government regulatory authorities and traditional medicine communities. Just as important, it aims to increase awareness among the traditional medicine community of wildlife conservation issues, relevant legislation and potential alternatives.

Speakers will include Senator Robert Hill, the Federal Environment Minister; David Kay, Assistant Secretary of Environment Australia; the Secretary of the Australia Chinese Medicine and Research Council; and Samuel Lee from TRAFFIC East Asia.

The first symposium was held in August 1997 in conjunction with the University of Western Sydney and Environment Australia. It developed in response to a 1995 TRAFFIC Oceania report that documented an active market in both Australia and New Zealand for illegally imported medicines claiming to contain parts of endangered and threatened wildlife, such as bear, leopard and Tiger.

In Australia, the importation of endangered and threatened species' medicines is regulated and in some cases banned, but large amounts had been illegally imported and offered for sale, despite the enforcement efforts at the borders. Between June 1991 and March 1995, for example, more than 40 000 illicit medicines had been seized by enforcement authorities.

The report, *Of Tiger Treatment and Rhino Remedies: trade in endangered species medicines in Australia and New Zealand*, recommended a variety of actions, including a government awareness campaign for the TEAM community in Australia. The practice of traditional East Asian medicine is flourishing in Australia. It is estimated that there are about 4500 practitioners,

a number expected to significantly increase in the coming years.

TRAFFIC first began co-hosting or organizing such events in East Asia in 1995 as part of its pioneering approach of working directly with traditional medicine communities to foster their understanding of conservation issues.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



© Traffic 1998



DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Symposium addresses Europe's vast trade in medicinal plants

More than 120 people attended the [First International Symposium on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants in Trade in Europe](#), which was organized by TRAFFIC in June 1998 at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in the United Kingdom.

As the first event of its kind to focus on European trade in medicinal plants, the event attracted a diversity of participants, including government officials, industry representatives, plant specialists, and conservationists.

Organized in collaboration with WWF, the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group and Kew Gardens, the symposium followed the release of a new TRAFFIC Europe *Species in Danger* report identifying 150 native European plant species that could be at risk in one or several countries from over-collection in the wild.

The report, [Europe's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Their Use, Trade and Conservation](#) by Dagmar Lange, documents how the vast majority of the at least 1200-1300 European medicinal and aromatic plants used on a commercial basis every year are still taken directly from the wild. One alarming trend is that conservation efforts have usually begun only after a species becomes threatened.

One native European species, Pheasant's Eye *Adonis vernalis*, is already extinct in Italy and the Netherlands and is now considered vulnerable to extinction in Germany, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland. The aerial parts of this plant are used in remedies to treat chronic cardiac problems and as a tranquilizer. The TRAFFIC Network recommends that European countries should consider whether this species would meet the criteria for international trade controls.

The symposium also focused upon exotic medicinal species in trade in Europe, such as Devil's Claw *Harpagophytum procumbens*. The roots of this native African species are used to treat chronic rheumatic disorders. In Namibia, its harvest has often been destructive and uncontrolled.

TRAFFIC Europe will produce and publish symposium proceedings later this year.

Funding for this symposium was donated by the Rufford Foundation; the UK Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions; and the Bundesamt für Naturschutz.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



© Traffic 1998



DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury

by Julie Gaw, Research Consultant, TRAFFIC East Asia

Unravelling trade in Tibetan Antelope wool

The wool of the Tibetan Antelope or Chiru *Pantholops hodgsonii* has become a "must have" item among the rich and famous worldwide, despite the animal's protected status and a 23-year-old international trade ban. Known as shahtoosh, the wool is the finest and most expensive in the world.

TRAFFIC staff in East Asia, India and other parts of the world research and investigate the shahtoosh trade, from its starting point on the high steppes of China—home to the last major herds of Tibetan Antelope—to its end-use consumers—the wealthy elite of Hong Kong, Milan, London, New York and other major cities.

As part of this research, TRAFFIC offices are collaborating with relevant government authorities in China and India, as well as the Hong Kong-based China Exploration and Research Society (CERS).

With assistance from TRAFFIC East Asia, Hong Kong authorities in December 1997 made the world's largest seizure of shahtoosh shawls. On 18 December, officers of Hong Kong's CITES Management Authority confiscated 186 shahtoosh shawls, which were being sold at a private exhibition and in local retail shops. The outcomes of the resulting prosecutions are pending.

Although the sale of shahtoosh violates Hong Kong law, the trade had become so blatant in this Special Administrative Region of China that in December 1997 at least one upscale boutique was displaying its shawls openly in a front window.

Shahtoosh shawls have also been seized in the UK, India and elsewhere. Despite the unprecedented and well publicised seizures, the Tibetan Antelope continues to face grave threats from demand for shahtoosh.

Known as Chiru in its home range on the remote Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau of China, the Tibetan Antelope lives at altitudes between 3700 and 5500 metres, with some animals venturing into the Ladakh region of India. More closely related to sheep and goats than to other antelope species, Tibetan Antelope

have developed a super-fine layer of hair to protect against the harsh plateau environment, where temperatures can dip to 40 degrees below zero. The burgeoning demand for this unique wool may prove to be the undoing of the world's remaining Tibetan Antelope.

This antelope has been listed in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) since 1975. The animal and its parts and derivatives are therefore banned from international trade except in exceptional circumstances. Today, the number of Tibetan Antelope is estimated to be no more than 75 000, and there is evidence of populations declining. IUCN classifies the Tibetan Antelope as vulnerable to extinction.



Photo: Wong How Man/China Exploration and Research Society

Poaching remains: Tibetan Antelope killed and then skinned by poachers for their fine hair, which is plucked from the hide and then woven into shahtoosh.

In some of China's remotest areas, well-armed poachers are tracking Tibetan Antelope to harvest their skin for their hair, each strand of which is said to be six-and-a-half times thinner than a human hair. The skins are often smuggled via various mountain passes into India, where the hair is removed and then woven into shahtoosh, which means literally "the king of wools".

Unlike domestic goats, the hair of which is harvested by shearing or combing, Tibetan Antelope are killed so their fine hairs can be plucked from the hide. This killing has decimated entire herds in recent years, according to biologists and Chinese government authorities.

Each Tibetan Antelope yields around 125 to 150 grams (4.375-5.25 oz) of this coveted wool. To make a woman's shawl of around two metres long by one metre wide requires some 350 grams (12.25 oz) of wool, which would represent the product from about three Tibetan Antelope. For men, a "doshala" measuring three metres long by one and a half metres wide would require the hair of about five Tibetan Antelope. Middlemen are believed to

pay the poachers up to US\$100 per hide, while the finished product retails in Hong Kong and other international fashion centres for US\$2000 to US\$5000.

The challenges to those working to stop poaching and illegal trade are many. For example, the vast and largely uninhabited regions where Tibetan Antelope live are extremely difficult to patrol, and poaching appears to have dramatically increased in recent years.

In addition, whereas nomads once hunted these antelope with wooden leg-hold traps and antiquated rifles, poachers are now usually better armed than the patrols sent to intercept them. Some deadly shoot-outs have resulted.

According to Wong How Man, President of CERS and Chief Advisor to the Arjin Mountain Nature Reserve, the poachers operate in organized, sophisticated hunting expeditions. These involve truck and jeep convoys, with their own petrol, food supplies and militia. The poachers often use spotlights to hunt at night, freezing the antelope in beams of light before gunning them down en masse.

Poachers have also taken to killing entire herds of female Tibetan Antelope migrating northwards to favoured birthing grounds in June and July.

According to Wong, who has observed these antelope in the wild since 1985, he recently discovered a previously unknown birthing ground for Tibetan Antelope on the western fringe of Tibet. But poachers were ahead of his expedition by a couple days, and Wong found more than 70 pregnant antelopes killed and skinned, almost all with full-term foetus.

In the past, Tibetan Antelope poachers favoured males, since females lack horns that would also be harvested for use in traditional East Asian medicine. Recent evidence also suggests that poaching has expanded from a winter activity that saw Tibetan Antelope hair at its thickest and finest, to a year-round activity, despite less hair yield per animal in summer.

Meanwhile, retailers continue to offer shahtoosh shawls in major cities, in high-end boutiques and even over the Internet. Some merchants and many owners remain unaware of the origins of their shahtoosh shawls and the threat they pose to this vulnerable species. Others are fully aware of the truth but insist shahtoosh is derived from shy "mountain goats" or "ibex" which rub their chins and necks on high-altitude bushes, leaving clumps of fine wool behind. Then, as the story goes, Tibetan and Nepali herdsmen painstakingly gather enough wool from these bushes to make shahtoosh shawls. In fact, there are no bushes or shrubs on the high plateau where Tibetan Antelope live. Some Kashmiri traders tell tales of the rare "toosh" bird and its fine, downy feathers being the source of shahtoosh.

There are two main substitutes for shahtoosh on the market. Known as pashmina and shahmina, they are made from the wool of domestic goats in the Himalayas. It is important to note, however, that shahtoosh has been smuggled under the name pashmina. For consumers, the best indicator of the wool origin is often price. Where a shahtoosh shawl or a shawl containing a

shahtoosh mix will cost well over US\$1000, pashmina or shahmina are normally sold for US\$300-500.

In documenting the realities of the shahtoosh trade from the remote reaches of China to the world's fashion elite, the TRAFFIC Network hopes to assist enforcement authorities, encourage better anti-poaching efforts and discourage shahtoosh traders and buyers from indulging in the demand that is driving poaching and the demise of the Tibetan Antelope.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Southeast Asia: A wildlife emporium

The challenge

Southeast Asia is a major hub of trade in wildlife, functioning as supplier, consumer and an emporium of plants, animals and their derivatives.

"Nearly all the major taxonomic groups of plants and animals found within this biodiverse area are traded, both within and outside the region," said Chen Hin Keong, Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia. "Some of the more important wildlife products in trade are timber, reptile skins, plant extracts, and live birds."



Deep-fried munias (rice birds) on sale opposite the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Photo: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia is one of the more densely populated regions in the world: Indonesia alone is home to nearly 200 million people. The region comprises some of the world's poorest countries as well as some of the most rapidly developing. In poorer areas, the rich, natural bounty is widely exploited by communities, some just to eke out an existence. In contrast, greater affluence in rapidly developing areas has led to higher purchasing power for wildlife products.

As a result of high levels of wildlife consumerism, unsustainable rates of harvesting are threatening species that were once plentiful and bringing many already endangered species ever closer to the brink of extinction.

One positive sign is that Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam are members of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Only one country in the region, Lao PDR, has yet to join.

But these countries face problems in implementing and enforcing CITES. Weak permit systems, a lack of CITES enforcement staff, inadequate legislation at the national level, poor co-ordination between departments, and widespread illicit trade are just some of these difficulties.



Clouded Leopard and Leopard skins
on sale in Myanmar

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
 - ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
 - ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
 - ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
 - ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Southeast Asia: A wildlife emporium

Our role

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia is part of the worldwide network of 20 TRAFFIC offices. TRAFFIC aims to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals does not exceed sustainable levels, and is in accordance with national laws and international treaties.

TRAFFIC has four areas of focus: medicinal wildlife trade; trade in timber and other wood products; fisheries products in trade; and promoting the effectiveness of CITES and other wildlife trade controls.

The Southeast Asia regional office is based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It works in three main sub-areas: the Greater Mekong comprising Myanmar, Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam; Island nations (the Philippines and Indonesia); and other countries (Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore).

These pages illustrate how TRAFFIC Southeast Asia works. Partnerships are key. Curtailing unsustainable or illicit wildlife trade cannot be done in isolation. TRAFFIC works with national authorities, Customs and police officials, the commercial sector, local communities and other non-governmental organizations to help meet the conservation challenges and strive for solutions that work in this remarkable region of Southeast Asia.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Southeast Asia: A wildlife emporium Joining hands in Indonesia

Strong economic incentives, lack of enforcement and low environmental awareness has led to epidemic wildlife trade in Indonesia. With over 13 000 islands stretching over a length of 5600km, helping to avoid over-exploitation of Indonesia's rich wildlife resources cannot be a single-handed task.

In conjunction with the WWF Indonesia Programme, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia is leading a networking programme in Indonesia to help strengthen wildlife trade monitoring efforts and implementation of national and international trade controls. Starting with a core group of five non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the aim is to also build closer inter-island links and promote awareness.



Photo: Steven Broad/TRAFFIC

Orchid collection. An Indonesian boy takes a break from collecting wild orchids on the active volcano Mount Batur in Bali, Indonesia

The core group has adopted several trade monitoring measures with clear commitments. It is headed by a Secretariat at WWF Indonesia that will

facilitate a working group on wildlife trade issues and provide fundraising assistance by way of small grants. TRAFFIC and WWF Indonesia staff oversee the design, development, fundraising and implementation of this initiative and serve as liaison with the Indonesian authorities responsible for wildlife trade.

The different NGOs, in turn, will build upon and pool their own specific strengths, skills, areas of expertise, experience and audiences to bring conservation messages to the general public and communities.

It is hoped that this partnership will provide opportunities and resources to assist Indonesian authorities in their efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Southeast Asia: A wildlife emporium

Assisting CITES Implementation in Vietnam

Vietnam has long been an important centre of wildlife trade in Southeast Asia. The trade is both for the domestic market and export and covers a wide range of species, from Tigers and rhinoceroses, to birds and seahorses.

In the case of the Tiger, TRAFFIC found that one shop alone in Ho Chi Minh city obtained 10 Tiger skeletons a year in the early 1990s. The most recent statistics available now indicate that there may be only 200 Tigers remaining in the country.

In addition, trade in other wildlife, such as fishes, reptiles and amphibians may pose an urgent threat to many species. At the same time, wildlife continues to provide basic resources for Vietnamese people. Surveys have found meat from Sambar, Wild Pig, civets, turtles, tortoises, lizards and snakes widely sold in cities and towns throughout the country.

Fortunately, Vietnam joined CITES in 1994, pledging to strengthen its control of wildlife trade and allowing it to call upon other CITESmember countries to help detect and prevent illicit international trade in Vietnam's native wild plants and animals.

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia is now assisting the relevant government agencies in Vietnam to implement and enforce CITES provisions effectively. The assistance will include technical advice on policy development and planning, management, capacity-building and implementation issues.



Photo: Steven Broad/TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia is raising funds to place a TRAFFIC advisor in Vietnam to help set up a working implementation system and advise the relevant agencies on administrative systems, wildlife trade legislation and anti-smuggling initiatives.

One critical need is to assist in the creation of a dedicated CITES Management Unit that would lead implementation and liaise with the CITES Secretariat and other CITES member countries on CITES matters.

Partnerships and co-operation are particularly important. It is vital for local enforcement agencies, traders, entrepreneurs and consumers to work together to ensure sustainable harvest and use of wildlife. Legislation alone will not change behaviour. Awareness campaigns are a crucial component to enforcement efforts.

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Southeast Asia: A wildlife emporium

Is Southeast Asia fishing its reefs to death?

How much would you spend to treat yourself to a fresh steamed grouper in a restaurant? If you live in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, you would probably spend about RM40-RM60 (US\$10-15). But the cost of bringing that one fish live to the restaurant far exceeds its menu price.



Photo: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

The demand for grouper and other coral reef fish has led to their over-exploitation and depletion. This and the destructive fishing methods used are damaging coral reef ecosystems and causing significant losses to economies, the fishing industry and the coastal communities that rely upon these fish for their livelihoods.

The practice of catching coral reef fish and supplying them live to local and overseas markets started in Southeast Asia during the 1980s and has since cast its net to the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific. Originally, trade expanded rapidly to meet demand from Hong Kong. More recently, rising affluence in Singapore, China and Malaysia caused exports to soar. Exports of live coral reef fish from the region's largest suppliers—Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia—increased markedly from the late 1980s until the early 1990s.

But could the boom be over? Initial findings from TRAFFIC studies in the Philippines and Malaysia suggest that export volumes declined in 1996, the

most recent year for which data are available. This decline could suggest dwindling fish stocks. Like other wildlife resources, marine fish stocks can be maintained only if harvested at a sustainable rate.

The potential for overfishing is high. This is particularly true in less developed countries, where the situation is aggravated by the existing impoverishment of many fishers and the high incomes that can be derived from harvesting live reef fish. The growth of the live reef fish industry has been likened to that of a gold rush.

Data from the countries surveyed indicate that government regulations and enforcement are insufficient to prevent overfishing. In addition, destructive fishing methods such as the use of cyanide are causing wide devastation to coral reefs, the prime breeding and feeding grounds for most of the region's fish. The use of cyanide, which stupefies the fish, not only kills and injures invertebrates, corals and fish, but can also cause health problems for the fishers and consumers alike.

Co-operation between governments, industry and others is essential to ensure conservation of coral reef fish and their marine ecosystems. A report on TRAFFIC's studies of the live reef fish food trade in both Southeast and East Asia will be published later this year to encourage remedial action.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

Southeast Asia: A wildlife emporium

Good fortune fish may soon be out of luck

The Asian Bonytongue or Asian Arowana *Scleropages formosus* is probably one of the most expensive freshwater, ornamental fish in the world. With its brightly coloured scales and barbels at the tip of its mouth, it is also known as the Dragon Fish and thought of as a reincarnation of the Divinity Dragon, a powerful guardian against evil.

Some Chinese believe this fish has the power to ward off evil, in addition to bringing luck and fortune. The red-coloured Asian Arowana, said to be the most powerful of all, is more in demand than others and consequently ranks as one of the most expensive aquarium fish in the world.

The increasing scarcity of this fish is another factor in its price tag. The rarer the fish, the more expensive it becomes and the more enhanced the owner's status. This popularity has led to extensive illicit trade. The Asian Arowana is a protected species in Malaysia and has long been listed in CITES Appendix I, which prohibits international trade except in special circumstances. For example, captive-bred fish may be traded if specimens are tagged with a glass-covered microchip inserted under the skin that can be read by a scanner. Proper CITES permits and a certificate with the microchip number must also accompany each fish.

Today, there is growing concern about illegal trade in the Asian Arowana in Peninsular Malaysia, which serves as an important transit point for both imports and exports.

Initial TRAFFIC surveys to learn the extent of illicit trade in Peninsular Malaysia indicate that this fish is smuggled in from Indonesia and sold to foreigners or to local traders. Although there is some demand for the fish in Malaysia, most imported into the country are re-exported to further destinations, such as Thailand, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The latter is believed to be the largest market for Asian Arowana.

The full findings of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia's surveys of illegal trade in Peninsular Malaysia will be shared with enforcement authorities and are expected to be published later this year.

Illegal trade in this fish could be curbed with tighter security and stricter enforcement. Otherwise this remarkable fish may soon go the way of its dragon namesake.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

The benefits of collaboration

Better data for better decisions

While research forms the core of TRAFFIC's work, analysis and communication of the findings is the key to effective conservation action. Also crucial is the integration of TRAFFIC's research results with information from other sources to form a comprehensive picture of the impact of trade on biodiversity.

As TRAFFIC North America's recent research on American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius* demonstrated, harvest and trade information are very important but nevertheless only two pieces of a much larger conservation puzzle. Information on the biological and legal status of American Ginseng was needed to assess the potential threat of the trade to wild Ginseng populations. This information was provided to TRAFFIC by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which maintains data on the biological and conservation status of North American species.

TRAFFIC and TNC are currently exchanging information on other North American medicinal plants, working together to identify potential threats posed by the medicinal trade.

Information exchange of this sort is not new to TRAFFIC. For example, TRAFFIC has collaborated with the IUCN Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) to combine biological status and trade information for more than 20 years. What is new is the explosion in information management and communications technology, and the resulting opportunities for faster and more effective integration and use of information and expertise.

TRAFFIC and 11 other conservation programmes and organizations have formed a global partnership to harness the opportunities. This initiative is known as [BCIS, the Biodiversity Conservation Information System](#).

BCIS members agree to support environmentally sound decision-making and action affecting the status of biodiversity and landscapes at all levels by co-operating in provision of data, information, advice and other services.

The initiative's members represent a broad spectrum of the conservation community, from the biological expertise of IUCN/SSC and BirdLife International to the legal background of the IUCN Environmental Law Programme and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre's experience in

information management

In conjunction with being one of the BCIS members, TRAFFIC has committed to improving management of trade-related data and information throughout the TRAFFIC Network. The aim is to increase TRAFFIC's ability to fulfil its own mission and contribute to the partnership's goals.

A review of the current standards of information technology used by TRAFFIC offices is under way as a first step to developing an information management strategy and action plan. Other BCIS partners are assisting by providing advice and expertise.

The Ginseng example illustrates the potential of BCIS to assist in the conservation of medicinal plants through more effective management, integration and communication of information. BCIS partners recognised this potential during their Steering Committee meeting in July by approving a pilot project, led by TRAFFIC, to examine the role BCIS can play in improving access to information about medicinal plant species.

Funding for the pilot project and for the BCIS secretariat is provided by the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation (NORAD).

[▶ Previous](#) [▶ Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

New support for medicinal plants

By Teresa Mulliken, Research and Network Development Manager, TRAFFIC International

Aspirin, ginseng tea, Aloe lotions and gels are simple healthcare remedies used in many parts of the world to treat a variety of illnesses. They all also have a common beginning: wild plants. Aspirin, for instance, owes its origins to the willow tree.

Hippocrates used powder extracted from willow bark to treat pain and reduce fever in the fifth century BC. Over 2000 years later, the chemical compound salicin was isolated from willow bark, the precursor to the active compound found in modern aspirin. Today, it is estimated that more than 80 billion aspirin tablets are used each year in the USA alone. Unlike aspirin, ginseng tea, used to improve vital energy and slow aging, is still produced from the raw product: ginseng roots. However, much of the ginseng in trade is cultivated, as is all of the aloe vera gel found in skincare products and health drinks.

Less well known are the tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of other medicinal plant species used around the world, some of which, like willow trees, have been recognised for their healing properties for thousands of years.

These plants form the basis of health care systems throughout much of the developing world, a source of new compounds on which to base new pharmaceutical products, and a major component of the burgeoning markets for herbal health care remedies and natural products. They also provide a source of income for growers, traders, collectors and manufacturers of plant-based medicines.

In this dual role as a source of healthcare and income, medicinal plants make an important contribution to the larger development process. Unfortunately, however, some plant species of medicinal value are already in short supply, which poses a threat to human welfare and the wild species themselves. Immediate actions are therefore required to ensure harvest and trade of medicinal plant species are conducted sustainably.

TRAFFIC has been working on the medicinal plant trade for many years, including collaboration with important partners such as the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group.

Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit, more commonly known as BMZ) is supporting a suite of new actions by TRAFFIC. Through a Funds in Trust Agreement with WWF International, BMZ has pledged DM1 million (US\$560 000) to the TRAFFIC Network's medicinal plant work during 1998-2000. Much of the funding is directed toward regionally focused work in East Asia, the Indian subcontinent and South America.

In addition, BMZ is supporting efforts to build and/or strengthen links with others working on medicinal plant trade issues. It aims to enhance the communication of TRAFFIC's research results to those who need it, from traditional medicine communities to policy makers.

The regional work to be undertaken through BMZ support is as diverse as the medicinal plant trade itself, with each region home to different, but in the case of India and East Asia, overlapping, medicinal traditions.

East Asia

The major traditional medicine systems in this region are derived from traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which has a history of several thousand years and is well-documented.

Although international attention has been drawn to the use of animal species such as rhinoceros and Tiger in TCM, animal ingredients actually make up less than 20% of those used in TCM. TCM is largely a plant-based medicinal system. It is believed that as many as 1000 plant species are in use for TCM in China and that about 80 per cent of them are taken from the wild. An initial TRAFFIC East Asia study in Hong Kong in 1995/96 revealed a massive trade involving a number of threatened plant species: of the 388 plant species listed in the China Plant Red Data Book, 69 were found to be used in TCM, and 22 of these were in common use.

Through work supported by BMZ, TRAFFIC East Asia seeks to promote the security and conservation of wild plant resources used in traditional medicine in East Asia to support basic health care needs.

TRAFFIC East Asia will convene a series of meetings to promote dialogue and understanding of the links between conservation and medicinal security issues among producers, regulators and medicinal communities.

Other activities planned include the compilation of an overview of the nature of and trends in medicinal plant harvest, propagation and trade in East Asia; identifying species at risk; and reviewing national legislation and policies relevant to production, supply and conservation of medicinal plants. Work will also be undertaken to help build capacity within governments and TCM communities to implement any needed trade controls.

The Indian subcontinent

The Himalayas provide more than a meeting point for China and the Indian subcontinent. They also provide a huge variety and volume of medicinal plants used in TCM, Tibetan medicine, and Ayurved. Like TCM, Ayurved has a long history (over 3000 years), is well-documented, and is widely used both locally and in Asian communities established in other parts of the world. There are also a large number of localised traditional medicine systems.

Harvest of native plants to supply India's own healthcare needs and a growing export market provides an important source of income for local communities. However, demand for plant materials is huge and growing, while many of the region's medicinal plant resources are dwindling. Recent reviews applying IUCN threat criteria found that a significant number of medicinal plant species are threatened or endangered within India. Large quantities of raw medicinal plant materials are also imported into India from neighbouring countries and exported to overseas markets.



Photo: TJ Hurrell/WWF UK

A number of organizations within India are concerned with maintaining India's traditional medicine systems. In addition, there is a widespread development network, an established pharmaceutical industry and a wealth of botanical experts in the country. Until now, however, there has been little effort to document the volume and impact of national or international trade in India's medicinal plants.

TRAFFIC India is already well on its way toward establishing working relationships with key stakeholders such as those above and government personnel and toward collecting information required if plants in trade are to be managed on a sustainable basis.

A key challenge within India will be to inform these and other stakeholders of the nature and impact of the medicinal plant trade, and to facilitate their co-operation in developing and implementing measures that will secure the conservation of medicinal plants. Original research will be combined with meetings and workshops to discuss findings and develop workable solutions to any problems identified.

South America

In contrast to East Asia and India, South America's traditional medicine practices are far more localised, with neither the geographic extent or the written texts that characterise TCM and Ayurved. As a result, an important first step is to study and describe the medicinal plant trade in the region, to identify commonly used species, and to begin the process of identifying whether any species are at risk.

Preliminary research in 1996 and 1997 by TRAFFIC International's South America Plants Officer confirmed that, as in Asia, medicinal plants are important components of local health care, are in some cases used unsustainably, and are exported as well as used locally.

BMZ funding is supporting the completion of a regional overview of the medicinal plant trade as well as more detailed studies of individual species in trade, existing trade controls, and the potential role of regional and international treaties in this region. Two species already identified for further research are Cat's Claw *Uncaria tomentosa* and Dragon's Blood *Croton lechleri*.

The results of this research will be shared with governments, traditional healthcare associations and relevant agencies to further raise the profile of medicinal plant trade issues and stimulate discussion and actions necessary to ensure more effective management.



[► Previous](#) [► Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

September 1998

INSIDE:

- ▶ [International trade in reptiles booms](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC Oceania to co-host second medicinal meeting](#)
- ▶ [European medicinal plant symposium results](#)
- ▶ [Shahtoosh: the lethal cost of luxury](#)
- ▶ Special focus: TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Joining hands in Indonesia](#)
 - ▶ [CITES implementation in Vietnam](#)
 - ▶ [Coral reef fishing](#)
 - ▶ [Good fortune fish out of luck?](#)
- ▶ [Creating better data for better decisions](#)
- ▶ [New support for projects on medicinal plants](#)
- ▶ [Thanking supporters](#)
- ▶ [Traffic Network](#)
- ▶ [Home](#)

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- CITES Secretariat
- The Commemorative Association for the Japan World Exposition
- Dieckmann & Hansen Caviar, Hamburg
- Discovery Channel-Asia
- Endangered Wildlife Trust
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- IUCN Mozambique Country Office
- IUCN Species Survival Commission
- IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group
- Johnson & Johnson
- JEC Fund
- Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden
- Liang Yi Cultural Undertakings Co. Ltd.
- Malawi Department of National Parks & Wildlife
- Marine Leadership Council
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- Netherlands Government
- New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service
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- US Agency for International Development (USAID RSCA, Botswana & USAID REDSO, Nairobi)
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▶ [Previous](#)



© Traffic 1998



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult

by Nina Marshall, Senior Programme Officer, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa

The East and Southern Africa region has a long tradition of using wild animals and plants for medicine. Thousands of species have been documented in local health care systems by ethnobotanical, anthropological and zoological researchers. Few scientists, however, have studied the availability of these species or the quantities in which they are used.

With increasing evidence of habitat loss, rising human populations and frequent reports of medicinal species becoming scarce, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa recently carried out a survey to identify plant and animal species in need of conservation and management action in the region.

The survey in 17 countries identified more than 100 species of plants and 29 animal species as becoming scarce or difficult to obtain by vendors of traditional medicine and traditional medical practitioners.

Some of these species are known to be endangered, such as the African Wild Ass *Equus africanus* which occurs in arid areas of Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*, popular for treating a wide range of ailments from asthma to epilepsy. Plant species such as *Aloe polyphylla* and *Warburgia salutaris* from southern Africa are experiencing serious population declines and are considered to be threatened species.



Green turtle *Chelonia mydas*

© Caroline Raymakers/TRAFFIC

Scarcity in particular countries is also reported for some species thought to be widespread and common, such as the Baobab tree *Adansonia digitata* in Eritrea and Sudan. This is a great concern because cases of local depletion may eventually become more serious if remedial action is not taken.

► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

Use of traditional medicine in East and Southern Africa is widespread. As a medical system, it is affordable, accessible, and culturally acceptable. In the past, colonial regimes legislated against use of traditional medicine and prohibited or restricted the activities of traditional medical healers, largely in an effort to extirpate traditional belief systems in favour of Christianity. While some of these laws are still in place, many countries have repealed this legislation in recognition of the cultural and medical value of traditional medicinal practices.

Popularity of traditional medicine in the region is undeniable, but at the same time other reasons support its prevalence. The cost of conventional medicine is beyond the reach of many, and is often unavailable. The ratio of Western doctors to patients in some countries is extreme, for example in Malawi there is one Western doctor for every 50 000 people, and in Tanzania the figure is 1:30 000. Western clinics are also absent from remote areas, and may provide only rudimentary medical care such as inoculation services.

Within this context, the use of traditional medicine is very important in meeting health care needs of millions of people in the region.

However, a wide variety of plants and animals are used in preparation of these medicines, and some species are clearly under pressure. In addition, TRAFFIC found that in most cases, plants and animals are harvested from the wild and few efforts are under way to propagate or breed the species in most demand.

The use of plants is more common than animals in African traditional medicine, but animals are used and range from larger mammals such as African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*, Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*, and Dugong *Dugong dugon* to the Leopard *Panthera pardus*, African Civet *Civettictus civetta* and the Four-toed Hedgehog *Erinaceus frontalis*. Reptiles, birds, amphibians, fish and variety of invertebrates are also used.

High demand for medicinal species is evident in urban areas where people and healers can no longer collect the medicines they need themselves, as natural habitat to support wildlife no longer exists.

Increasingly commercialized trade is also apparent, with traditional medical practitioners relying on commercial collectors to supply the needed ingredients. Unfortunately, many of these collectors and vendors of medicinal plants and animals have little interest in the long-term sustainability of the industry and are only involved to make a profit to meet daily economic needs.

This looming crisis affects not only the conservation status of hundreds of plants and animals, but also the health of many. Action must be taken on a number of levels and both the health and natural resources sectors must be involved in searching for sustainable strategies to address declines.

Above all, TRAFFIC recommends conservation, management and awareness

actions, and also regulation and further research in some cases. Efforts need to be cross-sectoral and encourage needed co-operation and collaboration between government health ministries, practitioners of traditional medicine, natural resource managers and a variety of others.

Reduction in use is not necessarily a realistic answer. Demand for traditional medicine is increasing and hence strategies to increase supply are very important. The success will depend upon government and private action to propagate, breed and sustainably harvest plant and animal species.

TRAFFIC's efforts to prompt such action involves bringing together representatives from various sectors and industries that do not traditionally collaborate, as innovation and creativity are essential in developing strategies and definitive actions to address the conservation and health issues.

The first activity was a workshop held in December 1998 in Nairobi with participants from diverse backgrounds, such as commercial game management, economics, traditional medicine practice, commercial herbal medicine production, biodiversity and conservation. The workshop recommendations will be available later this year.

Searching for a Cure: Conservation of Medicinal Wildlife Resources in East and Southern Africa. September 1998. Copies available from TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-Kenya, PO Box 68200, Nairobi, Kenya or TRAFFIC International, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 ODL, UK.

[▶ Next](#)



© Traffic 1999



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult

by Nina Marshall, Senior Programme Officer, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa

The East and Southern Africa region has a long tradition of using wild animals and plants for medicine. Thousands of species have been documented in local health care systems by ethnobotanical, anthropological and zoological researchers. Few scientists, however, have studied the availability of these species or the quantities in which they are used.

With increasing evidence of habitat loss, rising human populations and frequent reports of medicinal species becoming scarce, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa recently carried out a survey to identify plant and animal species in need of conservation and management action in the region.

The survey in 17 countries identified more than 100 species of plants and 29 animal species as becoming scarce or difficult to obtain by vendors of traditional medicine and traditional medical practitioners.

Some of these species are known to be endangered, such as the African Wild Ass *Equus africanus* which occurs in arid areas of Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*, popular for treating a wide range of ailments from asthma to epilepsy. Plant species such as *Aloe polyphylla* and *Warburgia salutaris* from southern Africa are experiencing serious population declines and are considered to be threatened species.



Green turtle *Chelonia mydas*

© Caroline Raymakers/TRAFFIC

Scarcity in particular countries is also reported for some species thought to be widespread and common, such as the Baobab tree *Adansonia digitata* in Eritrea and Sudan. This is a great concern because cases of local depletion may eventually become more serious if remedial action is not taken.

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

Use of traditional medicine in East and Southern Africa is widespread. As a medical system, it is affordable, accessible, and culturally acceptable. In the past, colonial regimes legislated against use of traditional medicine and prohibited or restricted the activities of traditional medical healers, largely in an effort to extirpate traditional belief systems in favour of Christianity. While some of these laws are still in place, many countries have repealed this legislation in recognition of the cultural and medical value of traditional medicinal practices.

Popularity of traditional medicine in the region is undeniable, but at the same time other reasons support its prevalence. The cost of conventional medicine is beyond the reach of many, and is often unavailable. The ratio of Western doctors to patients in some countries is extreme, for example in Malawi there is one Western doctor for every 50 000 people, and in Tanzania the figure is 1:30 000. Western clinics are also absent from remote areas, and may provide only rudimentary medical care such as inoculation services.

Within this context, the use of traditional medicine is very important in meeting health care needs of millions of people in the region.

However, a wide variety of plants and animals are used in preparation of these medicines, and some species are clearly under pressure. In addition, TRAFFIC found that in most cases, plants and animals are harvested from the wild and few efforts are under way to propagate or breed the species in most demand.

The use of plants is more common than animals in African traditional medicine, but animals are used and range from larger mammals such as African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*, Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*, and Dugong *Dugong dugon* to the Leopard *Panthera pardus*, African Civet *Civettictus civetta* and the Four-toed Hedgehog *Erinaceus frontalis*. Reptiles, birds, amphibians, fish and variety of invertebrates are also used.

High demand for medicinal species is evident in urban areas where people and healers can no longer collect the medicines they need themselves, as natural habitat to support wildlife no longer exists.

Increasingly commercialized trade is also apparent, with traditional medical practitioners relying on commercial collectors to supply the needed ingredients. Unfortunately, many of these collectors and vendors of medicinal plants and animals have little interest in the long-term sustainability of the industry and are only involved to make a profit to meet daily economic needs.

This looming crisis affects not only the conservation status of hundreds of plants and animals, but also the health of many. Action must be taken on a number of levels and both the health and natural resources sectors must be involved in searching for sustainable strategies to address declines.

Above all, TRAFFIC recommends conservation, management and awareness

actions, and also regulation and further research in some cases. Efforts need to be cross-sectoral and encourage needed co-operation and collaboration between government health ministries, practitioners of traditional medicine, natural resource managers and a variety of others.

Reduction in use is not necessarily a realistic answer. Demand for traditional medicine is increasing and hence strategies to increase supply are very important. The success will depend upon government and private action to propagate, breed and sustainably harvest plant and animal species.

TRAFFIC's efforts to prompt such action involves bringing together representatives from various sectors and industries that do not traditionally collaborate, as innovation and creativity are essential in developing strategies and definitive actions to address the conservation and health issues.

The first activity was a workshop held in December 1998 in Nairobi with participants from diverse backgrounds, such as commercial game management, economics, traditional medicine practice, commercial herbal medicine production, biodiversity and conservation. The workshop recommendations will be available later this year.

Searching for a Cure: Conservation of Medicinal Wildlife Resources in East and Southern Africa. September 1998. Copies available from TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-Kenya, PO Box 68200, Nairobi, Kenya or TRAFFIC International, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 ODL, UK.

 [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses

In December, TRAFFIC International hosted a workshop in the UK to help finalize indicators for evaluating the success of conservation initiatives for the world's remaining rhinoceroses.

The workshop, hosted on behalf of the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), was attended by technical experts from TRAFFIC and IUCN, including members of the SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups. A representative of the Secretariat also participated in the workshop.

The results of the workshop will be presented to the CITES Secretariat to assist in preparation of a report to the CITES Standing Committee.

All five rhinoceros species have been listed in Appendix I of the Convention since 1977. However, despite this listing, introduction of trade bans in consumer countries and protective actions by countries with rhinoceroses, serious declines continued.



© WWF/Michael Gunther/Bios

Black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*

The threats to rhinoceroses include demand for their horn in traditional East Asian medicine and for making dagger handles in the Middle East. A loss of habitat has also contributed to the decline, particularly for Asian species of rhinoceros.

In 1994, the CITES Parties adopted a resolution (Resolution Conf. 9.14) calling for the Standing Committee to pursue actions to reduce illegal trade, including to ensure that all activities are evaluated and that standardized indicators of success be developed to measure changes in illegal hunting and the status of populations.

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

The SSC African Rhino Specialist Group first began work on this issue in 1996. The December workshop aimed to broaden discussion to include the expertise of the SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group and TRAFFIC.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award

A TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan and WWF Japan Tiger poster won the Finalist Award at the New York Festivals in September 1998.

The poster, titled *Last 5000*, is part of a Year of the Tiger Campaign by the two offices. It was designed by Seiji Hirota of the Hirota Design Office on a volunteer basis.

The New York Festivals is an international awards competition held annually in the USA. Entries are judged by a Board of Distinguished Judges and Advisors from various sectors in the field of communications.

The Year of the Tiger Campaign of TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan and WWF Japan aims to inform the public how only 5000 Tigers may remain in the wild and how the public could help.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post

Stephen Nash began as Programme Director at TRAFFIC International on 1 December 1998.

Nash's principal responsibilities are to lead planning and implementation of the TRAFFIC Network's conservation programme; ensure programme links with partner organizations; and to deputise for the Executive Director.

Nash has extensive experience working with TRAFFIC and wildlife trade matters generally. Most recently, he worked as an expert consultant on a national legislation project at the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). He also served as Acting Enforcement Officer at the Secretariat in 1995.

In TRAFFIC, Nash served as Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia in Malaysia during its first two years (1991-1993) and as Assistant Director at TRAFFIC International in 1994.

Since then, he has undertaken a number of consultancy projects for the Network, including participating in the 1997 audits of ivory stocks in African countries, preparing and conducting CITES training workshops in Taiwan and Zimbabwe for government officials and editing or writing a variety of technical reports.

Prior to his position at TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Nash was Programme Co-ordinator for the WWF Irian Jaya Conservation Programme in Indonesia from 1988-1991.

Nash's experience in project design and execution, policy formulation and supervision of staff as well as his experience with CITES provide him with a solid base from which to lead the Network's future programme planning and implementation.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

A matter of attitude

by Maija Sirola, Communications Assistant, TRAFFIC International

Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade

Despite trade bans and other measures taken at national and international levels, the illegal trade in parts of Tiger, rhinoceros and other endangered species continues. One common feature of this continuing trade is traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which utilises a wide range of plants and animals.

Loss of habitat and human-animal conflict have played a critical role in these species' decline, but demand for their parts in TCM plays an important role as well. TRAFFIC surveys have repeatedly found TCM products that claim to contain endangered species on sale around the globe, most recently in North America.

Two new TRAFFIC reports provide the first ever in-depth analysis of what attitudes might lie behind the continuing illicit trade in Hong Kong and the USA. The reports, released in Hong Kong in November 1998 and in the USA in January 1999, present results of separate studies. Both studies were carried out as telephone surveys of people selected using statistical sampling methods. In total, 1157 Hong Kong Chinese and 635 Chinese Americans participated in the surveys.

The results differ markedly in some areas because of differences in the questionnaires.

However, major findings in both studies indicate that TCM consumers have little knowledge of the ingredients in the medicines they use and



little interest in finding out. Further, the studies found that many consumers in both Hong Kong and the USA are not aware of the connection between the use of TCM containing endangered species and the decline in those species.

Hong Kong attitudes

In Hong Kong, 35 per cent of the polled respondents had used TCM at least once and about 7 per cent of adults polled were regular TCM users who take

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

TCM once a month or more.

About three-fifths of the adults polled expressed concern about endangered species. The survey also found that 77 per cent of these respondents believe people should stop using some medicines in order to save endangered species. TCM users expressed more support for conservation than non-TCM users and three-quarters of users supported laws to prohibit the use of endangered animals in TCM.

Still, more than half of the TCM users said they would not ask about the ingredients of the medicines they consume, relying instead on the judgement and advice of doctors, pharmacists and others. TCM practitioners and shop assistants, followed by family members were cited as the most influential in determining whether or not a consumer would use medicines containing wild animal ingredients.

The survey found that women are most likely to be TCM users, but men and older users are more likely to have consumed rhinoceros horn or Tiger bone products. The most cited reasons for the continued usage of medicines containing wild animals was belief in the medicine's efficacy, followed by family and friends' recommendations.



US attitudes

Unlike Hong Kong Chinese, the majority of the Chinese Americans polled said that they used TCM on a regular basis and most (79 per cent) had tried TCM at least once. The survey found that most TCM users are likely to be born outside the USA, have lived in the USA for the past 10-20 years and be under 40 years old.

The respondents regarded TCM as effective medicine and an important part of Chinese culture and tradition. Respondents also reported that TCM has fewer side effects and generally gives a gentler, more complete cure for ailments than western medicine does. However, despite extensive experience with TCM, 71 per cent said they do not know much about specific ingredients in the medicines they consume.

The findings also indicated that many respondents view attempts to stop the use of endangered species in Chinese medicine as western prejudice and only a few considered Chinese medicine to be a significant threat to endangered animals.

When using TCM, US respondents reported that they rely first upon the advice of family members, then practitioners and shop assistants—the same influential groups as found in Hong Kong but in different order.

Recommendations

The findings indicate that Chinese communities, whether in Hong Kong or the USA, have similar attitudes and needs that may lead to the continuing illicit trade. Both reports recommend that the findings be used by governments and conservation organizations to develop activities and initiatives to raise consumer awareness.

There is also a need to influence the influential: TCM practitioners and shop assistants and family members. The reports recommend targeted awareness initiatives, particularly for members of TCM communities.

In addition, both reports encourage the use of sustainable alternatives to medicines containing the parts of threatened species.

In Hong Kong in particular, the government should, as a matter of priority, formulate a system to regulate the TCM industry. In the USA, a national law enforcement strategy to address the issue of illegal trade in endangered species medicines is needed.

TCM facts

- ▶ Traditional Chinese medicine has been used for perhaps 5000 years.
- ▶ TCM is used throughout Asia and by Asian communities worldwide.
- ▶ TCM uses more than 1000 plant and animal species.
- ▶ More than 85 per cent of traditional Chinese medicines are plant-based.
- ▶ The use of TCM is increasing in all parts of the world.

[**Attitudes of Hong Kong Chinese Towards Wildlife Conservation and the Use of Wildlife as Medicine and Food. 1998.**](#) Available from TRAFFIC East Asia, Room 2001, Double Building, 22 Stanley Street, Central, Hong Kong.

[**A World Apart? Attitudes Toward Traditional Chinese Medicine and Endangered Species in Hong Kong and the United States. 1998.**](#) Available from TRAFFIC North America, 1250 24th Street NW, Washington DC, 20037, USA.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

A matter of attitude

by Maija Sirola, Communications Assistant, TRAFFIC International

Tiger facts & figures

The Tiger is endangered. There may have been as many as 100 000 Tigers at the beginning of this century, but today only 5000-7500 are believed to be left in the wild. Three subspecies of Tiger have already become extinct.



© David Lawson/WWF-UK

Siberian Tigers *Panthera tigris altaica*

Threats: Habitat

fragmentation and loss, human-animal conflict and over-hunting of the Tiger's prey species pose a significant risk to the Tiger. Demand for Tiger parts, particularly for medicinal use, also poses an immediate risk to the Tiger's long-term survival.

Medicinal use: Tiger parts are used in many traditional East Asian medicine disciplines. In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), nearly every part of the Tiger has had a medicinal use over the past 1000 years. However, Tiger bone -- particularly the humerus or upper front leg bone -- is the only part remaining in the modern TCM *materia medica* and is most often prescribed to treat rheumatism. Tiger bone is ground into powder before being made into pills, plasters and other decoctions. It is also cut into segments and soaked in wine.

Medicinal trade: Throughout most of East Asia, the traditional centre for world demand, trade in Tiger bone and its derivatives is now illegal. However, a stubborn residual demand remains in East Asia and other parts of the world. TRAFFIC has documented the availability of traditional Chinese medicines claiming to contain Tiger bone in Australia, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, the UK, USA and elsewhere.

Trade in other parts: There also exists a commercial demand for non-medicinal parts of the Tiger, such as the skin, teeth and claws.

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

Legal status: Virtually all of the 14 countries with Tigers have laws in place to protect the Tiger but the level of enforcement and therefore protection varies from country to country. In addition, all subspecies of Tiger and their derivatives have been banned from international trade since 1987 under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



© Traffic 1999



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

The challenge

Europe encompasses many diverse countries, cultures and languages. While Western and Central Europe are characterized by an increasingly affluent human population, some emerging republics of the former Soviet Union harbour some of the world's poorest people. Europe is also one of the largest and most diverse markets for wildlife and wildlife products.

The 15 Member States of the European Union (EU) consume huge volumes of both wildlife and wildlife products from around the world, such as live parrots, tortoises, plant bulbs, medicinal plants, caviar and reptile skins. Timber and many other forest products and a variety of fisheries products are also traded extensively.

This market involves thousands of plant and animal species and changes frequently in response to fashion, value, the availability of species, trade regulation and other factors.

In comparison, the region also has centres of biodiversity, with many species in demand. East European countries, Russia and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) often act as suppliers. They provide the EU and world market with a variety of wildlife and wildlife products, such as medicinal plants, fish, tortoises, Tiger, bear and Saiga Antelope products, timber and hunting trophies. In much of Russia and in some central Asian countries, an uncontrolled trade has threatened native wildlife. Central and eastern European countries also import many species, some from dubious sources.



An Ocelot fur coat on sale in Athens, Greece during TRAFFIC surveys in 1998.

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

The EU has adopted some of the most comprehensive wildlife trade legislation in existence to implement the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

However, Europe also includes a number of countries that have not joined CITES, notably Ireland, most CIS countries and the new independent republics of former Yugoslavia.

In addition, implementation of the Convention's many provisions varies, ranging from comprehensive in some of the wealthier nations to virtually non-existent in some of the economies in transition elsewhere.



The Belgian Bird Market in Brussels.

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► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Our role

TRAFFIC Europe is part of the worldwide TRAFFIC Network, which has offices in 20 countries.

TRAFFIC aims to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals does not exceed sustainable levels, and is in accordance with national laws and international treaties.

The Network provides accurate and objective data and technical expertise to law enforcement and Customs officials, governments, specialists and others as a basis for effective policies and programmes for wild species in trade.

TRAFFIC has four areas of focus: medicinal wildlife trade; trade in timber and other wood products; fisheries products in trade; and promoting the effectiveness of CITES and other wildlife trade controls.

In addition, TRAFFIC Europe has identified regional priorities, such as the European trade in live reptiles and amphibians and the wild bulb trade in Europe.

TRAFFIC Europe is active across the continent, with an area of responsibility including more than 50 countries.

The TRAFFIC Europe regional office is based in Brussels, Belgium, while national offices are based in Paris, France; Frankfurt, Germany; Rome, Italy; Zeist, The Netherlands and Moscow, Russia.

These pages highlight how TRAFFIC Europe operates as well as some recent achievements and ongoing initiatives.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Assisting CITES implementation in the EU

The EU includes 15 countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK). Early in the next century up to 10 additional countries may join, which would create a single market of at least 500 million people.

The EU also represents one of the world's largest markets for wild plants and animals, including many regulated in international trade under CITES. It is an important consuming market and decision-making centre, the policies of which influence world trade patterns.

TRAFFIC Europe is active in shaping and supporting EU policies that benefit conservation and wise use of wild species in international trade. TRAFFIC played a key role in the drafting and adoption of new EU wildlife trade legislation that entered into force on 1 June 1997 (Council Regulation (EC) No. 338/97 on the Protection of Species of Wild Fauna and Flora By Regulating Trade Therein). Committed to ensuring the success of this legislation, TRAFFIC Europe, WWF and the European Commission conducted an information campaign in 1997 and 1998 to inform travellers, traders and law enforcement officials about the Regulation, which requires that Member States strictly implement its provisions and adopt set penalties for violations. TRAFFIC staff also help develop and refine EU policies on which species can be imported.

Technical assistance and scientific information is provided to enforcement bodies throughout the EU, as well as to CITES Scientific and Management Authorities in the 15 Member States that periodically meet to review and fine-tune the Regulation.



You wouldn't be the first ending up as a wildlife smuggler without knowing it.



Illustration: Steve Smith

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

Staff investigations in Italy, Greece and the Dutch Antilles have helped lead to important results. In Italy, sweeping reforms of the regulatory system have transformed the country into a model for others.

While legislation is only a first step, some EU countries have yet to take it.

TRAFFIC's probes in Greece helped encourage the country to join CITES in 1993, but in 1998 Greece still had yet to adopt effective legislation to implement the provisions of CITES. Enforcement, too, is critical. Surveys by TRAFFIC, most recently in August 1998, have found wildlife products that are banned or strictly regulated in international trade readily available in Athens.

In 1998, the CITES Standing Committee -- the enforcement arm of the Convention -- recommended that all CITES Parties refrain from trading in CITES-listed species with Greece until the country adopts the needed legislation, a need which the Greek Government is now addressing.

The EU's own evaluation of its wildlife trade legislation, scheduled for late 1999, will provide further details on implementation by Member States.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS

The growing, uncontrolled trade in wild plants and animal species prompted TRAFFIC Europe to open an office in Moscow in April 1995. Today, the staff there monitor a very active trade in their country and in the adjacent countries of the CIS, which include 12 former Soviet republics.

Russia and other CIS countries contain some of the most pristine areas and rare wildlife species on earth. Their close proximity to China and other east Asian countries also means that their indigenous wildlife used in traditional East Asian medicine, such as Tigers, bears, musk deer and ginseng, are highly sought after.

TRAFFIC has conducted in-depth studies on a variety of wildlife in trade, including wild sheep and goats, musk deer, Saiga Antelope, birds of prey, medicinal plants, timber and reptiles.

Investigations have been undertaken on the wildlife trade situation in Russia and the Central Asia republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

These studies, published in 1998, highlighted a number of challenges. For example, TRAFFIC found that once the enforcement net at the border was surpassed, even smuggled CITES-listed species could be traded freely.



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Results: TRAFFIC Europe studies indicate an increasing number of smugglers from Turkey, Iran and other Middle East countries are targeting Russia's birds of prey, such as Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* pictured here. Other birds of prey actively sought and sold include White-tailed Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*.

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

TRAFFIC Europe is working to address this shortcoming that seriously undermines Russia's ability to regulate trade in exotic species and implement CITES. In 1998, TRAFFIC and WWF facilitated adoption of legislation by the Moscow Duma to regulate this type of trade in Moscow and efforts are now under way to expand this legislation to other parts of the country.

TRAFFIC also assists authorities in trade control activities and training.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

The medicinal trade in wildlife

A number of European wildlife species and their products are used and traded in large volumes for medicinal purposes, such as musk deer pods, Saiga Antelope horns and velvet deer antlers. However, the bulk of the harvest and trade in native European species for medicine involves plants.

The trade in medicinal plants is of particular concern as an increasing number of people throughout Europe are turning to plant-based medicines and herbal remedies. In some parts of Europe, there is also still widespread traditional usage of many plant species.

Europe is one of the world's largest consumers of medicinal and aromatic plants and plant parts, with annual imports of at least 120 000 tonnes. A number of native European medicinal plants are also traded in large volumes.

New field studies are now under way on Asian Ginseng and other ginseng species, with a particular focus on the populations in the Russian Far East and adjacent areas.

In 1997 and 1998, TRAFFIC Europe staff supervised research into collection, use and international trade of medicinal plants in Albania, France, Hungary, Italy and Spain. They also collaborated with other institutions in Bulgaria, Germany, Turkey and the UK to gather information.

The findings, published in the 1998 *Species in Danger* report *Europe's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Their Use, Trade and Conservation* indicate a critical need for action, with at least 150 European species at risk in one or



Deadly healing?

The flowers, roots and whole plant of Mountain Tobacco *Arnica montana* are used as an aid to healing wounds. Populations of this plant are declining in many European countries.

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► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

several nations from over-collection in the wild. The number is likely higher.

The findings became an important base for *The First International Symposium on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants in Trade in Europe*.

The June 1998 symposium, which was organised by TRAFFIC Europe in collaboration with WWF, the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group and the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, brought together more than 120 specialists, government and industry representatives and conservationists.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Reptiles become ever-more fashionable

Europe's trade in live animals as pets involves tens of millions of reptiles, mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and invertebrates. The trade in reptiles in particular is booming.

The EU alone imports more than 500 species every year. The trade includes snakes, turtles, tortoises, chameleons, geckos, monitor lizards and even crocodiles. Europe is also a vast market for reptile products such as skins and leather.



Live reptiles are imported from around the globe, including many countries in East and Southern Africa, Madagascar, Indonesia, Suriname and countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea. Species from CIS countries are increasingly seen throughout Europe as well.

While the demand for live reptiles is on the rise, so, too, is smuggling. Many reptile species are protected by laws in their country of origin and a large number of the imported reptiles are regulated in trade under CITES or EU legislation.

Recent TRAFFIC Europe research indicates that both legal and illegal traders are increasingly organized. Whereas the former can help increase transparency in the trade, an increasingly organized illicit trade must be closely monitored.

TRAFFIC Europe's work on live reptiles aims to ensure the trade does not threaten the survival of species and to support Customs, Police and other enforcement authorities in Europe to stop illegal trade.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)

► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

© Traffic 1999





DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Bear assessment

Brown Bear populations are threatened in western Europe, largely as a result of habitat fragmentation. However, in many central European countries and in Russia, populations of Brown Bear are robust and even increasing in some areas.

All eight of the world's bear species are listed in the CITES Appendices. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES expressed deep concern that illegal trade in bear parts could threaten the conservation status of the world's bear populations. The Parties adopted a resolution calling for better enforcement of existing CITES provisions on trade in bears.

The resolution calls for all CITES Parties to step up their efforts to curtail illegal trade in bear parts and for countries that are home to Brown Bears to allocate sufficient resources to prevent bear poaching.

TRAFFIC Europe is working with CITES authorities and bear experts throughout Europe to assess the level of implementation of this resolution.

In CIS countries in particular, TRAFFIC is striving to obtain up-to-date information on any national laws, trophy hunting, poaching, medicinal trade trends and other developments since the resolution's adoption at the Parties' tenth meeting in June 1997.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Fisheries

The sustainability of fisheries is an area of growing concern in Europe. Many fisheries are in crisis with already over-exploited stocks. European fleets also operate in all the world's major fishing waters.

TRAFFIC Europe has taken a lead on helping to ensure sustainability of the catch and trade in sharks as well as sturgeons from the Caspian Sea.

The fishing fleets of every European country catch sharks, but most remain largely unmonitored and unmanaged. In Europe, sharks are used primarily as food, but their fins, liver and other parts are also used.

TRAFFIC has conducted in-depth studies of fisheries and trade in 13 European countries. The Piked or Spiny Dogfish *Squalus acanthias* was by far the most important in terms of commercial landings. The status of this shark has been adversely affected by overfishing, particularly in France, Norway, Ireland and the UK. In recent years, demand for the meat of this shark has been met by imports from the USA, where the status of Piked Dogfish is now of concern.

TRAFFIC staff remain active on the shark front, advising decision makers, liaising with specialists and giving presentations. TRAFFIC staff in Italy recently published the results of their research and helped create an educational exhibit on shark fisheries in trade at the Genoa Aquarium.



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TRAFFIC remains committed to encouraging the wise management of shark fisheries and trade in Europe and works with partners in the IUCN/SSC Shark Specialist Group and others to this end.

Sturgeon conservation is a priority. TRAFFIC's research and activities on the trade in sturgeon products has helped prompt national, regional and international action.

► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

Its research on sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and international caviar trade helped ensure the adoption of CITES trade controls for all sturgeons and their products in international trade, which took effect in mid-1998.



World populations of sturgeon may have declined by up to 70 per cent. Today, up to 90 per cent of the world's caviar supply comes from only four sturgeon species in the Caspian Sea.

TRAFFIC Europe now serves as a focal point for information and action. Staff work with governments, the caviar industry and consumers and specialists to ensure the effective implementation of the new controls under CITES and, most importantly, the long-term survival of sturgeons.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Recent Publications

Wildlife Trade in Russia and Central Asia
1998 201pp

Reference Guide, European Community Wildlife Trade Regulations
European Commission/TRAFFIC Europe/WWF 1998

Europe's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Their Use, Trade and Conservation
Dagmar Lange June 1998 77pp

Indagine Sul Commercio Degli Elasmobranchi: La Situazione in Italia
Alberto Laurenti e Massimiliano Rocco April 1998 61pp

Shark Fisheries and Trade in Europe
Elizabeth H. Fleming and Philippe A. Papageorgiou 1997 78pp

Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar
T. De Meulenaer and C. Raymakers October 1996 71pp

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community

An estimated 5000 people attended Taiwan's first national Exhibition and Conference on Chinese Medicine held in Taipei in September.

TRAFFIC East Asia was the only conservation body invited to participate in the event, which was organized by the Taiwan Department of Health's Committee on Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy and co-sponsored by the Chinese Medicine Commercial Association.



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The aims of the conference included publicising and supporting traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) culture; promoting modernization and scientific development of TCM; and introducing the regulation of TCM derived from protected wildlife species.

In his speech, Taiwan Vice President Chan Lien said that the development of TCM in Taiwan is undergoing a big change. He announced the government is going to create TCM departments in 14 teaching hospitals and also provide approximately US\$30 million to help hospitals establish evaluation systems for TCM's effectiveness. Performance of the TCM doctors in these teaching hospitals will also be evaluated as part of hospitals' accreditation, he said.

The exhibition included a wide range of exhibits, including a popular exhibit by TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei. This exhibit focused upon TCM and wildlife conservation in order to help the TCM community understand international conservation trends related to traditional medicine, the concept of sustainable use and the regulation of medicinal products that are derived from protected wildlife species.

The display introduced a recent decision by Taiwan's Board of Foreign Trade to regulate the import and export of plants regulated in international trade under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). It also included information about the regulation of

► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

trade in medicinal animal species through the Taiwan Wildlife Conservation Law.

At the display, more than 200 people asked to be put on a mailing list so that they could receive further information, marking an important step forward between TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei and the wider TCM community in Taiwan.

-- *Joyce Wu and Rita Chang, TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei*

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



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DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime

by Stephanie Pendry, UK Enforcement Assistance Officer, TRAFFIC International

TRAFFIC is participating in an important partnership to combat wildlife crime in the UK. The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) is a permanent national committee that provides a forum for both discussion and action on practical enforcement initiatives.



**PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION AGAINST
wildlife crime**

PAW was created in 1995 following a legislative review and is composed of the UK CITES Management Authority, the Home Office, the UK Police Forces, H.M Customs and Excise, TRAFFIC International and other non-governmental bodies involved in wildlife law enforcement issues.

It is closely involved in the review, co-ordination and collaboration of all issues relating to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in the UK.

PAW is co-ordinated by a Wildlife Law Enforcement Steering Group of government agencies and meets three times yearly.

PAW has undertaken or produced a variety of activities and a large number of materials. For example, a *Guide for Wildlife Law Enforcement in the UK* was published, providing information pertinent to every aspect of the law, policy, practical advice, contacts, resources and many other issues. Other materials have included a directory of forensic experts and a kit for taking samples for DNA analysis from live birds and derivatives. Revised national legislation to implement the new EU regulation on wildlife trade also took place under the auspices of this group.

TRAFFIC has been an active member of PAW since its inception, particularly on two of its working groups. TRAFFIC International co-ordinates the work

► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

of the DNA and Other Forensic Techniques Working Group and is a member of the Working Group for Data Exchange and Management.

The DNA Working Group monitors developments in forensic techniques, aiming to identify and incorporate new technologies into investigation of wildlife crime. Research now under way includes the development of a DNA test from feather tissue instead of blood as well as methods to identify Tiger bone in manufactured medicines. The group is also examining the use of forensic techniques to determine the age of ivory.

The Working Group for Data Exchange and Management is focusing on the most effective means by which to share information between different organizations about wildlife offences. Formal protocols and safeguards are being developed in response to the recently introduced Data Protection Act in the country. In addition, a directory of organizations that can help with the issues relating to wildlife offences is under development.

PAW has created a forum and mechanism for a comprehensive, structured and co-ordinated approach to improving both laws and enforcement in the UK. Its achievements include useful products for law enforcement officers and changes in legislation. The process has led to more effective enforcement, with a marked increase in seizures and prosecutions for illegal trade as well.

On the issue of prosecution, one of the most recent related products is *By Hook or by Crook – a Reference Manual on Illegal Wildlife Trade and Prosecutions in the UK*. This book, developed primarily for the judiciary and Police and Customs officials in the UK, was written by Jane Holden of TRAFFIC Oceania and released in December 1998.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



© Traffic 1999



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Plans set for training workshops in China

TRAFFIC East Asia, together with the WWF China Programme and the CITES Management Authority of China, will host training workshops in China for the wildlife law enforcement officials in 1999. The workshops are funded by WWF Germany.

The aims of the training workshops are to assist China in building capacity among enforcement staff to enhance understanding and implementation of national and international wildlife trade controls. Particular attention will also be given to assisting staff to gain a greater understanding of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. China is one of the 144 member countries of CITES.

TRAFFIC has hosted or participated in similar workshops throughout East Asia and elsewhere.

The workshops are designed to foster relationships between agencies working on issues related to wildlife in trade and to further an international and domestic information network for sharing of wildlife trade information.

China shares borders with 16 countries or territories. Wildlife products found in illegal trade range from Tiger bone, bear bile and cat skins in North East China to orchids, turtles, ivory and live animals in South West China. Medicinal plants protected in China, such as Panax ginseng, also find their way into markets around China. Greater co-operation and sharing of wildlife trade information and expertise from the various regions within and around China is therefore vital in the ever-complex task of trying to reduce illicit or unsustainable trade.

Manuals to aid the implementation of CITES and China's domestic legislation and regulations will be provided to supplement the training. Manuals in Chinese to help officials identify some of the main wildlife species and their derivatives in China's cross-border trade will also be provided.

▶ [Previous](#) ▶ [Next](#)



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► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post](#)
- ▶ A matter of attitude
 - ▶ [Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade](#)
 - ▶ [Tiger facts & figures](#)
- ▶ Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier
 - ▶ [The challenge](#)
 - ▶ [Our role](#)
 - ▶ [Assisting CITES implementation in the EU](#)
 - ▶ [Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS](#)
 - ▶ [The medicinal trade in wildlife](#)
 - ▶ [Reptiles become ever-more fashionable](#)
 - ▶ [Bear assessment](#)
 - ▶ [Fisheries](#)
 - ▶ [Recent Publications](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community](#)
- ▶ [UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime](#)
- ▶ [Plans set for training workshops in China](#)
- ▶ [Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa](#)

Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa

Hundreds of succulent plant species are facing an uncertain future due to poor management by authorities and the demands of plant collectors from around the world, according to the findings of a new study by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.

The findings, published in the report *South Africa's Trade in Southern African Succulent Plants* identify 128 succulent plant species as susceptible to the destructive effects of habitat degradation and the activities of plant collectors. The latter include hobbyists and traditional medical practitioners.

The species range from the Lesotho endemic *Aloe polyphylla* that is used medicinally but also threatened by construction of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project to the South African species *Gibbaeum esterhuyseniae*, which was considered extinct in the wild until about three years ago when it was rediscovered.

"The fact that illegal trade and habitat destruction are endangering succulent plant populations is undeniable," said David Newton, South Africa National Representative for TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa and co-author of the new report. "Improved government conservation management, enhanced enforcement efforts and encouragement of artificial propagation of rare species, especially of those used for medicinal and horticultural purposes, are essential for these species."

The study found that South African conservation authorities have inadequately recorded the legal and illegal trade, with even succulent plant species covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) receiving little attention.

Succulent plants are in demand from a variety of sectors, including horticultural companies, hobbyists and commercial collectors and for use in traditional and western medicines. In South Africa, succulent plants are also impacted by habitat destruction caused by the lack of adequate Environmental Impact Assessment procedures prior to major construction activities. The new report also highlights negligence of government botanical gardens and some private plant traders in adhering to provincial conservation ordinances.

The report, launched in November 1998, recommends a variety of steps to

► [Thanking supporters](#)

► [Traffic Network](#)

► [Home](#)

improve government management procedures, the establishment of effective Environmental Impact Assessment procedures, resolving the problem of smuggling through the postal system and conservation of species through encouraging artificial propagation.

South Africa's Trade in Southern African Succulent Plants. 1998. Available from TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-South Africa, c/o Endangered Wildlife Trust, Private Bag XII, Parkview 2122, South Africa.

► [Previous](#) ► [Next](#)



© Traffic 1999



DISPATCHES

January 1999

INSIDE:

- ▶ [Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses](#)
- ▶ [TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award](#)
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