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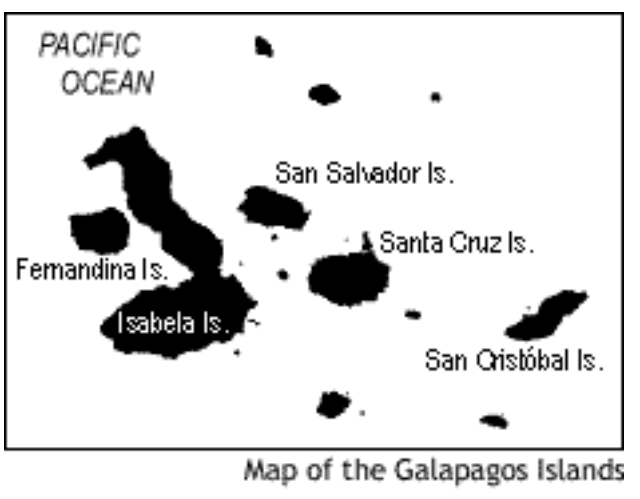
Spanish

Evolution of Exploitation in the Galapagos Islands: *Ecuador's Sea Cucumber Trade*

M. Jenkins and T.A. Mulliken

For centuries, sea cucumbers have been a popular source of food, most notably in East Asian cuisine. In the 1980s, international trade in sea cucumbers for food increased dramatically. The fishery in Ecuador emerged at that time, comprising almost exclusively only one species Isostichopus fuscus*; by 1991 the fishery for sea cucumbers along mainland Ecuador had been exhausted and the country's fishing effort focused on populations in the Galapagos Islands. Although exports of sea cucumber from Ecuador account for a tiny proportion of the world trade in this commodity, the impact of the fishery in that country threatens to affect the unique ecosystem of the Galapagos Islands. Attempts at control (the fishery has been closed since December 1994) were strongly opposed by local communities and in some localities fishing continued unabated. In March 1998, a special law was passed giving priority to the design of a management plan for the Galapagos fisheries which, at the time of writing, is nearing finalization. Development of a rational management system with carefully controlled exports, rather than a complete ban, may reduce the risks of illegal fishing and processing of sea cucumbers.*

Background



Map of the Galapagos Islands

Sea cucumbers, or holothurians, are widely distributed in marine environments, from intertidal zones to the deep-sea bed (Conand and Byrne, 1993). Found in all oceans, these animals are most common in the Indian and South West Pacific Oceans, and in the tropics can easily be seen lying on a sandy sea bed, among corals or rocks. Ranging in colour from black through reddish brown to dark green, and anywhere between two centimetres and two metres in length, they move by means of many small feet, and use an array of tentacles to gather edible particles into their mouths. Some sea cucumbers expel sticky white threads to entangle or distract would-be predators, and even expel their internal organs when disturbed. Unusually, this does not kill the sea cucumber, which simply regenerates its organs. There are an estimated 1100 species of sea cucumber, but commercial fisheries are based very largely on 10 to 20 species in the genera *Actinopyga*, *Bohadschia*, *Holothuria* and *Microthele* (Holothuridae), and *Isostichopus*, *Parastichopus*, *Stichopus* and *Thelonota* (Stichopodidae) (Conand, 1997, 1998; Conand and Byrne, 1993). All species exploited are principally shallow-water species, harvested at depths of up to 40 m (James, 1989).


Photo: M Spalding

Sea cucumbers range from 2 cm to 2 m in length

Although in some regions sea cucumbers have been largely or completely unexploited until the recent past, in other parts of the world they have been taken for food for centuries. Sea cucumbers are usually traded in dried form, often referred to as bêche-de-mer, or trepang. During the 1990s, about 40 countries worldwide have been reported to trade sea cucumbers for food, the great majority to supply East Asian markets, although there are exceptions, for example the local use of sea cucumbers in some Pacific islands. International trade increased dramatically in the 1980s, reaching a global volume of the order of 10000 t of dried sea cucumber annually, according to data compiled by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 1998) and national Customs data. The fishery in Ecuador emerged relatively recently and has comprised almost exclusively only one species, *Isostichopus fuscus* (sometimes retained in the genus *Stichopus*). Exports of sea cucumbers from Ecuador account for a tiny proportion of world trade in the commodity. Nevertheless, the impact of the sea cucumber fishery in the Galapagos Islands has raised special concern in Ecuador and internationally. Not only does the fishery pose a direct threat to local sea cucumber populations as a resource, but also indirectly to the fauna and flora of the islands, recognized worldwide as of immense biological importance. A large proportion of the land area (nearly 770 000 ha of a total of nearly 800000 ha, comprising 13 major islands) is a national park and 8 000 000 ha of near and offshore waters around the islands were established as the Galapagos Marine Resources Reserve in 1986. This area was upgraded to a Biological Reserve of Marine Resources in December 1996 (Anon., 1997a). Sea cucumber fishers have contravened regulations in force for the reserve, felling trees and otherwise affecting local habitats through their processing activities, and increasing the opportunities for non-native species, such as rats, ants and weeds, to invade the islands (MacFarland and Cifuentes, 1996; Merlen, 1995). The rapid rise in human population of the islands, from a few hundred in the 1940s to approximately 14 000 in 1998, is partly a result of the perceived fishing opportunities in the islands (MacFarland and Cifuentes, 1996; Merlen, 1995). Despite Government efforts aimed at bringing it under control, and subsequently banning it altogether, the fishery has continued into the late 1990s. Attempts at control have been strongly opposed: many of those who arrive on the islands to fish have a strong incentive to maximize their income in a short period of time, reportedly often to repay loans taken out to buy boats and other equipment. Moreover, most of the human population, being of recent arrival to the islands, has no tradition of local resource management (MacFarland and Cifuentes, 1996).


Photo: C Allan/TRAFFIC

A selection of sea cucumbers on sale in Hong Kong

Although some information was available regarding the local fishery, little was known regarding the end markets for sea cucumbers being harvested in Galapagos or other Ecuadorian waters. TRAFFIC therefore initiated a study of the world markets for sea cucumbers from Ecuador, with financial support from WWF-US.

Much has changed since this research was initiated. A *Special Law for the Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Province of Galapagos* was adopted in March 1998, establishing the Marine Reserve of the province of Galapagos, a protected area under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service including all waters within 40 nautical miles of the outer perimeter of the islands. In addition, the law gives specific jurisdiction to the National Park Service to control Galapagos fisheries, of which only local artisanal fisheries will be allowed. A Management Plan is under development, which may include a limited sea cucumber fishery.

It is hoped that this article, which summarizes the findings of TRAFFIC's research, will contribute to efforts to bring Ecuador's sea cucumber fishery and trade under more effective control, and thereby support efforts to protect the unique flora and fauna of the Galapagos Islands.

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Seizures and Prosecutions

The sources of information upon which the cases below are based are cited at the end of each country section.

Europe

BELGIUM

From 1 January to 16 November 1998, police officers seized a number of live animals listed below; most countries of origin and source were unknown, except where stated; all were of Appendix II-listed species except where stated: 2 Tigers *Panthera tigris* (App. I) (bred in captivity in Belgium); 5 Spider Tortoises *Pyxis arachnoides* (probably from Madagascar); 1 Radiated Tortoise *Geochelone radiata* (App. I); 3 Madagascar Tortoises *G.yniphora* (App. I) (ranched specimens from Madagascar); 2 Spur-thighed Tortoises *Testudograeca* (and 2 *T. graeca graeca* from Tunisia); 7 Hermann's Tortoises *T.hermanni*; 8 Horsfield's Tortoises *T.horsfieldii*; 21 Egyptian Tortoises *T.kleinmanni* (App. I) (probably from Egypt or Libya); 22 Marginated Tortoises *T.marginata* (probably from Greece); 3 Pancake Tortoises *Malacochersus tornieri* (ranched specimens from Zambia); 26 Madagascar Tree Boas *Sanzinia madagascariensis* (App.I); 3 Eurasian Eagle-Owls *Bubo bubo*, 1 Black Kite *Milvus migrans*, 1 Laggar Falcon *Falco jugger* (App. I); 43 Uzungwe Three-horned Chameleons *Chamaeleo werneri* (Tanzania). Also seized were the skulls of 1 Black Crowned Crane *Balearica pavonina*, 1 Caribbean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber* and 1 Wrinted Hornbill *Aceros leucocephalus*; shell of 1 Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas* (App. I); and 1 Lion *Panthera leo* skull (App. I/II).


© WWF/Chris Martin Bahr

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

From 1 January to 1 July 1998, the following items, many in transit, were seized at Zaventem Airport: 50 Mantella *Mantella* frogs (App. II) from Madagascar; 22 kg of ivory from the Democratic Republic of the Congo; 1 Leopard *Panthera pardus* skin from Lagos, Nigeria, to France; 2kg ivory figurines from Congo to Italy; 4 cacti *Fouquieria* (EU Annex I) and *Urpusii* (Annex I); and 2 aloe *Aloe* specimens from California, USA, to Belgium; 8 dozen boxes of traditional Chinese medicines (TCM) containing musk *Moschus*, from China to Belgium; 83 tubes of TCM containing musk, from China to Mali; 2 stuffed Slender-tailed Meerkats *Suricata suricatta*, 1 *Cercopithecus* sp., and 1 Duiker *Cephalophus* sp. (App. I/II) from Mali.

Anti-Drug Group (GAD) Inspection Service, Zaventem Airport; TRAFFIC Europe

FRANCE

On 21 October 1998, Customs officers at Charles de Gaulle Airport discovered 576 kg of ivory tusks contained in the luggage of a North Korean diplomat. Their suspicions were aroused because the passenger was travelling with 20 suitcases; on inspection, all were found to contain the ivory, which consisted of whole tusks and 92 large pieces. The diplomat, arriving from Douala, Cameroon, in transit to Beijing, China, was not travelling under his diplomatic status. Nevertheless, the Public Prosecutor decided not to make an arrest and the man was released.


© World Conservation Monitoring Centre

Gorilla *Gorilla gorilla*

WWF and French Customs Press Release, 28 October 1998; TRAFFIC Europe

GERMANY

On 29 September 1998, Customs officers at Frankfurt/Main Airport confiscated 4 juvenile Palm Cockatoos *Probosciger aterrimus* (App. I) from a French citizen arriving from Thailand. The birds had been packed in tubes and concealed in hand luggage. The suspect, who was arrested, claimed to have bought the cockatoos from a market in Bangkok (though the species are native to Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Australia, only). The birds were in good health and have been placed at a quarantine station. The case is under investigation.


© Clive James Hicks/WWF UK

Komodo Dragon *Varanus komodoensis*

CITES Management Authority, Germany; Customs Agency of Frankfurt/Main; TRAFFIC Europe

UK

On 9 May 1998, 489 preserved specimens of Rajah Brooke's Birdwing butterflies *Trogonoptera brook iana* (App. II) were seized by Customs officers at Heathrow Airport. The specimens were found in a parcel posted from Malaysia, en route to Russia. Information relating to the case has been passed to the Russian authorities.


© WWF/Henry Ausloos

Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*

On 9 May 1998, a parcel arriving from Hong Kong and declared as Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* (App. II) teeth was detained after it was found to contain 87 carved elephant ivory items and a few pieces of mammoth ivory. No permits were presented with the shipment and it was confiscated.

On 22 June 1998, Wilfred Bull, sentenced in March after pleading guilty to his part in the conspiracy to sell 128 rhino horns illegally (*TRAFFIC Bulletin* 17(2):87), appealed against the forfeiture of the horns. The Court of Appeal ruled that as there was no proof that the horns had not been legally acquired, the penalty of forfeiture had been inappropriate and the horns were returned to Bull; his conviction and gaol sentence still stand. The decision to return the horns was based on the fact that the Crown, at the original trial, had not challenged a claim by Bull that he had acquired the horns legitimately prior to 1985 when the laws regulating the sale of CITES specimens came into force. This was an oversight on the part of the Crown, which should have pressed for Bull to prove that the horns had been acquired legally. As this did not happen, the Court of Appeal assumed that the Crown must have accepted this claim.

On 31 July, the Crown returned to the Court of Appeal to see whether the decision to return the rhino horns to Bull could be overturned or, failing that, taken to the House of Lords for further debate. However, the Crown was refused leave to appeal to the House of Lords, and the original decision of the Court of Appeal stands.

The UK CITES Management Authority have written to Bull's solicitors to ensure that he is aware that it is an offence to sell, attempt to sell, or to buy rhino horn, no matter how old or from whatever source, without specific approval from the CITES Management Authority, and that such approval would not be forthcoming for commercial transactions in raw, unworked rhino horn. Under legislation introduced on 1 June 1997, forfeiture is now mandatory for similar offences committed after this date.

On 26 June 1998, Customs officers at Heathrow Airport detained 63 White Cockatoos *Cacatua alba*, 3 Citron-crested Cockatoos *C. sulphurea citrinocristata* and 10 Yellow-crested Cockatoos *C.sulphurea* (all App. II) contained in a shipment of birds arriving from Singapore, bound for Mexico. The accompanying CITES re-export certificates for the cockatoos, which showed Indonesia as country of origin, ranged in date from 1985 to 1993 and were suspected as being unlikely to apply to the specimens in the shipment. A veterinary examination made it possible to age the birds, which were found to be much younger than specified on the certificates. Customs officers were therefore able to declare the documents as being invalid and the shipment was seized on 9 September. All birds had psittacosis when they arrived and were treated for the disease while in the care of Customs. The cockatoos are being found homes in breeding programmes. Owing to restricted housing facilities, the other birds in the shipment were allowed to continue their journey after the Mexican authorities were informed by the CITES Secretariat of their impending arrival.

Between 21 May 1998 and 15 October 1998, a large number of medicinal products were seized by Felixstowe Customs officers at UK ports of entry. The products claimed to contain plant and animal derivatives which are listed in CITES, and were without the requisite documentation. Three companies were fined and action in the remaining cases was limited to seizures. Some of these products and their ingredients are itemized below:

75 000 pills/9600 capsules/25 kg/790 ampoules (all containing orchids *Gastrodia elata*, App.II); 400000 pills (Costus Root *Saussurea costus*, App.I, and *Gastrodia elata*); 360 tea pills (*Gastrodia elata* and musk deer *Moschus*, App.I); 7176 sachets/136 000 pills/35 kg/400000 pills (all containing Costus Root); 200 000 pills (Costus Root and tree fern *Cibotium barometz*, Ann.B); 4000 plasters (musk deer); 390 tea pills (musk deer and Saiga Antelope *Saiga tatarica*, App. II); 2360 tea pills (Saiga Antelope) and 20 kg (tortoiseshell).

TRAFFIC International; The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions Press Release, 31 July 1998; CITES Enforcement Team, Heathrow Airport; H.M. Customs and Excise, Felixstowe

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PUBLICATIONS:

Amazon Tree Boas to Zululand Dwarf Chameleons: *The US Role in the International Live Reptile Trade*

C. Hoover

Introduction

The trade in live reptiles to supply the pet industry dates back at least to Ancient Greece, when tortoises were popular pets (Inskipp and Wells, 1979). In recent times, tortoises from the Mediterranean were commercially imported into the UK from the late 1800s, peaking at a quarter of a million in 1938 (Inskipp and Wells, 1979).

Photo: WWF-Canon/Tony Rath

The species imported to the USA in the greatest numbers during the mid-90s was the Common Iguana *Iguana iguana*, and largely accounted for the dramatic increase in the total number of live reptiles imported to the USA.

The international live reptile trade has a far shorter history in the USA, but it has been quite active for several decades. In 1970, for example, 1 736 695 live reptiles were imported into the USA, including 1 382 927 turtles from 10 families, 112 402 crocodilians from two families, 208 921 lizards and amphibians from 13 families, and 32 445 snakes from 10 families (Busack, 1974). Live reptile trade levels in the USA appeared to decline in the 1970s and 1980s - due at least in part to the passage of US legislation that restricted the trade in wildlife and the listing of a number of reptile species in the CITES Appendices. Nevertheless, in the last five to ten years, both the volume of live reptiles and variety of species in trade have increased dramatically.

Photo: WWF-Canon/André Bärtschi

Amazon Tree Boa *Corallus enydris*
A total of 11 714 were imported to the USA during 1983 to 1995. Specimens in trade are primarily taken from the wild.

The USA is not only a consumer of live reptiles, but also a supplier. Throughout most of this century, hatchling Red-eared Slider turtles *Trachemys scripta elegans* were one of the staples of the US pet industry. Millions were sold until the early 1970s when the turtles were identified as a source of *Salmonella* bacteria. The US Food and Drug Administration banned the sale of specimens less than 4 inches (10cm) in carapace length (Coleman, 1993) at least in part to prevent children from placing in their mouths specimens which may be *Salmonella* carriers. Owing in part to the virtual closure of the US market to hatchling turtles, the USA also became a major exporter of live reptiles for the pet trade as well as playing a substantial and apparently expanding role as a re-exporter in the live reptile trade.

Recognizing the rise in reptile imports to the USA and the growing popularity of reptiles as pets and as food, TRAFFIC North America sought to examine the trade in live reptiles - to define its scope, analyse trends, and identify areas within this diverse and voluminous trade that warranted a closer look.

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African Elephant Range States Dialogue Meeting

The third African Elephant Range States Dialogue meeting was held in Arusha, Tanzania, from 28 September to 2 October 1998. It was convened to discuss and review the implementation of the important decisions on African Elephant issues taken at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in June 1997. Such decisions arose from the foundations of range State co-operation and understanding generated in the previous dialogues in Dakar, Senegal (November 1996) and Darwendale, Zimbabwe (June 1997). The agreed communiqué from the meeting is reproduced below.

Introduction

Photo: S Mainka

Parties attending the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP10) agreed to transfer the African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II and conditional export quotas for trade in raw ivory were agreed upon. Accompanying this change in listing, the CoP agreed on a package of measures bearing directly and indirectly on the initiation of the experimental trade in raw ivory. These include:

- the set of conditions that must be fulfilled before exports of ivory from Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe can take place (CITES Decision 10.1);
- a mechanism for range States to declare their government ivory stocks if they wish to make them available for a one-off purchase for non-commercial purposes in return for conservation funding (CITES Decision 10.2); and
- the requirements for an international system for monitoring illegal hunting of elephants and trade in elephant specimens.

The decisions taken at CoP10 have far-reaching implications that set difficult challenges for all range States. To ensure that African consensus could be maintained and that each country could act from a clear understanding of related developments, the range States decided during CoP10 that a third meeting of the Dialogue should take place. This would also provide an opportunity for the range States to discuss other matters of mutual concern regarding the conservation of the African Elephant. Tanzania accepted to host this meeting and the Representatives of the African Region to the CITES Standing Committee and their alternates again requested IUCN and the CITES Secretariat (on behalf of UNEP) to provide the necessary facilitation and organization.

Tanzania's Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, The Honourable Zakia Hamdan Meghji, opened the meeting, which was attended by 27 range States (see page 134). Tanzania chaired the Dialogue meeting and the following Vice Chairs were chosen from each sub-region: Central Africa (Cameroon), West Africa (Senegal), Southern Africa (South Africa) and East Africa (Uganda). Canada, the European Union (EU), Japan, the UK and the USA provided financial support for the meeting.

The first morning of the meeting provided the delegates with an opportunity to review activities since the second Dialogue meeting and CoP10.

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CITES News

New Parties

Fiji, Mauritania and Azerbaijan have joined CITES, bringing to 145 the total number of Parties to the Convention. Their accessions took/take effect on 29 December 1997, 11 June 1998 and 21 February 1999, respectively.

Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

The United Nations Environment Programme will host the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 10 to 20 April 2000.

Trade Ban with Greece

Greece became a Party to CITES on 6 January 1993. Since that time, the CITES Secretariat has raised concerns about Greece's inability to implement and enforce the Convention because of its failure to adopt the necessary legislation. At the 40th meeting of the Standing Committee in March 1998, it was recommended that all Parties suspend the issuance of permits and certificates for trade to Greece and refuse to accept documents issued by Greece from 1 September 1998. The Secretariat was directed to inform all Parties of this recommendation unless it was satisfied that a new adequate law had entered into force or was expected to enter into force by 1 September. Since that meeting, the Secretariat requested the Management Authority of Greece to advise it of any new legislation. No response was received and the Secretariat was unable to report any progress to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee's recommendation therefore entered into force from 1 September 1998 until further notice.

CITES Secretariat, Notifications to the Parties Nos. 1998/55; 30 October 1998;1998/35, 6 August 1998; CITES Secretariat, 9 December 1998

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PUBLICATIONS:

US Law Aids Conservation of Rhinos and Tigers

Efforts to halt the considerable US trade in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) products labelled as containing Tiger and rhino parts have been given a boost following enactment of new legislation in the USA. Hither to, the burden of proving that such products contained rhino and Tiger products lay with the Government. However, with current forensic techniques, it is not always possible to identify such compounds in manufactured products. Now, with effect from 30 October 1998, the *Rhinoceros and Tiger Product Labeling Act* gives enforcement authorities the power to prohibit the sale of products claiming to contain these ingredients, even if they do not. WWF and TRAFFIC have worked with the US Congress and the US Fish and Wildlife Service for nearly two years to bring about this change in the law, an effort reinforced by petitions to Congress from more than 11 000 members of WWF's Conservation Action Network.

The *Rhinoceros and Tiger Product Labeling Act* amends the *Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act* of 1994, and effects the following changes:

- prohibits the importation, export and sale of any product for human consumption or application containing, or labelled or advertised as containing, any substance derived from any species of rhino or Tiger;
- carries a penalty of up to six months in gaol, and fines of up to US$12 000 per violation;
- provides for the development and implementation of an educational outreach programme in the USA for the conservation of rhinos and Tigers.

US Fish and Wildlife Service Press Release, 30 October 1998

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PUBLICATIONS:

Taiwan Regulates CITES Plants


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On 16 July 1998, Taiwan's Board of Foreign Trade (BOFT), Ministry of Economic Affairs, announced the addition of all CITES Appendix I- and II-listed plant species to its published "Notes" of the *"Consolidated List of Commodities Subject to Import and Export Restriction & Commodities Entrusted to Customs for Import and Export Examination"* (Document No. Trade (87)-07691). The announcement contains regulations governing the importation and export of CITES Appendix I/II flora species.

While Taiwan cannot be party to CITES in its own right owing to its non-recognition as a sovereign state by the United Nations, Taiwan has regulated the importation and export of most CITES-listed fauna since passage of its *Wildlife Conservation Law* in 1989. However, prior to the recent BOFT announcement, trade in CITES-listed plant species was largely unregulated.

In addition, the Council of Agriculture (COA) announced guidelines regulating application for permission to export and import wild-collected and artificially propagated specimens of CITES Appendix I-listed flora (Document No. (87) *Nung-Lin-Tze* 87030331). These guidelines will provide the basis for creation of an orchid nursery registration system which, initially, will apply to *Paphiopedilum* spp. and *Phragmipedium* spp. only. The two announcements represent significant progress in Taiwan's efforts to implement CITES.

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TRAFFIC News

It is with great sadness that TRAFFIC reports the death, on 3 July 1998, of Jamila Ramole, Programme Co-ordinator at TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa in Tanzania. Jamila died after contracting cerebral malaria, which was further complicated by meningitis. She had worked at the Tanzania office since July 1994, where she was primarily responsible for maintaining the Tanzania wildlife trade database, in collaboration with the Wildlife Department. Jamila is sadly missed by her colleagues.

Staff Changes

TRAFFIC International: After a break from TRAFFIC for four years, Stephen Nash returned on 1 December 1998 to become Programme Director at TRAFFIC International. During late 1991 to 1993, Stephen was Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia in Malaysia prior to his move to TRAFFIC International in 1994 for a period of one year.

On 1 July 1998, Stephanie Pendry was appointed UK Enforcement Assistance Officer. This is now a full-time role at TRAFFIC International which is funded by the UK Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, and WWF UK, in support of the implementation of CITES in the UK.

Crawford Allan, previously responsible for the UK enforcement project since 1993, takes on the full-time role of Global Enforcement Assistance Co-ordinator, with responsibility for co-ordinating the TRAFFIC Network's involvement in international enforcement issues.

TRAFFIC East Asia: Marcus Phipps has been appointed Deputy Regional Director of TRAFFIC East Asia, effective from January 1999. Marcus will continue responsibility as National Representative of the TRAFFIC East Asia office in Taipei, a position he has held for four years.

TRAFFIC North America: Nathalie Chalifour, the Canadian representative of TRAFFIC North America is currently on educational leave until September 1999. She was replaced in July 1998 by Julie Thomson-Delaney, a wildlife biologist who had been working in policy development for the Ontario government.

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US Proposal to Downlist the Yacare Caiman

The US Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to reclassify the Yacare Caiman *Caiman yacare* from its present Endangered status to Threatened status under the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) because the current listing does not correctly reflect the present status of this animal. The Service also proposes to list the Common Caiman *Caiman crocodilus crocodilus* and the Brown Caiman *Caiman crocodilus fuscus*, currently unlisted, as Threatened by reason of similarity of appearance which will assist in protecting the Yacare Caiman from uncontrolled use. The Yacare is native to Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia and the other two caimans occur in Mexico and Central and South America. All three taxa are listed in CITES Appendix II.

A special rule is also proposed that would allow US commerce in skins and other parts and products of these three species, from country of origin and countries of re-export, if certain pre-trade conditions are satisfied for those countries. The conditions largely pertain to the implementation of CITES Resolution Conf. 9.22 on the universal tagging of crocodilian skins as well as conditions complementing the intent of this resolution and provisions to support the management of Yacare populations so that populations will be sustained through time. In the case where tagged caiman skins and other parts are exported to a second country, usually for tanning and manufacturing purposes, and the processed skins and finished products are exported to the USA, the USA will prohibit the importation of skins and products if it determines that either the country of export or the country or countries of re-export are engaging in practices that are detrimental to the conservation of caiman populations.

The purpose of the special proposed rule is twofold: one is to promote the conservation of the Yacare Caiman by ensuring proper management of the commercially harvested caiman species in the range countries and through implementation of trade controls as described in the CITES tagging resolution to reduce commingling of caiman specimens. The rule is also intended to relieve the burden on US law enforcement personnel who must screen difficult-to-distinguish caiman products to exclude products from endangered or improperly identified species from US commerce.

US Federal Register, Volume 63 (184), 23 September 1998

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PUBLICATIONS:

US$1.3 Million Realized Through Elephant Hide Sale in Zimbabwe


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Conservationists have long argued that sales of hides of African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* could be as lucrative as elephant ivory (see *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 15(1):4), while having the added bonus that such trade poses few, if any, conservation risks for the species. That premise is being tested, as Zimbabwe recently held its first legal auction of elephant hides in a decade. The auction took place in Harare, on 19 June 1998, following the decision made at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES to allow Zimbabwe to trade commercially in elephant hides. Twenty-two lots of dry, salted elephant hides, ears, trunks and feet were offered by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM). Weighing 82.8 t, the Government's stock of hides had been accumulating since 1988, the year before CITES Parties voted to place African Elephant populations in Appendix I, thereby outlawing international commercial trade in parts of the species.

Once popular for making luggage, golf bags, cowboy boots and other "heavy-duty" leather products, elephant hide declined steeply in value in the wake of the Appendix-I listing. In South Africa, for example, source of the best-quality hide at the time the AppendixI-listing was applied, prices plummeted from US$19.26 a kg of dry, salted hide in 1989, to only US$3.62 a kg a year later. At the recent auction in Harare, however, dry, salted elephant hide prices rebounded beyond former levels as international buyers from Japan, the USA and South Africa competed in the bidding process. Selling on average for ZW$179 (US$12.78) a kg, some lots fetched as much as ZW$330 (US$23.57) a kg, whereas prices at Zimbabwe's last elephant hide auction in 1988 had averaged only US$8.42 a kg for the same product.

In total the DNPWM earned some ZW$18.2 million (US$1.3 million) from the auction, which was conducted by a professional auction company. Designated as a "Statutory Fund" since 1997, all revenues derived from Government stocks of hide will remain with the DNPWM to enhance elephant conservation in Zimbabwe, while proceeds from hides originating from communal land areas will be returned to those communities. Other sectors of Zimbabwe's economy are also poised to benefit from the sale of elephant hides, since, as a condition of sale, all hides destined for export must be tanned to a minimum of "crust stage" by one of the country's six registered tanneries. Each exported hide or piece of hide must also bear an export tag obtained, for a fee, from the DNPWN.

Studies have shown that virtually all elephant hide production in the past has been the result of long-standing elephant management protocols, and production has consistently represented a sustainable offtake. In Zimbabwe, most elephant hide has been acquired from elephant culls in the past, and from the killing of problem elephants.


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Auctioned elephant hides for shipment to the USA, Japan and South Africa. Department of National Parks & Wild Life Management's store room, Harare, Zimbabwe, July 1998.

Commercial poaching of elephants for their hides is greatly inhibited by a number of logistical, financial and legal deterrents. These include the considerable time and expertise it takes to skin an animal properly, the quantities of salt required for preserving skins, and the great weight of wet-salted hides (up to 100kg each). Access to the small and quality-conscious international markets would be a further complication. To date, TRAFFIC has been unable to document any direct evidence of elephants being poached for commercial export of their hides anywhere in their range.

Tom Milliken, Director,
TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa

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PUBLICATIONS:

Spotcheck of Wildlife on Sale in a Myanmar Market

The towns of Tachilek, in Myanmar, and Mae Sai, in Thailand, are separated by a river, with some houses only metres apart. A survey of Myanmar's wildlife trade in February 1988 uncovered very few wildlife items on sale in this area (Martin, 1997). Six years later, however, the trade in these towns was growing at an alarming rate (Redford, 1994; K. Ammann, pers. comm., 1996). More recently, Tachilek has been noted as one of Myanmar's main wildlife trading centres (Martin 1997).

Skins of Clouded Leopards *Neofelis nebulosa*, and horns of Sambar Deer *Cervus unicolor*, Gaur *Bos gaurus* and Indian Muntjak *Muntiacus muntjak* on display at a stall in Tachilek, Myanmar, April 1998

In April 1998, a researcher from the Wildlife Conservation Society Lao Programme visited Tachilek following reports that large numbers of cats skins were on sale at the town's market, in particular of Clouded Leopard *Neofelis nebulosa* (CITES Appendix I). Over a period of just one and a half hours, allowing between a third and a half of the market area to be covered, the researcher recorded more than 70 Clouded Leopard skins, and very large quantities of ungulate horns and skulls on sale. At least four of 11 shops or stalls selling wildlife products visited were found to be selling wildlife products exclusively. A large amount of the items for sale at Tachilek are bought wholesale by Thai traders and smuggled across the border to Mae Sai and nearby Mae Sot (Martin, 1997). The recent findings, together with those recorded by Redford at Tachilek and Mai Sai in 1994, are noted below.

Species		Items	Number seen 1994	1998
Banteng	*Bos javanicus*	trophies	-	2
Bear	*Ursidae*	gall bladders	30	>40
		tooth	>40	-
Clouded Leopard	*Neofelis nebulosa*	skins	20	>70
Eld's Deer	*Cervus eldii*	horns (set)	-	20
Gaur	*Bos gaurus*	skulls/horns	>32	44
Golden Cat	*Catopuma temminckii*	skins	14	11
Great Hornbill	*Buceros bicornis*	casques		12
Green Peafowl	*Pavo muticus*	quills		<>4200[1]
Indian Muntjac	*Muntiacus muntjak*	horns (set)	-	>400[2,3]
		skulls	>230	-
Leopard	*Panthera pardus*	skins	24	7
		skulls	30	-
Leopard Cat	*Prionailurus bengalensis*	skins	many	52
Macaque	*Macaca spp.*	skulls		22
Marbled Cat	*Pardofelis marmorata*	skins	-	16
Rufous-necked Hornbill	*Aceros nipalensis*	casques		3
Sambar Deer	*Cervus unicolor*	horns (set)	-	>100
Serow	*Naemorhedus sumatraensis*	skull	>200	-
Takin	*Budorcas taxicolor*	skulls	9	-
Tiger	*Panthera tigris*	skins	8	4
		skulls	20	-
		penises	23	-
		tooth	>16	-

Observations of border trade in wild animal parts at Tachilek (Myanmar) and Mae sai (Thailand), August 1994 and April 1998[4]. *1994 data: T. Redford. An investigation of wild animal trade on the Thai/Burmese border at Mae Sai. Unpublished. 1998 data: P. Davidson, Wildlife Conservation Society Lao Programme.*

[1] contained in 60 bundles
[2] all examined were Muntiacus muntjak, but the large volume of horns on display made it difficult to verify identity of each set.
[3] plus key-rings/curios
[4] April 1998 survey covers Tachilek market only

Source: P. Davidson, Wildlife Conservation Society Lao Programme

Reference

Martin, E.B. (1997). Wildlife products for sale in Myanmar. *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 17 (1):33-44.

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PUBLICATIONS:

WTO Rulings on Shrimps and Salmon

Shrimps: In 1989 the USA ruled, under the *Endangered Species Act* 1973, that shrimp trawlers in the USA must use Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in their nets in areas where there is a likelihood of encountering sea turtles. It also prohibited the importation of shrimp harvested in countries with technology that may adversely affect certain sea turtle species, unless the harvesting nation was certified by the USA to have a regulatory programme and incidental turtle take rate comparable to the USA. This ruling was challenged by Thailand, Malaysia, India and Pakistan who took their complaint to the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

On October 12 1998, in response to this complaint, the WTO Appellate Body found that the US law could *in principle* come within the WTO Article XX Exception (g) "*measures relating to the conservation of exhaustible natural resources if such measures are made in conjunction with restrictions on domestic production or consumption*". However, it found that the *practical application* of the law infringed the preamble to Article XX because it was applied in such a way that it arbitrarily and unjustifiably discriminated between countries where the same conditions prevailed. The main reasons behind this decision were as follows:

1. The actual implementation of the *US Endangered Species Act* 1973 essentially required exporting countries to adopt the same policy as the USA, even though the legislation itself was flexible;
2. The USA failed to engage other countries seriously in bilateral/multilateral agreements before taking unilateral action by imposing the import ban;
3. The USA negotiated seriously with some, but not other exporting nations and made greater efforts to transfer technology to some, but not others;
4. When applying the law by following its internal department guidelines, the USA failed to enquire into the appropriateness of the programme for exporting countries;
5. The USA failed to observe procedural fairness when considering the applications from exporting countries.

By approving the US law in principle, the WTO ruling could be considered as paving the way towards facilitating environmentally related trade measures under WTO. However some environmental groups have strongly criticized the WTO Appellate Body decision as continuing to show bias against the environment in favour of free trade, and "moving the goal posts" for allowable trade-related environmental measures under the WTO. To date no trade-related environmental measures have been upheld by the WTO, with the Organization reinforcing its preference for multi lateral rather than unilateral solutions that require trade-related environmental measures.

In an important step, the Appellate Body did however find future Dispute Panels could accept and consider information from non-Government organizations directly, and without WTO first requesting it.

...and Salmon: Application of the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Agreement) allows WTO Members to adopt measures (such as importation and export bans and restrictions) necessary for the protection of human, animal and plant life or health. However, they must not be applied in a manner that would constitute arbitrary discrimination between Members where the same conditions prevail, or operate as a disguised restriction on international trade.

In 1975, Australia placed a ban on the importation of fresh, chilled or frozen Atlantic Salmon *Salmo salar* on quarantine grounds. The ban remained in place following a risk assessment by Australia in 1996 in response to a complaint to the WTO that such a ruling violated the SPS Agreement (Articles 2, 3 and 5).

In its final ruling on the complaint, on 20 October 1998, the Appellate Body of the WTO confirmed that, although Australia could set its high quarantine "no risk standard", it had violated the SPS Agreement. This was primarily because:

- Australia allowed the importation of other fish and fish products such as live ornamental fish and frozen bait fish, even though the risk could be considered at least as high as that for salmon.

The Appellate Body also took into account other factors including that:

- the 1995 Draft Report by Australia had recommended allowing conditional imports of salmon (a finding overturned in the final report); and
- Australia had no internal controls on the movement of salmon.

The Appellate Body also found Australia had not conducted a proper risk assessment of salmon imports, and was therefore also in violation of Article 2.2.

On 25 November 1998, Australia advised it would be implementing the WTO decision, and entering into discussions with Canada within a reasonable time.

Sources: World Trade Organisation Committee on Trade and Environment, GATT/ WTO Dispute Practice Relating to Article XX. Paras (b), (d), and (g) of GATT - Note by the Secretariat, Revision. 26 October 1998. World Trade Organisation: United States - Import Prohibition of Certain Shrimp and Shrimp Products - Report of the Appellate Body. 12 October 1998. Report of the Appellate Body. Australia - Measures Affecting Importation of Salmon. 20 October 1998. *Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest 2(40). Shrimp - Turtle ruling gets a luke warm reaction from all sides, International Centre for Sustainable Trade and Development. Bridges Weekly Trade News Digest. WTO issues final ruling on the Australian - Salmon Case. 2 November 1998. WWFUS Press Release, 12 October 1998.* Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service: World Trade Organisation decides on the salmon import appeal. *AQIS Public Bulletin*, 28 October 1998.

Jane Holden, Senior Programme Officer, TRAFFIC Oceania

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PUBLICATIONS:

Drift Nets to be Withdrawn

The European Union has agreed to implement a ban on fishing with drift nets in Atlantic and Mediterranean waters. The Regulation, which amends Regulation (EC) 894/97, will take effect on 1 January 2002 and affect five Member States: Spain, France, Ireland, Italy and the UK. During a phase-out period until 31 December 2001, fishing vessels are allowed to keep on board, or use for fishing, drift nets of individual or total lengths not exceeding 2.5 km, for the capture of selected species. However, under the agreement there will be a 40% cut in the number of boats licensed to use drift nets by the end of 1998. A commitment was also given to introduce measures to assist fishermen to convert to other forms of fishing, to retrain and to decommission their boats, although such measures would have to be met from existing budgets.

In recognition of the foreseen economic and social hardship incurred by such a ban, on 4 September 1998 the European Commission adopted a series of proposals to compensate fishermen or fishing vessel owners that have used drift nets during 1995, 1996 or 1997.

European Commission Press Releases: 2105th Council Meeting,Fisheries, Luxembourg, 8 June 1998/Accompanying measures for fishermen serving on board and the owners of fishing vessels affected by the ban on fishing with drift-nets, 9 September 1998 (http://europea.eu.int)

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PUBLICATIONS:

FAO Shark Action Plans

Approval of International Plans of Action (IPOA) for shark conservation and management will be considered by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Committee on Fisheries in February 1999, following the drafting of text by world governments meeting at FAO in Rome in October 1998. If approved, the IPOA will be adopted in November 1999 for voluntary implementation by States involved in shark fisheries.

The IPOA encourages States to assess the state of shark stocks (including rays and chimaeras) within their Exclusive Economic Zones and those fished on the high seas, and to determine if there is a need to develop National Plans of Action (a requirement if there is a directed shark fishery by that State and/or if sharks are regularly caught in non-target fisheries). If a State decides there is no need for an action plan, it must still review such a need on a regular basis and, together with all States, is required to collect annual data on catch, landings and trade. Reports must be made biennially to the FAO on the assessment conducted or progress made under national plans of action. States are requested to have a national plan of action in place by 2001.

Shark News 12, November 1998

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PUBLICATIONS:

UK Fishing Communities Land Benefits

New measures have been announced to ensure that UK fishing communities benefit from the activities of all UK fishing vessels, including those which fish against UK quotas but which do not employ UK crew and land most of their catch abroad.


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With effect from 1 January 1999, a new licence condition will be introduced that requires all vessels to demonstrate an economic link with the UK by one of the following means:

1. landing at least 50% by weight of the vessel's catch of quota stocks into the UK; or
2. employing a crew of whom at least 50% are normally resident in a UK coastal area; or
3. incurring a given level of operating expenditure in the UK for goods and services provided in UK coastal areas; or
4. demonstrating an economic link by other means (including combinations of the above) providing sufficient benefit to populations dependent on fisheries and related industries.

UK Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food News Release, July 1998

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PUBLICATIONS:

Norway's Minke Whale Quota

Norway has raised its quota for next year's hunt of Minke Whales *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* from 671 in 1998, to 753 specimens. The 1999 quota includes 140 whales not caught in previous catches. The whaling season will run from May to August 1999. At the end of the 1998 season, Norwegian whalers had captured 624 Minke Whales.

C. Phillips, in litt., *30 November 1998*

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PUBLICATIONS:

First International Symposium on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants in Trade in Europe

22-23 June 1998
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK

Hosts: TRAFFIC Europe; IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group; WWF UK; Conventions Policy Section of Kew Gardens

Funded by the Rufford Foundation; UK Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions; Bundesamt für Naturschutz (German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation)

This meeting focused on the European trade in medicinal and aromatic plants. Four principal themes related to: 1) the exploitation of medicinal plants in selected European countries; 2) management regimes regulating their exploitation in specific countries and access to the market of plant-based pharmaceutical products; 3) conventions and international agreements applicable to the exploitation of and trade in medicinal plants; and, 4) workable solutions to ensuring their sustainable use.

Presentations on the exploitation and trade in key producing countries highlighted the importance of non-detrimental harvesting techniques. Placing a monetary value on wild plants was deemed to be essential to ensuring their conservation, but harvesting quotas for such exploitation must be based on good scientific data. Furthermore, rural communities should be able to benefit from the exploitation by industry (pharmaceuticals, cosmetic companies, etc.) of their local resources, and local companies in supplier countries should have better access to technology and market information in order to process and sell the raw material at a higher price. It was agreed that, where possible, cultivation of threatened species should be promoted, but it was also recognized that, where cultivation is capable of being achieved, it is an expensive and slow process that may take years before being applied successfully, if at all, at commercial level. Examples given of threatened medicinal plants that are being cultivated include African Stinkwood *Prunus africana*, sundews *Drosera intermedia* and *D. rotundifolia*, Arnica *Arnica montana*, Devil's Claw *Harpagophytum procumbens* and Himalayan Yew *Taxus wallichiana*. In most of these cases, it is too early to claim any commercial success, however, and it is clear that for some species, such as African Stinkwood, for example, cultivation schemes have come too late to stem the decline in wild populations.

It was suggested in the conclusion of discussions that industry become directly involved in the sustainable production of medicinal and aromatic plant material of both wild and cultivated stock, and should budget for associated costs. In addition to ensuring the safety, efficacy and quality of the product, industry should also take into account the sourcing of its plant-based products. Examples were given of projects under way by private companies, for example, in the controlled cultivation of Devil's Claw in Namibia, Arnica in Germany, Switzerland and France, and yew in Nepal.

In order to ensure sustainable supplies of medicinal and aromatic products, the need was reiterated for collaboration between the private sector, non-governmental organizations and rural farming communities. Such collaboration would include the establishment of common objectives and decisions, and the development of national programmes and study groups.

International Ginseng Conference '99. Ginseng: its Sciences and its Markets - Advances in Biotechnology, Medicinal Applications and Marketing

8-11 July 1999

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong
Further details from: http://www.cmmrc.cuhk.edu.hk/ginseng

A sequel to the International Ginseng Conference held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1994, this event aims to articulate the rapid advances in biotechnology and medicinal applications for ginseng, as well as the recent developments in the ginseng market. As a major international entrepot for the ginseng trade for more than 150 years, Hong Kong is particularly well placed to host this event: more than 80% of American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius* produced in North America is first shipped to Hong Kong for grading and processing before redistribution to China and other parts of Asia, while substantial amounts of ginseng from China and Korea pass through Hong Kong to other countries every year.

Presentations will include examination of the medicinal applications and scientific progress in anti-tumour activities; pharmacology and toxicology; biochemistry and molecular biology; clinical and therapeutic applications; marketing and promoting the use of ginseng; the technology for ginseng analysis; quality control; DNA manipulation; and, recent developments in production and cultivation.

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PUBLICATIONS:

Steps Towards Improved Regulation of Trade in Big-leafed Mahogany

Big-leafed Mahogany *Swietenia macrophylla*

Although a proposal to list Big-leafed Mahogany *Swietenia macrophylla* in CITES Appendix II was rejected during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, agreement was reached to form a working group to examine the status, management, and trade in this species throughout its range. The initiative was proposed by the two main exporters of mahogany, Brazil and Bolivia, and by the USA, the main importer of the timber of this species. This initiative, with a recommendation that all range and key consumer States be included in the working group, represented important progress in discussions on this topic, which have been ongoing in the CITES forum since 1992. As proposed during the CITES meeting, it appeared that the working group would provide an important opportunity for exchange of information and debate at both regional and international levels.

Working Group on Mahogany

The Working Group on Mahogany met in Brasilia, Brazil, from 3 to 5 June 1998. The meeting was organized and chaired by the Government of Brazil, with support from the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT). Formed to encourage co-operation in promoting development, environmental conservation and rational use of the Amazonia region's natural resources, and counting all South American mahogany range States among its members, the ACT was an ideal forum for discussions on the subject of mahogany. All ACT signatories attended the meeting (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana (not a range State for *Swietenia macrophylla*), Peru, Surinam and Venezuela). Panama was the only representative from the Central American range States, though all other Range States were invited. It seems likely that the reason for their non-appearance was the late issuance of invitations, which also left governments and others with little time to form delegations or prepare for the meeting.

The four top importing countries were in attendance (Argentina, Germany, the UK and the USA), as were several inter-governmental bodies concerned with mahogany or larger timber trade issues (including the CITES Secretariat, the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO), the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP)), a selection of non-governmental organizations (including The International Hardwood Products Association (IHPA), IUCN - the World Conservation Union, TRAFFIC, Friends of the Earth-Brazil (FoE), Greenpeace-Guatemala, Man and Environment Institute of Amazonia (IMAZON), the Bolivian National Forest Chamber (CNF), and the Association of Timber Exporter Industries of Para, Brazil (AIMEX). A small number of other observers were also in attendance.

Results

The meeting was divided into three sections: status; management and policies; and international co-operation and trade. Several themes ran throughout many of the presentations. Representatives from Bolivia, Brazil Colombia, Peru and Venezuela provided information indicating that mahogany populations were not threatened with over-exploitation, describing various national management regimes in place in order to prevent this. This view was not shared by IUCN, FOE and Greenpeace representatives, who drew attention to concerns regarding habitat loss and population declines, especially in Central America, and called for more effective management to prevent declines.

The importance of ensuring that adequate value was received by range States for what was recognized as being an economically important resource was stressed during the opening remarks, again during subsequent interventions by range State representatives and ITTO, and was reiterated in the concluding statements and summary documents. Such economic benefit was seen as integral to promoting sustainable utilization.

Much of the information on trade was linked to the CITES Appendix III listing for *Swietenia macrophylla*. At the invitation of the Chair, TRAFFIC presented the findings of a study of Appendix III implementation for *Swietenia* and explained larger CITES implementation issues relevant to timber trade. Noting evidence that the Appendix III listing was not being consistently applied to intra-regional trade, the CITES Secretariat offered assistance to Parties seeking to improve their Appendix III implementation. Representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, the UK and the USA noted that they were taking steps to improve Appendix III implementation. Initial steps taken to increase bilateral co-operation in control of the cross-border trade in mahogany were also noted by Bolivia.

Two documents were produced on the final day of the meeting. The *Summary Report of the Meeting of the Working Group on Mahogany* briefly summarizes the main points made during formal presentations and meeting discussions, and highlights general conclusions. Among these are the need to collect further information related to the sustainability of mahogany harvests, including distribution and abundance, with creation of forest inventories for this species being considered a priority. The need for additional information on genetic variability and life history was also recognized. Access to markets and fair market values was viewed as essential to increasing the value of forests and to supporting forestry practices necessary for sustainable production of *Swietenia macrophylla*, with actions to alleviate poverty also required if sustainable forestry is to be achieved. Stronger co-operation between the private sector in exporting and importing countries was also considered important to promoting sustainable management. International co-operation was called for in providing technical assistance with respect to technology transfer, training and investment to increase the value of resources. Problems with trade controls along borders and in importing countries were recognized, and the CITES Appendix III listing described as a complementary precautionary measure assisting with supervision and international co-operation in controlling the trade of the species.

The second document, an *Indicative Co-operation Agenda of the Amazonian Countries for the Mahogany Forest Policy*, called for greater information exchange and co-operation on forestry practices among Amazonian countries, particularly relating to mahogany. The document was to be forwarded to the Amazon Cooperation Council meeting scheduled for late June, but was not actually presented until October (see below). Among the key actions included in the *Agenda* were: an evaluation system to determine the status of commercial forestry species; technical and scientific co-operation for sustainable management and planting; commercial and industrial co-operation; and, monitoring, control and inspection of products.

The Meeting of the Working Group on Mahogany represented an important step towards sustainable management and trade of *Swietenia macrophylla*. If effectively implemented, the above measures can make positive contributions to these goals within South America. As shown on page 103, a number of steps have already been taken in the months following the meeting. Those concerned with the long-term conservation of *S.macrophylla* should support efforts to ensure sustainable management of South American mahogany populations and also their implementation. The problem of sustainable management of mahogany in Central America remains to be addressed. A second meeting of the Working Group on Mahogany, with greater emphasis on dialogue and full participation of all range States, may be one way of monitoring and furthering progress toward sustainable management throughout the species' range.

INDICATIVE COOPERATION AGENDA OF THE AMAZONIAN COUNTRIES FOR THE MAHOGANY FOREST POLICY

Consideration of this document, drafted at the Mahogany Working Group, by the Amazon Cooperation Council, initially scheduled for June 1998, was delayed until 5-6 October, at which time Resolution RES/IX CCCA-TCA/1 was adopted 'to promote the establishment of mechanisms of exchange of information and knowledge in the issue of forest policies, with emphasis in the timber species of commercial value'. Means identified to pursue these goals included:

- Systems to evaluate the status of commercial species;
- Technical and scientific co-operation for sustainable use and cultivation;
- Co-operation with regard to commerce;
- Industrial co-operation and valuation of the product.

BOX 1: Latest Developments in Big-leafed Mahogany Range States

Argentina: Dialogue between Argentina's CITES authorities and Customs officers based at the borders has increased, with signs that this is leading to more effective border controls: a shipment of mahogany from Bolivia was held temporarily to allow confirmation that it was accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Bolivia: Illegal exploitation of Big-leafed Mahogany occurs in almost all the protected areas of the Bolivian Amazon. Despite efforts at control by rangers in Beni Biosphere Reserve, some 62 mahogany trees in the reserve were recently felled illegally; further, owing to local political pressure, efforts to halt operations at sawmills have stopped (E. Flores *in litt.*, December, 1998).

Brazil: In 1992, Brazil set up a system for establishing export quotas every six months. In 1998, these were set at 25000m3 and 40000 m3. By the year end, as a result of a judicial decision four enterprises were granted permission to export legal stock that amounted to 11000 m3 in excess of the quota.

Brazil's CITES Appendix III listing became effective on 26 July 1998. Under *Portaria No.085* of 24 June 1998, to obtain a CITES export permit timber exporters must indicate the origin and locality from where the timber was extracted, and documentation showing strict observance to the regulations by the enterprise providing the timber. A system to issue CITES export permits was established in two of the main ports of export, the sea ports of Paranaguá and Belém. Two staff members responsible for mahogany exports have been posted in each port. In addition, officers from the IBAMA Department of Transformation and Commercialization (the CITES Management Authority responsible for the monitoring of the trade for timber species), have been inspecting mahogany trade controls in these ports.

On 28 July 1998, Decree 1963 of June 25, 1996, which suspended new authorizations for the exploitation of mahogany, was renewed for two years (Decree 2.687).

In Mato Grosso, one of the key mahogany producing States, IBAMA, through the Direction of Natural Renewable Resources, is inspecting various aspects of the timber industry, including timber producers and logging companies, management plans, logging authorizations, sawmills, and export businesses. If any irregularity is detected, the enterprises' licence to log and to sell timber will be suspended.

In October 1998, the Government banned mahogany logging and transport in the Municipalities of São Félix do Xingu, Ourilândia do Norte, Tucuma, Xinguara and Redenção but in practice the regulation has been difficult to enforce because timber from these areas has been difficult to distinguish between that from other Municipalities where logging remained legal (L.H. de Oliveira, CITES Management Authority, Brazil, *in litt.*, January, 1999).

Peru: A number of meetings co-ordinated by a National Working Group of Mahogany have taken place during the course of the year involving Government bodies, including CITES authorities, public and private institutions. The aim of this working group is to define Peru's position for regional or international meetings relating to this topic, in particular at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in 2000.

Multi-lateral Agreements and Dialogue

Bolivia-Argentina: The CITES Management Authorities of both countries are in frequent communication. This dialogue and other activities to confront the problem of unauthorized cross-border trade of mahogany are ongoing.

Bolivia-Brazil: A meeting to determine co-ordinated actions with the aim of repressing illegal activities related to mahogany and other timber species was organized by the Government of Brazil. This meeting, which involved the governments and specialists from both countries, was held on 10 July 1998, in São Paulo. Some immediate actions were defined, among them:

- the establishment of terms of bilateral co-operation for the control and monitoring of trade across shared borders;
- the promotion of combined actions to stop the illegal exploitation and trade of forest products, through a meeting of the border authorities of both countries;
- the creation of a working group including representatives of IBAMA (Brazil) and MDSP (Bolivia), diplomats and the military of both countries. This group will diagnose capacities and existing needs, will define strategic medium- and long-term actions for the conserv ation of the resources and shared ecosystems;
- the exchange of information about the progress on joint activities by telephone and e-mail.

A follow-up meeting will be organized in Bolivia, with the aim of planning specific activities.

Ximena Buitrón, Plants Officer, TRAFFIC International; Teresa Mulliken, Research and Development Manager, TRAFFIC International

Sources: W. Mallea, CITES Management Authority, Bolivia, pers comm., July; in litt., *August 1998; L.H. de Oliveira, CITES Management Authority, Brazil,* in litt., *5 August 1998; D. Ramadori* in litt., *3 August 1998; B. Ochoa, Amazon Co-operation Treaty, pers. comm., July 1998; C. Andalut Westreicher, La Caoba y el comercio international. In: Despertar Potucino 9, Pozuzo-Perú, 1998; V. Carazo, Embajador Secretario Pro Tempore, Amazon Cooperation Treaty, in litt., November 1998.*

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PUBLICATIONS:

TRAFFIC Publications

South Africa's Trade in Southern African Succulent Plants

David J. Newton and Justine Chan *June 1998* 162 pp Price: R50.00
Available from TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-South Africa office


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The southern African sub-continent hosts the richest and most diverse succulent flora in the world. Demand for succulents -from horticultural companies, hobbyists, commercial collectors and for use as traditional and western medicines - has left many species at risk. These impacts are often further compounded by the effects of habitat destruction and poor management by wildlife authorities. This TRAFFIC report identifies 128 succulent plant species that are vulnerable to such effects, focusing primarily on the export-oriented horticultural trade which forms the bulk of the international trade in these plants. The study found that South African conservation authorities have inadequately monitored the trade, even in CITES-listed species, and that poor government administration in the form of over- and under-reporting of exports has made identification of illegal trade difficult. The report includes recommendations to improve government management procedures, environmental impact assessments, and the conservation of succulent plants through artificial propagation.

The TRAFFIC ***Species in Danger*** series provides a technical base for guiding effective policy on conserving species in trade and for identifying the need for and guiding future research and action. A complete list of publications in this series is published below. Details of availability can be obtained from TRAFFIC International.

Year	Title of Publication
1991	The Smuggling of Endangered Wildlife Across the Taiwan Strait
1992	Wild Plants in Trade
1992	Illegal Tropical Timber Trade: Asia-Pacific
1992	The World Trade in Rhino Horn: A Review
1992	The Control of Wildlife Trade in Greece
1992	The Horns of a Dilemma: The Market for Rhino Horn in Taiwan
1992	Perceptions, Conservation and Management of Wild Birds in Trade
1993	Bluefin Tuna: An Examination of the International Trade with an Emphasis on the Japanese Market
1993	The Decline of the Black Rhino in Zimbabwe: Implications for Future Rhino Conservation
1993	Medicinal Plants and Plant Extracts: A Review of their Importation into Europe
1993	International Trade in Swiftlet Nests with Special Reference to Hong Kong
1993	Market Under Cover: The Rhinoceros Horn Trade in South Korea
1994	Killed for a Cure: A Review of the Worldwide Trade in Tiger Bone
1994	Hard Times for Hardwood: Indigenous Timber and the Timber Trade in Kenya
1994	International Trade in Reptile Skins: A Review and Analysis of the Main Consumer Markets, 1983-91
1994	Prescription for Extinction: Endangered Species and Patented Oriental Medicines in Trade
1994	Sold for a Song: The Trade in Southeast Asian Non-CITES Birds
1995	Marine Invertebrates of the South Pacific: An Examination of the Trade
1995	The Bear Facts: The East Asian Market for Bear Gall Bladder
1995	Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles: The Trade in Southeast Asia
1995	From Steppe to Store: The Trade in Saiga Antelope Horn
1996	An Overview of World Trade in Sharks and Other Cartilaginous Fishes
1996	Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar
1996	Under Siege: Poaching and Protection of Greater One-horned Rhinoceroses in India
1996	The International Trade in Seahorses
1997	Rhinoceros Horn and Tiger Bone in China: An Investigation of Trade since the 1993 Ban
1997	Managing Shark Fisheries: Opportunities for International Conservation
1998	Europe's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Their Use, Trade and Conservation
1998	Searching for a Cure: Conservation of Medicinal Wildlife Resources in East and Southern Africa

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TRAFFIC BULLETIN
Vol. 17, No. 3
(January 1999)

PUBLICATIONS:

The Global Conservation Status of Trees

Around the world, tree species are threatened with extinction. This is the conclusion of a three-year project undertaken by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) and the Species Survival Commission of IUCN - The World Conservation Union. *The World List of Threatened Trees*, one of the outputs of the project, records information on each of over 8500 species that are globally threatened, according to the IUCN Red List system of categorization. The degree of threat faced by individual tree species varies considerably and some countries have a much larger share of threatened tree species than others, but overall about 10% of the world's tree taxa are threatened with extinction. Estimates of the total number of tree species in the world vary from 80 000 to 100 000 and the differing calculations are partly a reflection of differing botanical definitions of a "tree". Assessments have not been made for all parts of the world, however, and as further information becomes available the number of tree species recorded as threatened will undoubtedly rise.

WCMC and SSC carried out their study in collaboration with a wide range of other organizations and individuals. Over 300 botanists contributed information on the conservation status of tree species and provided supporting information on the areas where the species grow; the threats causing declines in wild populations; ecology and uses of threatened species; levels of use and conservation measures in place. Species selected initially for review were trees recorded in the WCMC Plants Database either as threatened or as having restricted geographical range. Experts were asked to supply relevant data for these species and for additional species they considered to be of concern. Compiled results from this survey were recorded in a new database held at WCMC - the Tree Conservation Database - summaries of which form the basis of the book. The study also recognized the need for extra information on some species still relatively widespread, yet subject to exploitation. As part of the study, workshops were held in various parts of the world to look at the conservation status of such species for which information is needed from a range of countries.

Only 12% of the tree species identified as globally threatened were recorded as occurring in protected areas and only 8% as known to be in cultivation. Information on the distribution of threatened tree species collected by the study should now be put to use to determine where protected areas for trees are most needed.

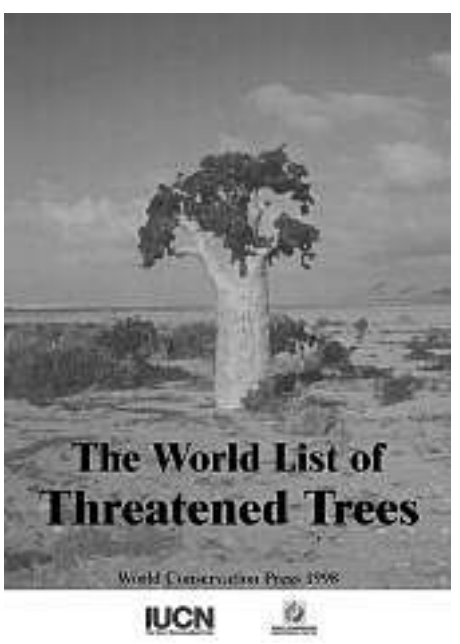
At present, 2295 tree species fall into the categories of Endangered or Critically Endangered. Rescue measures for such severely threatened species should involve both measures to conserve wild populations in their natural habitats and contingency conservation in arboreta or botanic gardens.

Over 1000 tree species are recorded in the Tree Conservation Database as globally threatened specifically as a result of felling. This reinforces the need for timber harvesting to be managed on a sustainable basis which takes into account the biological requirements of individual species: although sustainable forest management has focused on maintaining forest cover, continuity of timber supplies and maintenance of ecological functions, generally little attention has been paid to sustaining individual tree species. Species recorded as Endangered as a result of felling and international trade may be eligible for international trade controls.

The task of conserving the world's threatened trees requires co-ordinated conservation action. Discussions are under way with a range of organizations concerned to build on the data so far collected and to use what already exists as a basis for action.

For more information please contact Sara Oldfield at Fauna and Flora International, Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2DT. Tel: +44 1223 571000; Fax: +44 1223 461481, or WCMC and IUCN/ SSC at the address below.

Sara Oldfield



The World List of Threatened Trees
Compiled by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre.
Edited by Sara Oldfield, Charlotte Lusty and Amy MacKinven.
Available from WCMC, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0DL, UK. Price £26.75 (US$40.00) plus postage and packing.

Tel: +44 1223 277314; Fax: +44 1223 277136;
E-mail: info@wcmc.org.uk

The ***Tree Conservation Database*** is available from WCMC on CD-ROM. Price: £150.00 (US$225.00) plus postage and packing, or in interactive format, on WCMC's web site: **http://www.wcmc.org.uk/trees/**

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TRAFFIC BULLETIN
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PUBLICATIONS:

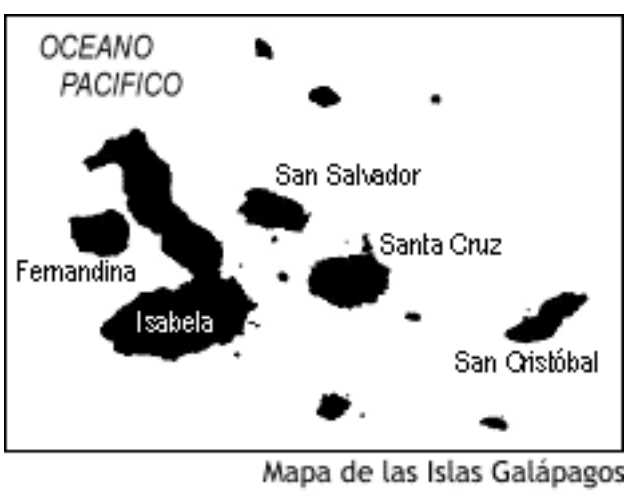
English

La Evolución de la Explotación en las Islas Galápagos: *El Comercio del Pepino de Mar de Ecuador*

M. Jenkins y T.A. Mulliken

Durante siglos, los pepinos de mar han sido una habitual fuente de alimentación, particularmente en la gastronomía del Asia Oriental. En los años ochenta, el comercio internacional de pepinos de mar para alimentación aumentó dramáticamente. Es en ese momento que surge la pesquería en Ecuador, incluyendo casi exclusivamente sólo la especie Isostichopus fuscus*; hacia 1991 la pesquería de los pepinos de mar a lo largo del Ecuador continental se había agotado y el esfuerzo de pesca del país se concentró en las poblaciones de las Islas Galápagos. Aunque las exportaciones de pepinos de mar de Ecuador representan una proporción ínfima del comercio mundial de estos productos, el impacto de la pesquería en dicho país amenaza con afectar el ecosistema distintivo de las Islas Galápagos. Los intentos para su control (la pesquería ha estado cerrada desde diciembre de 1994) tuvieron fuerte oposición de las comunidades locales y en algunas localidades la pesca ha continuado sin cesar. En marzo de 1998 se aprobó una ley especial que asigna prioridad al diseño de un plan de manejo para las pesquerías de las Islas Galápagos el cual, al momento de escribir este informe, estaba casi finalizado. El desarrollo de un sistema racional de manejo con exportaciones cuidadosamente controladas, en lugar de una prohibición completa, puede reducir los riesgos de pesca y el procesamiento ilegal de pepinos de mar.*

Antecedentes



Mapa de las Islas Galápagos

Los pepinos de mar u holoturias, están extensamente distribuidos en ambientes marinos, desde las zonas intertidales hasta las profundidades oceánicas (Conand y Byrne, 1993). Presentes en todos los océanos, estos animales son muy comunes en los Océanos Indico y Pacífico Sur Occidental, y en los trópicos se los observa fácilmente en el fondo arenoso del mar, entre corales o piedras. Los pepinos de mar, de un color que va desde el negro al castaño rojizo pasando por el verde oscuro, y de un tamaño de que va desde los dos centímetros a los dos metros de longitud, se mueven por medio de muchos pequeños pies, y usan una serie de tentáculos para recoger partículas comestibles que llevan a sus bocas. Algunos pepinos de mar expelen hilos blancos pegajosos para enredar o distraer a potenciales depredadores, e incluso expulsan sus órganos interiores cuando son perturbados. Extraordinariamente, esto no mata al pepino de mar que simplemente regenera sus órganos. Se ha estimado en 1.100 el número de especies de pepinos de mar, pero las pesquerías comerciales se basan principalmente en 10 a 20 especies de los géneros *Actinopyga, Bohadschia, Holothuria y Microthele* (Holothuridae), e *Isostichopus, Parastichopus, Stichopus y Thelonota* (Stichopodidae) (Conand, 1997, 1998; Conand y Byrne, 1993). Todas las especies explotadas son principalmente especies de aguas poco profundas, cosechadas a profundidades de hasta 40 m (James, 1989).


Photo: M Spalding
Los pepinos de mar tienen desde 2 cm a 2 m de longitud

Aunque en algunas regiones los pepinos de mar no han sido explotados o lo han sido de manera reducida hasta el pasado reciente, en otras partes del mundo se han utilizado para alimentación durante siglos. Los pepinos de mar se comercializan usualmente en forma seca, a menudo llamada "bêche-de-mer", o "trepang". Durante los años noventa, se ha reportado que aproximadamente 40 países de todo el mundo comercian con pepinos de mar para alimentación, la gran mayoría para proveer a los mercados de Asia Oriental, aunque hay excepciones como, por ejemplo, el uso local de pepinos de mar en algunas islas del Pacífico. Según los datos compilados por la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO, 1998) y los de las aduanas nacionales, el comercio internacional ha aumentado dramáticamente en los años ochenta, alcanzando un volumen global del orden de las 10.000 t anuales de pepino de mar seco. Las pesquerías en Ecuador son de una época relativamente reciente y han involucrado casi exclusivamente sólo una especie, *Isostichopus fuscus* (a veces mantenida en el género *Stichopus*). Las exportaciones de pepinos de mar desde el Ecuador representan una proporción ínfima del comercio mundial de este producto. No obstante, el impacto de la pesquería del pepino de mar en las Islas Galápagos ha provocado una especial preocupación tanto en Ecuador como internacionalmente. No sólo hace que la pesquería represente una amenaza directa para las poblaciones de pepino de mar locales como recurso, sino también indirectamente para la fauna y flora de las islas, reconocidas mundialmente como de inmensa importancia biológica. Una gran proporción del área terrestre (casi 770.000 ha de un total de casi 800.000 ha, que incluyen 13 de las principales islas) es un parque nacional y 8.000.000 de ha de aguas costeras y mar afuera que rodean las islas fueron establecidas en 1986 como la Reserva de Recursos Marinos de Galápagos. Esta área se elevó a una Reserva Biológica de Recursos Marinos en diciembre de 1996 (Anón., 1997a). Los pescadores de pepinos de mar han violado las reglamentaciones vigentes de la reserva, tumbando árboles y también afectando hábitats locales a través de sus actividades de procesamiento, y aumentando las oportunidades para que especies no nativas, como ratas, hormigas y malezas, invadan las islas (MacFarland y Cifuentes, 1996; Merlen, 1995). El rápido aumento de la población humana de las islas, de unos pocos centenares en los años cuarenta a aproximadamente 14.000 personas en 1998, es en parte el resultado de la percepción de las oportunidades de pesca en las islas (MacFarland y Cifuentes, 1996; Merlen, 1995). La pesquería ha continuado hasta finales de los años noventa, a pesar de los esfuerzos gubernamentales orientados primero a tenerla bajo control, y luego prohibiéndola totalmente. Los intentos de control han tenido una fuerte oposición: muchos de aquellos que llegan a las islas para pescar tienen un fuerte incentivo para aumentar al máximo su ingreso en un corto período de tiempo, a menudo para poder reembolsar préstamos obtenidos para comprar barcos y otros equipos. Es más, la mayoría de la población humana recién llegada a las islas, no tiene ninguna tradición en el manejo local de recursos (MacFarland y Cifuentes, 1996).


Photo: C Allan/TRAFFIC
Selección de pepinos de mar en venta en Hong Kong

Si bien había un poco de información disponible con respecto a la pesquería local, poco se conocía con respecto a los mercados finales para los pepinos de mar cosechados en las Galápagos u otras aguas ecuatorianas. Por consiguiente, TRAFFIC inició un estudio de los mercados mundiales para los pepinos de mar de Ecuador, con apoyo financiero de la WWF-EE. UU.

Mucho ha cambiado desde que se comenzó esta investigación. En marzo de 1998 se aprobó la *Ley Especial para la Conservación y el Desarrollo Sustentable de la Provincia de Galápagos*, estableciendo la Reserva Marina de la Provincia de Galápagos, un área protegida bajo la jurisdicción del Servicio Parques Nacionales que incluye todas las aguas dentro de las 40 millas náuticas del perímetro exterior de las islas. Adicionalmente, la ley le asigna jurisdicción específica al Servicio de Parques Nacionales para controlar las pesquerías de las Galápagos, permitiéndose sólo las pesquerías artesanales locales. Un Plan de Manejo que podría incluir una pesca limitada de pepinos de mar está en desarrollo.

Se confía que este artículo, que resume los resultados de la investigación de TRAFFIC, contribuirá a los esfuerzos de mantener la pesquería y el comercio de pepinos de mar del Ecuador bajo un control más eficaz, y con ello apoyar los esfuerzos para proteger la distintiva flora y fauna de las Islas de Galápagos.

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PUBLICATIONS:

Evolution of Exploitation in the Galapagos Islands: *Ecuador's Sea Cucumber Trade*

M. Jenkins and T.A. Mulliken

Methods

The primary focus for research of the sea cucumber trade from Ecuador was Asia, since this is the world's main market for the commodity. Research was also conducted in Ecuador itself and in the USA, as the latter was discovered to serve as a staging post in the trade from Ecuador to Asian destinations. TRAFFIC East Asia researched the trade in sea cucumber in Taipei and Hong Kong, including market surveys in these two cities. In addition, Customs data for mainland China (1993-96), Hong Kong (1984-96), Japan (1989-1996), South Korea (1991-96) and Taiwan (1986-97) were obtained and analysed. TRAFFIC Southeast Asia obtained and reviewed Customs data for Malaysia (1988-96) and Singapore (1996). TRAFFIC North America conducted telephone interviews of dealers in fisheries products in California, and contacted staff within the US Customs Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service for additional information. US Customs data are not sufficiently detailed to distinguish sea cucumbers in international trade, and therefore were not analysed for this study. TRAFFIC International retained a consultant within Ecuador to obtain fisheries export data and other information on the sea cucumber trade within and from Ecuador.

FAO fisheries and trade statistics (FAO, 1996a/b and 1998), Customs import data for East Asian countries and studies by Conand (1997 and 1998) and Conand and Byrne (1993) were reviewed to obtain an overview of world trade.

Weight conversion factors used

The processing of sea cucumbers, which usually involves gutting, boiling and drying, drastically reduces their weight. The precise reduction depends on the processing regime and, to some extent, on the particular species involved. On average, Conand and Byrne (1993) estimate a ten-fold weight loss, from fresh drained weight to dried, processed sea cucumber. Sonnen holzner (1997) gives a mean wet weight of 271 g for *Isostichopus fuscus* in the Galapagos Islands. Using the conversion rate of 10 dried sea cucumbers to the weight of one fresh one, this gives a mean number of around 37000 dry *I. fuscus* per tonne. Castro (1994) found an average dry weight of 18 g-20 g (or roughly 50000-55000 sea cucumbers per tonne) for *I. fuscus* off the coast of Baja California, Mexico, the adult length of which is recorded as 22 cm-24 cm, the same as that of adults of the species in Galapagos Island waters (Martinez *et al*., 1995). Estimates based on counts of sea cucumbers seized in the Galapagos of 85-125 per kg give a higher estimate of 83 000-125 000 sea cucumbers per tonne (Anon., 1997b). In this report, a median estimate based on Castro (1994) of 50 000 per tonne is used.

Producers

FAO data for 1996 (FAO, 1998) show some 20 countries reporting the catch of sea cucumbers in significant quantities (over 10 t), while Hong Kong Customs data list nearly 40 countries as suppliers of dried sea cucumber to the territory (nearly double the number of supply countries to Hong Kong in the mid-1980s). With some exceptions, most notably the intensively managed fisheries for *Stichopus japonicus* in Japan and for *Parastichopus californicus* in Washington State and southern Alaska, USA (Woodby and Larson, 1996), reported catch (which may in some cases actually reflect trade volumes of dried sea cucumber rather than wet catch weight) in each country was rarely stable. Rather, it showed marked changes from one year to another, consistent with the pattern of a 'boom-and-bust' fishery. Typically, such a pattern shows rapid increase from low harvest levels to very high levels for a few years, followed by a sharp fall-off in catches thereafter. At any one time different countries appear to be in different phases of this process. Madagascar and Tanzania, for example, were evidently in a phase of major expansion of their sea cucumber fisheries from 1990 to 1994, when the nominal annual catch for each country was reported by FAO as increasing from around 200t to 1600t-1800t. During the same period, catch estimates for the Maldives recorded by FAO(FAO, 1996b; based on trade statistics, but apparently not taking into account the 10:1 ratio of fresh weight to dry weight) declined from 746t to 66 t: when the Maldives sea cucumber fishery opened in 1986, its annual catch amounted to a catch equivalent of approximately 30t a year (Joseph, 1992). As an even more dramatic illustration of such patterns, the reported catch in Chile increased from zero before 1991 to 1601t in 1991, and then declined to 4t in 1994. Both fisheries apparently showed some subsequent increase, however, with reported catches in the Maldives and Chile rising to over 100 t in 1996 (FAO, 1998).

In some cases, declines in reported nominal catches or in exports may be a result of imposition of harvest or export restrictions. In other cases, reports of catch per unit effort and/or of the unit value of exports suggest that declines in catches are attributable to depletion of accessible sea cucumber stocks. Such depletions may sometimes be offset by switching to a substitute species of sea cucumber. This appears to be the case in the Maldives, where the sea cucumber fishery shows evidence of a shift from more valuable species, which have reportedly become difficult to find in any quantity, to less valuable species (Joseph, 1992; Joseph and Shakeel, 1992).

Importers

Photo: Terence Fong Ching-Wai

Holothuria scabra (above, on sale in Hong Kong) is one of the most expensive species of sea cucumbers

According to FAO data (1996b) and Conand (1998), the main importers of sea cucumber worldwide are Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. The vast majority of this trade is in dried sea cucumber. The only markets other than these which recorded imports over 100t in any one year from 1985 to 1994 are Malaysia (300t-650t a year); South Korea (about 400t a year); and China (1300t in 1992). Customs import statistics show that Hong Kong and Singapore recorded roughly equal volumes of trade in dried sea cucumber (around 300t-400t annually each) in the early 1970s. From the early 1970s to the early 1980s, recorded imports to Hong Kong showed a slow but steady increase, to around 1000t in 1982. Imports to Singapore over this period remained steadier and stood at around 500t in 1982. From 1982 onwards world trade increased dramatically, particularly to Hong Kong, which has since been responsible for some 80% of reported world trade in sea cucumber (Conand and Byrne, 1993).

There are some indications of a decrease in trade since the early 1990s, most notably to Hong Kong where, according to Customs statistics, imports fell from just over 7000t in 1994 to around 5800t in 1995 and 5000t in 1996. It is unclear whether the decline is a result of decreasing supply or of a fall-off in demand. Analysis of price changes over this period should theoretically give some insight; however these data, as gathered from Customs declarations, are subject to a large number of influences and it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions. A market survey in Taiwan in 1995 concluded that this market was mature, with little sign of any marked change in consumption rates or the prices consumers were prepared to pay, indicating that demand here was stable (Anon., 1995). However, traders in Hong Kong interviewed in 1997 noted that mainland China was a rapidly expanding market, which was also increasingly seeking a higher quality product. In late 1998, it was reported that demand from China and other major Asian markets was low and that supplies from all sources were expected to decrease (Sudari, Infofish, *in litt.*, December 1998).

Assessment of the full extent of global imports in sea cucumber is difficult because of the often poor quality of the data and the risk of double-counting shipments traded via more than one country before reaching their final market. Summing Customs import statistics for Hong Kong, Taiwan and Malaysia (which, according to re-export data are very largely independent of each other) provides an overall figure for the late 1980s and early 1990s of around 9000t per year in most years. Data from FAO (1996b) and Conand (1997, 1998) indicate that other import markets account for only around 10% of global imports (one of the other major importers, Singapore, re-exports the vast majority of its sea-cucumber imports). Overall, therefore, recorded global trade in dried sea cucumber in the late 1980s and early 1990s can be estimated as in the order of 10000t annually. This accords reasonably well with annual catch figures for the late 1980s of around 90 000t (Conand and Byrne, 1993), increasing to 120 000 t in the early 1990s (Conand, 1997).

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PUBLICATIONS:

Seizures and Prosecutions: *Africa*

SOMALIA

On 16 January 1998, the captain and crew of a Taiwanese ship were ordered to pay approximately US$1 million for fishing illegally in Somali waters. The court at Jarriban, some 700 km north of Mogadishu, said that if the fine was not paid within 15 days, the ship's cargo of 50 t of shark fins would be sold and the vessel auctioned. The captain was ordered to pay a fine of US$800000 for the ship and US $40000 as a personal penalty. Each of the 16 crew members were ordered to pay US $10000.

Reuters, 20 February 1998, cited in Horn of Africa Bulletin 10(1), January-February 1998

SOUTH AFRICA

Between 27 August and 14 October 1998, the Endangered Species Protection Unit arrested some 30 people, including an attorney and a former policeman, and confiscated elephant tusks, rhino horns, and a variety of live reptile species, some of which had been imported. Specimens included Rock Pythons *Python sebae*, cobras, mambas *Dendroaspis*, house snakes, Gabon Vipers *Bitis gabonica*, Horned adders *Bitis*, and girdled lizards *Cordylus*. It is thought that most of the snakes were bound for the USA and 160 Leopard Tortoises *Geochelone pardalis* (App. II) were on their way via Mozambique to Europe.

The attorney and one other person were arrested in the Northern Cape in early August on charges of hunting without permits. They appeared in court and were released on their own recognizances. A former policeman was one of four men arrested in Gauteng and North West Province for illegal trading in rhino horn. All are in custody and 7 rhino horns, weighing a total of 25 kg, were confiscated. Arrests were made in connection with the illegal possession, trading in and/or the export of reptiles and eight people were arrested for illegal ivory trading. Seven elephant tusks, weighing a total of 78 kg were confiscated; the source of the rhino horns has not been confirmed but three are thought to have been from rhinos in Pilanesberg Reserve, an undisclosed number from Hluhluwe Reserve, and two from the suburb of Benoni, Johannesburg.

Business Day (South Africa), 18 October 1998; TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa

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PUBLICATIONS:

Amazon Tree Boas to Zululand Dwarf Chameleons: *The US Role in the International Live Reptile Trade*

C. Hoover

Methods

The primary data source consulted for this study was the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Law Enforcement Management Information System (LEMIS). This is a computerized database recording the imports and exports of live wildlife and wildlife products that have been declared to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Information not yet entered into LEMIS was obtained from Fish and Wildlife Import/Export Declaration Forms (Form 3-177). In addition, data were obtained from a US Customs database - the Automated Commercial System (ACS) - which allows brokers and importers to enter import/export data electronically for review and clearance by federal inspection agencies. Because LEMIS and ACS data include only those wildlife shipments that were declared to the USFWS and recorded in either of those systems, these data should be considered minimum trade figures. The period reviewed was 1983 to 1995.

CITES annual report information, compiled by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) in Cambridge, UK, also provided records of trade: under CITES, each Party is required to submit an annual report that shows how many CITES-listed species or specimens that country has imported, exported, or re-exported. Though these reports are a valuable source of trade data, many countries are several years behind in submitting them.

Owing to the hundreds of reptile species that are involved in international trade, there was a need to limit the scope of this review. As a number of reptiles in trade are not recorded at the species level, tracking the trade in all species would have been a labour- and time-intensive exercise. Therefore, as well as taking into consideration the overall trade figures, approximately 100 species were selected for review in this report based on information obtained from traders in live reptiles, government officials responsible for regulating the trade, and the author's own experience as a former wildlife inspector with the USFWS. Roughly 70 of the species selected are listed in the CITES Appendices (the exact number is difficult to quantify because some taxa were reviewed at the genus level, while four were added to Appendix II during the period reviewed). Total world trade in the approximately 30 non-CITES-listed species could not be reviewed because the data for countries other than the USA were not available. US trade statistics for these species were consulted, however.

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PUBLICATIONS:

African Elephant Range States Dialogue Meeting

Status of the African Elephant

The IUCN/African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) presented an update on the status of the African Elephant at the sub-regional and continental levels. The presentation highlighted the challenges of estimating elephant populations in savanna and forest habitats and the consequent differences in the relative breakdown of population estimates into "definite", "probable" "possible" and "speculative" categories in the four sub-regions. This point was clearly demonstrated through the data presented. Whereas Southern and Eastern Africa, with their predominantly open, savanna habitats and regular aerial surveys in many sites, provide the highest number of "definites", Central Africa, which is predominantly forested, has more elephant estimates in the "probable" category.

Because of the nature of elephant habitats in Central and West Africa, population data are difficult and costly to collect and, as a result, the precision of population estimates for these sub-regions remains relatively poor. The meeting acknowledged that the indirect population survey techniques used to estimate elephant numbers in the extensive forest habitats of these sub-regions would benefit from further investment and development to provide more reliable and precise population estimates in future. The meeting recognized that although it may never be possible to know with precision the true population numbers of elephants throughout their range, there is considerable room for improvement in the quality of data available today. More and better survey data are required for many populations of Central and West Africa as well as some in several countries in the other sub-regions. It will be important to exploit linkages between current gaps in knowledge about African Elephant populations and the development of survey capacity in the context of the proposed CITES site-based system for monitoring illegal killing of elephants (MIKE).

The meeting also recognized that population numbers are not the only data needed for the management of elephants. The degradation and loss of critical habitats is another key variable in the conservation of elephant populations and must also be monitored.

It was again stressed that there is important and relatively untapped potential for intra-continental (South-South) transfer of expertise in elephant population survey techniques, but the facilitation of such transfer will require resources. In addition, it was recognized that there is considerable room for improvement in collaborative approaches to monitoring and securing elephant populations that cross international boundaries and in addressing trans-border smuggling of elephant products.

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the wildlife trade monitoring network

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Spotlight

TRAFFIC Report of the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES

Skill is needed to identify ramin wood correctly—hence the need for a specialist workshop
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How to separate the wood from the ramin trees

Singapore, 26 November 2007—Nearly 30 Customs officials and representatives of CITES Management Authorities and forestry agencies from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and China received training in identification of ramin wood at a workshop held in Singapore earlier this month.

more

Bigeye tuna: Don't catch them young, warns TRAFFIC
© WWF / Lorraine Hitch

Turning a blind eye to bigeye tuna, warns WWF/TRAFFIC

Cambridge, UK, 21 November 2007—Bigeye tuna are under threat because authorities are failing to recognise the dire extent of overfishing.

In the Eastern Pacific up to 60 per cent of the bigeye tuna catch are small, juvenile fish, and the proportion of these is rising, says a new report from TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, and WWF.

more

Elephant evolution finishes at an ivory carving in the wildlife trade consumer campaign launched today in China

Wildlife conservation campaign launched in China

Beijing, China, 20 November 2007—An advertising campaign aimed at changing consumer attitudes about unsustainable wildlife trade was today launched in Beijing. The campaign, consisting of creative print, video and online advertisements, is part of an awareness-raising project between WWF, the conservation organization, TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, and Ogilvy, an advertising agency.

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TRAFFIC BULLETIN
Vol. 17, No. 3 (January 1999)

PUBLICATIONS:

La Evolución de la Explotación en las Islas Galápagos: *El Comercio del Pepino de Mar de Ecuador*

M. Jenkins y T.A. Mulliken

Métodos

El principal centro para la investigación del comercio del pepino de mar desde Ecuador fue Asia, ya que éste es el principal mercado mundial para este producto. La investigación también se condujo en el propio Ecuador y en los EE.UU, ya que se descubrió que este último país servía como centro de distribución en el comercio desde Ecuador hacia los destinos asiáticos. TRAFFIC Asia Oriental investigó el comercio en pepinos de mar en Taipei y Hong Kong, incluyendo los estudios de mercado en estas dos ciudades. Adicionalmente, se obtuvieron y analizaron datos de aduana para China continental (1993-96), Hong Kong (1984-96), Japón (1989-1996), Corea Sur (1991-96) y Taiwán (1986-97). TRAFFIC Asia Sur Oriental obtuvo y revisó datos de aduana para Malasia (1988-96) y Singapur (1996). TRAFFIC América del Norte llevó a cabo entrevistas telefónicas de distribuidores de productos de las pesquerías en California, y para información adicional se puso en contacto con el personal del Servicio de Aduanas, del Servicio Nacional de Pesquerías Marina, y del Servicio de Pesca y Vida Silvestre de los Estados Unidos. Los datos de la Aduana de los Estados Unidos no son suficientemente detallados como para distinguir los pepinos de mar en el comercio internacional, y por consiguiente no se analizaron en este estudio. TRAFFIC Internacional contrató a un consultor dentro de Ecuador para obtener datos de la exportación de las pesquerías y otra información sobre el comercio del pepino de mar desde y dentro de Ecuador.

Las estadísticas sobre comercio y pesquerías de la FAO (FAO, 1996a/b y 1998), los datos de importación de las aduanas de los países de Asia y los estudios de Conand (1997 y 1998) y Conand y Byrne (1993) fueron revisados para obtener una apreciación global del comercio mundial.

Factores de conversión de peso utilizados

El procesamiento de los pepinos de mar, que normalmente implica eviscerado, hervido y secado, reducen drásticamente su peso. La reducción exacta depende del tipo de proceso y, en alguna medida, de la especie particular involucrada. Conand y Byrne (1993) estiman, como valor promedio, una pérdida de peso del orden de diez veces, entre el peso fresco escurrido y el pepino de mar ya procesado y seco. Sonnenholzner (1997) estima un peso húmedo promedio de 271 g para *Isostichopus fuscus* en las Islas Galápagos. Usando la tasa de conversión de 10 pepinos de mar secos por uno fresco, se obtiene un número promedio de alrededor de 37.000 individuos secos de *I. fuscus* por tonelada. Castro (1994) obtuvo un peso seco promedio de 18 a 20 g (o aproximadamente 50.000-55.000 pepinos de mar por tonelada) para *I. fuscus* aguas afuera de la costa de Baja California, México, cuya longitud para el adulto está registrada como de 22 a 24 cm, igual a la de los adultos de esta especie en las aguas de las Islas Galápagos (Martínez *et al*., 1995). La estimación de 85-125 individuos por kg basada en el conteo de pepinos de mar capturados en las Galápagos dan una estimación más alta: 83.000-125.000 pepinos de mar por tonelada (Anón., 1997b). En este informe se utiliza una media estimada basada en Castro (1994) de 50.000 pepinos de mar por tonelada.

Productores

Los datos de la FAO para 1996 (FAO, 1998) evidencian que 20 países han reportado sobre la captura de pepinos de mar en cantidades significativas (más de 10 t), mientras los datos de la aduana de Hong Kong listan casi 40 países como proveedores de pepino de mar seco al territorio (casi el doble del número de países que abastecían a Hong Kong a mediados de 1980). Con algunas excepciones, principalmente la de las pesquerías de *Stichopus japonicus* manejadas intensivamente en Japón y de *Parastichopus californicus* en el Estado de Washington y en el sur del Estado de Alaska, EE.UU (Woodby y Larson, 1996), la captura oficialmente reportada en cada país (que en algunos casos puede reflejar volúmenes comercializados de pepino del mar seco en lugar del peso de captura húmeda) rara vez era estable. Más bien, mostró marcados cambios de un año a otro, coherentes con el modelo de "auge y caída" de la pesquería. Este modelo de pesquería muestra típicamente, un aumento rápido desde bajos a muy altos niveles de cosecha en pocos años, seguido por una abrupta caída de las cosechas. En un momento dado los diferentes países parecen estar en las diferentes fases de este proceso. Madagascar y Tanzania, por ejemplo, estaban evidentemente en la fase de una gran expansión de sus pesquerías de pepino de mar entre 1990 a 1994, cuando la captura anual nominal para cada país fue reportada por FAO con un incremento de aproximadamente 200 t a 1.600-1.800 t. Durante el mismo período, la captura estimada para Maldivas registradas por FAO (FAO, 1996b; basada en estadísticas del comercio, pero al parecer sin tener en cuenta la proporción 10:1 de peso fresco a peso seco) se redujo de 746t a 66 t: cuando la pesquería de pepino de mar de Maldivas se abrió en 1986, su captura anual representó una captura equivalente a aproximadamente 30 t por año (Joseph, 1992). Como una ilustración aún más dramática de tales situaciones, la captura reportada en Chile aumentó del cero antes de 1991 a 1.601 t en 1991, y luego declinó a 4 t en 1994. Sin embargo, ambas pesquerías aparentemente mostraron con posterioridad un pequeño aumento, con capturas en Maldivas y Chile reportadas como superiores a las 100 t en 1996 (FAO, 1998).

En algunos casos, la caída en las capturas nominales o en las exportaciones reportadas puede ser el resultado de la imposición de restricciones a las cosechas o a las exportaciones. En otros casos, los reportes sobre la captura por unidad de esfuerzo y/o sobre el valor unitario de las exportaciones sugieren que las declinaciones en las capturas son atribuibles al agotamiento de los existencias accesibles de pepino de mar. Tales disminuciones pueden a veces ser compensadas volcando el esfuerzo sobre una especie de pepino de mar sustituta. Este parece ser el caso de Maldivas, donde la pesquería de pepino de mar muestra evidencias de un reemplazo de las especies más valiosas, que aparentemente se han tornado difíciles de encontrar aún en cantidades pequeñas, por las especies menos valiosas (Joseph, 1992; Joseph y Shakeel, 1992).

Importadores

Según los datos de FAO (1996b) y de Conand (1998), los principales importadores mundiales de pepino del mar son Hong Kong, Singapur y Taiwán. La gran mayoría de este comercio está en el pepino de mar seco. Los únicos otros mercados que registraron importaciones de más de 100 t en algún año entre 1985 y 1994 son Malasia (300-650 t por año), Corea Sur (aproximadamente 400 t por año) y China (1.300 t en 1992). Las estadísticas de importación de las aduanas muestran que Hong Kong y Singapur registraron volúmenes aproximadamente iguales en el comercio de pepino de mar seco (alrededor de 300 a 400 t anualmente cada uno) a principios de los años setenta. Desde principios de los años setenta hasta principios de los años ochenta, las importaciones registradas en Hong Kong mostraron un aumento lento pero firme hasta alcanzar alrededor de 1.000 t en 1982. Las importaciones a Singapur en este período han permanecido más constantes y se mantuvieron en alrededor de 500 t en 1982. De 1982 en adelante el comercio mundial aumentó dramáticamente, particularmente hacia Hong Kong que ha sido subsecuentemente responsable del 80 % del comercio mundial reportado en pepino de mar (Conand y Byrne, 1993).

Photo: Terence Fong Chng-Yao

Holothuria scabra (arriba, de venta en Hong Kong), es una de las especies más caras de pepinos de mar.

Hay algunos indicios de disminución en el comercio desde comienzos de los años noventa, particularmente hacia Hong Kong donde, según las estadísticas de la aduana, las importaciones cayeron de algo más de 7.000t en 1994 a alrededor de 5.800 t en 1995 y 5.000 t en 1996. No está claro si esta disminución es resultado de una disminución del abastecimiento o de una caída en la demanda. El análisis de los cambios en el precio durante este período teóricamente debería dar alguna idea; sin embargo, estos datos, tal como fueron obtenidos de las declaraciones de la Aduana, están sujetos a muchas influencias y es difícil extraer una conclusión clara. Una encuesta de mercado en Taiwán, en 1995, concluyó que este mercado estaba maduro, con pocos signos de cambios importantes en las tasas de consumo o de los precios que los consumidores estaban dispuestos a pagar, indicando que aquí la demanda era estable (Anón., 1995). Sin embargo, comerciantes de Hong Kong entrevistados en 1997, señalaron que China continental era un mercado que se estaba expandiendo rápidamente que también, cada vez más, estaba buscando un producto de mayor calidad. A fines de 1998, se reportó que la demanda de China y otros importantes mercados asiáticos era baja y que se esperaba una disminución en el abastecimiento desde todas las fuentes (Sudari, Infofish, *in litt*., Diciembre de 1998).

Una evaluación de la envergadura de las importaciones globales de pepino de mar es difícil debido a la reiterada baja calidad de los datos y al riesgo del doble conteo de embarques comerciales cuando éstos pasan por más de un país antes de llegar a su mercado final. La suma de las estadísticas de las importaciones de las aduanas de Hong Kong, Taiwán y Malasia (que, según los datos de reexportación, son en su mayoría independientes unas de otras) proporciona una cifra global para finales de los años ochenta y principios de los años noventa de alrededor de 9.000 t por año para casi todos los años en este período. Los datos de FAO (1996b) y de Conand (1997, 1998) indican que otros mercados de importación representan sólo alrededor del 10% de las importaciones globales (Singapur, otro de los principales importadores, reexporta la mayor parte del pepino de mar que importa). Por consiguiente, en su conjunto, el comercio global reportado de pepino de mar seco hacia finales de los años ochenta y principios de los noventa puede estimarse que ronda las 10.000 t por año. Esto concuerda razonablemente bien con las cifras de las capturas anuales de alrededor de 90.000 t hacia finales de los años ochenta (Conand y Byrne, 1993), que aumentaron a 120.000 t anuales a principios de los noventa (Conand, 1997).

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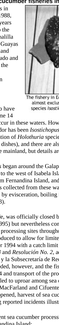

TRAFFIC BULLETIN
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(January 1999)

News

Evolution of Exploitation in the Galapagos Islands: Ecuador's Sea Cucumber Trade

Seizures and Prosecutions

Amazon Tree Boas to Zululand Dwarf Chameleons: the US Role in the International Live Reptile Trade

African Elephant Range States Dialogue Meeting

PUBLICATIONS:

Evolution of Exploitation in the Galapagos Islands: *Ecuador's Sea Cucumber Trade*

M. Jenkins and T.A. Mulliken

Results

The emergence and decline of sea cucumber fisheries in Ecuador

Commercial exploitation of sea cucumbers in Ecuador was already well established by 1988, and is believed to have begun one or two years before this. At that time it was confined to the mainland coastal area, principally in Machalilla National Park in Manabi Province, and in Guayas Province along the Santa Elena Peninsula and around small offshore islets such as el Pelado and el Muerto. The town of Puerto Lopez was the main processing centre. The fishery was apparently exhausted along the Ecuadorian mainland coast by 1991.

Photo: Jonathan R Green, Ecuador

The fishery in Ecuador consists almost exclusively of one species *Isostichopus fuscus*

Since 1992, virtually all commercial sea cucumber fishing in Ecuador is believed to have taken place off the Galapagos Islands. Some 14 species of sea cucumber are reported to occur in these waters. However, the only species exploited on a large scale in Ecuador has been *Isostichopus fuscus*. There is reportedly some small-scale local exploitation of *Holothuria* species from the mainland for mixing in ceviches (raw fish dishes), and there are also recent reports that *Slenkothuria theeli* is exploited off the mainland, but details are lacking.

Intensive, uncontrolled harvest of *I. fuscus* began around the Galapagos Islands in 1991 and has been concentrated in waters to the west of Isabela Island, in the Bolivar Channel that separates Isabela from Fernandina Island, and off the western coast of Fernandina Island. Sea cucumbers collected from these waters were taken to camps on these islands to be processed, by evisceration, boiling in sea water and sun-drying (Richmond and Martinez, 1993).

The fishery, including processing and trade, was officially closed by Presidential Decree in August 1992 (Martinez *et al.*, 1995) but nevertheless continued, as testified to by the discovery of camps and processing sites throughout 1993 and the first half of 1994. In 1994 a plan was introduced to allow for limited opening of the fishery for three months from mid-October 1994 with a catch limit of 550 000 sea cucumbers (according to *Acuerdo No. 104* and *Resolución No. 2*, adopted by the

Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo Pesquero y la Subsecretaría de Recursos Pesqueros). This catch limit was far exceeded, however, and the fishery was subsequently closed on 15 December 1994 and transport of the processed product banned two weeks later. The prohibitions led to uproar among sea cucumber fishers in the area (Anon., 1997a; Anon., 1997c; MacFarland and Cifuentes, 1996) and although the fishery has not officially re-opened, harvest of sea cucumbers is known to have continued, as the following reported incidents illustrate:

- During 1996, as many as 25 different sea cucumber processing camps were discovered along the coast of Fernandina Island;
- In March 1997, sea cucumber processing camps were found in northern and western Isabela Island and in the north-west of Fernandina Island, including one camp with 22 000 dried sea cucumbers (Anon., 1997d).
- Also in March 1997, the *Magdalena*, a vessel registered in Guayaquil, Ecuador's principal port, was apprehended near the island of Isabela with some 30 000 dried sea cucumbers on board (Anon., 1997a; Anon., 1997d).
- In June 1998 another shipment of around 30000 dried sea cucumbers and approximately 1 t of shark fin was reported to have been confiscated in Galapagos en route to Manta, a port town on the mainland coast of Ecuador.
- As of July 1998 there were reported to be a few camps still remaining on Fernandina and northern Isabela, although these were said to be very well camouflaged. Generally, any sea cucumbers harvested were believed to be taken to Puerto Villamil on Isabela Island to be processed.

In 1991 and the first half of 1992, harvest rates from the Galapagos Islands (effectively the only harvest area in Ecuador by this time) were reputedly in the region of 70000 to 110000 sea cucumbers daily (Richmond and Martinez, 1993). Harvest rates in the period September 1992 to October 1994, while the fishery was officially closed, are unknown, but in the period 15 October 1994 to 15 December 1994, when the fishery was briefly re-opened and a total harvest quota of 550 000 established, around six million sea cucumbers are estimated to have been harvested (Anon., 1997a), although some sources estimate that as many as 8-12 million were taken (MacFarland and Cifuentes, 1996). Harvest levels since December 1994 are not known with any accuracy, although MacFarland and Cifuentes (1996) estimated that they were probably at around 20%-30% of those at the peak of the 1994 open season. FAO fisheries data (FAO, 1998) record the nominal catch of 29 t of sea cucumber in each of the years 1991 and 1992, declining to 12 t for each of the years 1993 to 1996.

The trade in sea cucumber from Ecuador

Quantities of sea cucumber exported from Ecuador

In interpreting international trade statistics for sea cucumber, particular caution was exercised in view of the following findings:

- Firstly, some major importers such as Singapore re-export a significant proportion of sea cucumber, and there is therefore a high likelihood of double-counting if global import or export figures are simply summed.
- Secondly, although the vast majority of trade can be assumed to be in eviscerated and dried sea cucumbers, this is not universally the case (for example, frozen fresh sea cucumber is traded from the USA) (Conand and Byrne, 1993) and therefore calculations of numbers of sea cucumbers in trade may not be completely accurate if based on statistics for the dried product.

- Thirdly, as some countries (for example, the USA) do not have a separate Customs tariff heading for sea cucumber, records of international trade in the commodity are likely to under-represent the actual amounts traded.

Year	Hong Kong's declared imports from Ecuador (t)	Taiwan's declared imports from Ecuador (t)	Total declared imports to Hong Kong and Taiwan combined (t)	Declared exports from Ecuador (t)	Declared exports from Guayaquil (t)
1990	0.14	0.00	0.14	-	2.93
1991	0.60	0.00	0.60	-	8.12
1992	5.63	1.42	7.05	29.3	23.92
1993	14.96	0.00	14.96	-	1.54
1994	5.22	11.33	16.55	-	7.71
1995	0.00	4.22	4.22	60.47	40.20
1996	0.12	37.93	38.05	-	0.15
Total	**26.67**	**54.89**	**81.56**	**-**	**84.57**

Table 1. Reported trade in dried sea cucumber from Ecuador to Hong Kong and Taiwan, and total reported exports of dried sea cucumber from Ecuador. *Sources: Customs data from Ecuador, Hong Kong and Taiwan; General Directorate of Fisheries, Guayaquil, Ecuador.*

Import data for mainland China (1993-96); Hong Kong (1984-96); Malaysia (1988-96); Singapore (1996); South Korea (1991-96); and Taiwan (1986-96), which were examined for research for this report, all show separate categories for sea cucumber, as do fisheries export data from Ecuador. As a result of analysis of these data sets in conjunction with FAO fisheries statistics, only Hong Kong and Taiwan emerged as significant importers of sea cucumber from Ecuador. Officially reported imports of sea cucumber from Ecuador to Hong Kong and Taiwan are shown in Table 1.

Although the total amount of sea cucumber reported imported to Hong Kong and Taiwan from Ecuador during 1990 to 1996 is remarkably close to the total amount of sea cucumber reported as exported worldwide from the port of Guayaquil, Ecuador, for the period, there is a wide discrepancy between amounts declared by importers and exporter for individual years during that time (Table 1). For example, in 1992, export data for Guayaquil record the export of 17.6t of dried sea cucumber specifically to Taiwan, whereas Taiwan itself recorded only 1.42t of the same as imported from Ecuador for the years 1992 to 1993, combined.

The reported total of approximately 80t exported by Ecuador from 1992 to 1996 amounts very roughly to some four million sea cucumbers (using the estimate of 50000-55000 sea cucumbers per tonne calculated by Castro (1994)). This is clearly far less than the estimated number harvested during the same period in Ecuador, and this could possibly be explained by some or all of the following:

- there is considerable domestic consumption;
- the true conversion ratio for wet to dry weight of *Isostichopus fuscus* is different from that used;
- harvest rates have been exaggerated;
- there is considerable wastage between harvest and export;
- officially recorded trade from Ecuador considerably under-represents numbers exported;
- some of the harvest is exported directly from Galapagos without travelling through the mainland.

Reports from Ecuador indicate that domestic consumption is very limited in extent, and extremely unlikely to account for any significant proportion of the harvest. Differences in conversion ratio may account for some discrepancy, but are highly unlikely to alter the figures by more than 30% or so. Of the other factors, there are no concrete data on wastage, although accounts of the preparation process indicate that there is relatively little. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the last two factors listed above account for at least part of the explanation.

Photo: Terence Fong Ching-Wai

Sacks of *Actinopygia nobilis* and other sea cucumbers on sale in Hong Kong

Other importers of sea cucumber from Ecuador which showed up during analysis of the trade data examined were China, which is recorded as having imported 2.5t of dried sea cucumber from Ecuador in 1992, Japan, and the USA. Japanese statistics record an import of just under 3.5t of frozen sea cucumber from Ecuador in 1989. This is of note as there are no other definite records of export of frozen sea cucumber from Ecuador. The lack of specific import data for sea cucumber to the USA makes it impossible to assess its precise role in international trade in the commodity. However, export data for Guayaquil for 1995 show that 19t, almost 50% of reported sea cucumber exports from Guayaquil for that year, went to the USA. Other reported exports from Guayaquil to the USA amounted to 9.2t in 1992 and 149kg in 1996. Much trade in sea cucumber to the USA is believed to be for re-export to East Asia (see discussion below).

Photo: Terence Fong Ching-Wai

Actinopygia nobilis specimens on sale in Hong Kong

Ecuadorian trade in sea cucumbers as a proportion of the world trade

If the estimate of 10000t of sea cucumber in global trade annually during the early 1990s is correct, then the 84t or so reported as exported by Ecuador during 1990 to 1996 would have accounted for less than 0.17% of world trade. Even at the time of the estimated peak of sea cucumber harvest in Ecuador during the open season around the Galapagos Islands in 1994, Ecuadorian production would still have amounted to only around 1.75% of the estimated volume of total world trade at the time. Further, although Taiwan appears to be one of the most important destinations for sea cucumber from Ecuador, imports from Ecuador to Taiwan accounted for no more than 1% of all sea cucumber imports to Taiwan during the period 1992 to 1996.

Trade routes within and from Ecuador

The illegal nature of sea cucumber fishing off the Galapagos Islands made it difficult to establish current trade routes from Ecuador. Anecdotal information compiled during this study indicates that, after being dried, many of the sea cucumbers collected in waters around the Galapagos Islands are sold at sea, off the western coasts of Fernandina and Isabela Islands, to purchasers aboard large commercial vessels. The vessels are reported to be from countries such as Peru and Costa Rica, as well as Ecuador. Although ostensibly tuna-fishing vessels, there are claims that these ships generally do not carry nets and are therefore assumed to be buying commodities such as sea cucumber and shark fin. A recent study of the Galapagos (Anon., 1997a) confirmed the presence of foreign fishing vessels in Galapagos waters, with 18 of 23 boats identified in illegal activities from 1989 to 1996 being foreign or from the mainland. Further, of 141 claims filed for illegal fishing, 48 were for tuna poaching, and 40 for taking sea cucumbers. Also of note in this context is the export of sea cucumber from Peru to Hong Kong, having apparently begun in 1994, when 32t were traded. Reported export has tailed off dramatically since then, with just over eight tonnes recorded in 1995 and only 137kg in 1996 (Fong Ching-wai and Parry-Jones, 1997). Ships from Asia, including from Japan, have also been seen in Galapagos waters. Their main purpose is alleged to be tuna and shark fishing, and it is not known if they are also buying sea cucumber. In some cases, sea cucumbers fished in the Galapagos are alleged to be taken first to Peru and then exported to the Ecuadorian mainland as Peruvian catch, and subsequently re-exported.

Dried sea cucumber is also reputedly flown from the Galapagos Islands to Guayaquil, camouflaged with other fisheries products, and from there exported aboard commercial airlines. Some shipments from the Galapagos Islands to mainland Ecuador are believed to be organized by dealers in Guayaquil who send intermediaries to Puerto Villamil on Isabela Island to arrange shipments, sometimes aboard aeroplanes chartered specific ally for the purpose. There is an isolated report of an individual carrying some 8000 dried sea cucumbers in two suitcases from the Galapagos Islands to Guayaquil in February 1996. As noted above, in June 1998 a shipment of some 30000 dried sea cucumbers (and 20000 shark fins) was confiscated in the Islands en route to Manta, indicating that this port, as well as Guayaquil, may also be used for the export of sea cucumbers from the country. Certainly, Manta has been officially reported as an exporting port for sea cucumber from Ecuador, although there is only one known incidence of this during the period 1991 to 1996: 11 200 kg were reportedly exported to Hong Kong from Manta during the second half of 1992.

According to records kept by the General Direction of Fisheries in Guayaquil, sea cucumber was exported from Guayaquil to Los Angeles, Miami and New York at least until 1995, and also directly to Taiwan. One importer in Taiwan, interviewed in 1997, noted that most sea cucumber originating in Ecuador and imported into Taiwan was shipped via the west coast of the USA rather than coming directly from Ecuador (Chen *et al.*, 1998). Information collected by TRAFFIC North America confirmed that the west coast of the USA was both a source of sea cucumbers for foreign markets and a trans-shipment point for sea cucumbers originating in Latin America and en route to Asia. The domestic market for sea cucumber in the USA would appear to be limited, as traders of sea cucumber based in that country stated that they did not regularly keep the commodity in stock and that demand was quite low and prices high. Of 100 traders identified for the purposes of a telephone survey in the USA as being likely to deal in sea cucumber, only 14 stated that they were selling the product or had done so in the recent past (P. Kufchock, TRAFFICNorth America, *in litt.*, December 1997).

Legal controls for exports from Ecuador

The legality of exports of sea cucumber from Ecuador (as opposed to harvest and transport of the product within the country) is unclear. Information acquired in 1997 from the National Fisheries Institute indicated that export during that year was an illegal activity. This was subsequently contradicted by information from a regional fisheries agency indicating that traders claiming to have stocks acquired before the Galapagos fisheries ban were allowed to export them. Exports continued to be recorded by the General Direction of Fisheries office in Guayaquil during and after closure of the Galapagos sea cucumber fishery, and although some of these exports were of legally harvested sea cucumbers, the likelihood of legality presumably decreased with time from the beginning of 1995, when the Galapagos fishery was officially closed.

Prices for sea cucumber in and from Ecuador

In 1993, fishing boat owners were reportedly paid ECS100 (US$0.056) for each dried sea cucumber, of which the diver then received ECS20 (US$0.01) (Richmond and Martinez, 1993). Given a mean of 50 dried *I.fuscus* per kg, this equates to US $2.80 per kg of dried sea cucumbers (based on a mean live drained weight of 250g per individual *I. fuscus*, and the conversion factor of 10 to one for wet to dried weight). It is estimated that exporters in the early 1990s made around US$8 per kg of dried sea cucumber, in other words receiving a mark-up of around three times the price on harvest.

In Hong Kong, the declared value of sea cucumber imported from Ecuador between 1990 and 1996 was found to be highly variable, ranging from US$7 per kg (in 1993 and 1996) to US$34 per kg (in 1992) (Fong Ching-wai and Parry-Jones, 1997). Imports to Taiwan from Ecuador for the years 1992 to 1996 had a declared value of US$4 to US$6 per kg (Chen *et al.*, 1998), not only considerably lower than the value of Ecuadorian sea cucumber imported to Hong Kong at the time, but also apparently lower than the reported export value in Ecuador.

Two major importers of sea cucumber from Ecuador: Taiwan and Hong Kong

Taiwan

According to the China External Trade Development Council (CETRA), some 65 companies were involved in sea cucumber trade in Taiwan in 1996, one of which reportedly imported the product from Ecuador in that year. Others had reportedly imported sea cucumber from Ecuador before this, but had stopped after finding product quality levels unpredictable (Chen *et al.*, 1998). An earlier report prepared for the American Institute in Taiwan, cited the Board of Foreign Trade as stating that 22 importers were actively importing sea cucumber into Taiwan, but that two primary trading groups accounted for 95% of all imports (Anon., 1995).

Since 1988, Taiwanese Customs and other official statistics have classified sea cucumbers into the following three broad categories for tariff purposes: "sea cucumber", "sea cucumber - spiked" and "sea cucumber - not spiked". The last two-mentioned categories are for dried product only, while animals which are live, fresh, chilled, frozen, salted or in brine are classified together in the category "sea cucumber". There appears to be no clear-cut principle which is widely accepted by both the official and private sectors in Taiwan for assigning sea cucumber categories. Imports from Ecuador are classified as "not-spiked" in official statistics, although apparently they consist of only one species, *Isostichopus fuscus*, which on a morphological basis would be characterized as spiked. However, Chen *et al.* (1998) refer to one importer who had imported "spiked" sea cucumbers from

Mexico and Ecuador, indicating that at least some of the sea cucumbers from Ecuador are characterized as spiked in Taiwan, even though such recognition would apparently be financially disadvantageous to importers if they were declared as such on import (see Table 2).

Hong Kong

Hong Kong, the destination of 80% of sea cucumber in international trade (FAO, 1996b; Conand 1997, 1998), was reported to have 13 importers of sea cucumber, based on interviews conducted there in 1997. Eight of these importers agreed to an interview: none of them reported importing sea cucumber direct from Ecuador, although two stated that they imported sea cucumber from the Americas – from Mexico, Panama and the USA. There are currently no restrictions, controls or tariffs on imports of sea cucumber into Hong Kong (R.Parry-Jones, TRAFFICEast Asia, *in litt.*, March 1998).

Classification	Description of goods	Tariff rate
Sea cucumber	1. Live, fresh, or chilled	20%
	2. Frozen	
	3. Other, salted or in brine	
	4. Other, dried	NT$32/kg or 20%, whichever is higher
Sea cucumber - spiked	Spiked, dried	NT$200/kg or 20%, whichever is higher
Sea cucumber - not spiked	Not spiked, dried	NT$50/kg or 20%, whichever is higher

Table 2. Taiwanese Customs classifications and tariffs for sea cucumber, 1989-96.
Source: Taiwan Customs Import Tariff and Classification of Import and Export Commodities

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TRAFFIC BULLETIN
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PUBLICATIONS:

Seizures and Prosecutions: *Asia*

EAST ASIA

JAPAN

On 9 September 1998, police officers from Aichi Prefecture and Customs officers from Nagoya arrested five people in connection with a failed attempt to smuggle 66 kg of Hawksbill Turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* (App. I) shell into Japan from Singapore. It is alleged that three of the suspects obtained the shell in Singapore in order to sell it to one of those arrested. The shell is believed to have been imported for ornamental purposes. The plates of the Hawksbill Turtle shell (known in Japan as 'bekko') being highly prized for use in traditional tortoiseshell products. Japan dropped its reservation on the Appendix I-listing of the Hawksbill Turtle in 1994, since when importation of specimens/derivatives of the species has been illegal.

Japan Bekko Association Press Release 2 October 1998; Japan Bekko Association, in litt., *30 November 1998; TRAFFIC International*

TAIWAN

On 27 June 1998, officials at Taiwan's Chiang Kai-shek International Airport seized 89 live reptiles from a Taiwan national. These included 2 Ball Pythons *Python regius*, 15 Horsfield's Tortoises *Testudo horsfieldii*, 20 Red-footed Tortoises *Geochelone carbonaria*, 31 African Spurred Tortoises *Geochelone sulcata*, 20 Common Iguanas *Iguana iguana* (all App. II), and 1 unidentified lizard. Allegedly all specimens had been imported legally into Japan and then re-exported to Taiwan.

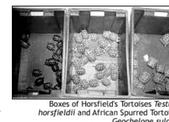


Photo: Wildlife Protection Unit, Taiwan

Boxes of Horsfield's Tortoises *Testudo horsfieldii* and African Spurred Tortoises *Geochelone sulcata*

Under the terms of Taiwan's *Wildlife Conservation Law*, four of the six species seized are protected and commercial trade is prohibited. Also, under the terms of the *WCL*, a permit must be obtained for the importation of all live wildlife. Because such a permit had not been obtained, specimens of the two non-protected species (Ball Python and the lizard) were also seized. The case has been referred to the Taoyuan District Prosecutor's office.

On 14 October 1998, a Canadian and a Dutch national were arrested at Chiang Kai-shek International Airport after attempting to smuggle 303 reptiles and amphibians into Taiwan in their luggage. One of the suspects had been arrested in January for a similar offence involving over 200 animals.

In the most recent incident, officials seized Flat-tailed Day Geckos *Phelsuma laticauda*, Fan-tailed Day Geckos *P. serraticauda*, Banded Day Geckos *P. standingi*, Carpet Chameleons *Chamaeleo lateralis*, South-central Chameleons *C. minor*, Panther Chameleons *C. pardalis*, frogs *Mantella* spp. (all App. II), and salamanders *Salamandra* spp. As no import permits accompanied the shipment, all specimens were seized.

The Canadian, François Le Berre, had been fined NT$50000 (US$1450) for the first offence; in the latest case the government has initiated procedures to bar Mr Le Berre from future entry to Taiwan. The case against the Dutch national is pending.

Wildlife Protection Unit (Taiwan); TRAFFIC East Asia

SOUTH ASIA

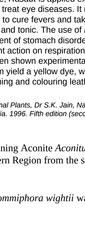
INDIA

The following were among specimens seized by authorities in India from January to August 1998:

5 Tiger *Panthera tigris* skins; 10 Tigers (whole or parts); 42 Leopard *Panthera pardus* skins; 7 Leopards (whole animals), assorted bones and teeth; 57 shahtoosh shawls, made from wool of the Tibetan Antelope *Pantholops hodgsonii* (App. I) (with some items a mix of wool of domesticated goats (known as pashmina) and shahtoosh); 1784 freshwater turtles (Testudinata); 3 Himalayan Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* (App. I) gall bladders and 3 bear skins, 1 elephant (App. I), 2 tusks, 67 pieces and 246 kg elephant ivory; 7 civet skins; 1 Goral *Naemorhedus goral* (App. I). Sixty-eight people were arrested.

The Indian Barberry

Ayurvedic medicine containing Indian Barberry *Berberis aristata* was recently seized by authorities in India; export of this plant, or derivatives, from India is prohibited. The Indian Barberry is a large thorny shrub which occurs in the Himalayas and in the Nilgiri hills in southern India. When boiled in water, the dried roots, root bark and lower stems of the plant release an alkaloid, berberine, the concentrate of which is known as *Rasaut*. Mixed with butter and alum, or with opium and lime juice, *Rasaut* is applied externally on eyelids to treat eye diseases. It may also be used to cure fevers and taken as a mild laxative and tonic. The use of *Rasaut* in the treatment of stomach disorders and its depressant action on respiration and the heart has been shown experimentally. The root and stem yield a yellow dye, which is used for tanning and colouring leather.



Source: Medicinal Plants, Dr S.K. Jain, National Book Trust, India. 1996. Fifth edition (second reprint).

On 14 April 1998, two consignments of Ayurvedic tablets containing Indian Barberry *Berberis aristata* (128 tablets) (see box), and *Commiphora wightii* (50 tablets), a tree known as Guggal, the resin of which is used to treat various ailments and as an ingredient in incense, were seized by Wildlife Preservation officials of Western Region, at the Air Cargo Complex, Sahar, Mumbai (Maharashtra).

On 5 June, 1200 bottles of Ayurvedic medicines containing Aconite *Aconitum* spp. were seized by Wildlife Preservation officials of Western Region from the seaport in Mumbai (Maharashtra).

Export of these ingredients is prohibited; the ban on *Commiphora wightii* was lifted on 14 April.

TRAFFIC India; Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI); Aaranyak Nature Club

SOUTHEAST ASIA

INDONESIA

In July 1998, Customs officers at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, Jakarta, seized 1020 live Indian Spectacled Cobras *Naja naja* (App. II) from 54 boxes labelled as containing live eels, bound for China. The snakes are in the temporary care of Ragunan Zoo, south Jakarta, until a more suitable environment is found for them. One man is helping the police with their enquiries.

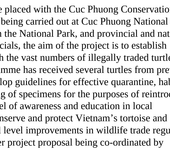


Photo: D Dimitra / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

Asiatic Softshell Turtle *Amyda cartilaginea*

The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), 30 July 1998

MALAYSIA

On 28 July 1998, Customs officers at the Causeway (the border crossing to Singapore) seized 772 birds from a car in which two individuals were travelling to Singapore. The birds were concealed in the boot of the vehicle and included 615 Oriental White-eyes *Zosterops palpebrosus*, 77 White-rumped Shamas *Copsychus malabaricus*, and 80 Thick-billed Green-Pigeons *Treron curvirostra*. The first two species may be kept as pets in Malaysia if a permit for such a purpose has been issued by the authorities. Both suspects were charged under the *Wildlife Protection Act* 1972 and sentenced to a fine of RM1500 (US$400) each or three months' gaol. The birds were to be released in the wild.

New Straits Times (Malaysia), 28 July 1998; TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

VIETNAM

On 25 August 1998, Forest Protection authorities, acting on a tip-off, stopped a public bus as it reached the city of Ninh Binh, 100 km south of Hanoi. Contained in 17 bags and crates inside the vehicle they found an estimated 700 (800 kg) turtles and tortoises of 13 species, representing perhaps the most diverse number of turtle species ever contained in one seizure in Vietnam. Most of the bags held Elongated Tortoises *Indotestudo elongata* (App. II)(weighing a total of 470 kg), with Giant Asian Pond Turtles *Heosemys grandis* representing the second-most numerous species, Keeled Box Turtles *Pyxidea mouhoti*, and smaller quantities of Malayan Box Turtles *Cuora amboinensis*, Indochinese Box Turtles *Cuora* (=*Cistoclemmys*) *galbinifrons*, Impressed Tortoises *Manouria impressa* (App. II), Malayan Snail-eating Turtles *Malayemys subrijuga*, Stripe-necked Leaf Turtles *Cyclemys tcheponensis*, Annam Leaf Turtles *Annamemys annamensis*, Asiatic Softshell Turtles *Amyda cartilaginea*, Chinese Softshell Turtles *Pelodiscus sinensis*, Black Marsh Turtles *Siebenrockiella crassicollis* and Big-headed Turtles *Platysternon megacephalum*. Additionally, there were some 15 Common Water Monitors *Varanus salvator* (App. II), 6 pangolins *Manis*, gekkos, and 34 Common Palm Civets *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus* (App. III). Apart from one dead specimen, all the animals were in good condition. The trader claimed that the turtles and tortoises in the shipment were raised on farms in south Vietnam but authorities were provided with information that suggests that they were collected from the wild throughout the southern and central regions of Vietnam, as well as in neighbouring Laos and possibly Cambodia. The cargo had been bound for Hanoi and for possible onward shipment to the Chinese market.

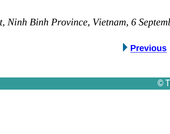


Photo: D Shepherd / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

Giant Asian Pond Turtles *Heosemys grandis* and Malayan Turtles *Cuora amboinensis*

A large number of the turtles were placed with the Cuc Phuong Conservation Project in support of a pilot study being carried out at Cuc Phuong National Park. In co-operation with authorities from the National Park, and provincial and national Forest Protection Department officials, the aim of the project is to establish practical solutions for dealing with the vast numbers of illegally traded turtles that are seized in Vietnam. The programme has received several turtles from previous confiscations, and intends to develop guidelines for effective quarantine, habitat assessment, release and monitoring of specimens for the purposes of reintroduction, as well as focus on raising the level of awareness and education in local communities about the need to conserve and protect Vietnam's tortoise and freshwater turtle species. National level improvements in wildlife trade regulation are currently the focus of a broader project proposal being co-ordinated by TRAFFIC Southeast Asia.

Cuc Phuong Conservation Project, Ninh Binh Province, Vietnam, 6 September 1998

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PUBLICATIONS:

Amazon Tree Boas to Zululand Dwarf Chameleons: *The US Role in the International Live Reptile Trade*

C. Hoover

The US Role in the Live Reptile Trade: An Overview

Imports

Figure 1 shows live reptile import figures for a number of years, beginning in 1970. It is interesting to note the groups of animals that make up these figures: in 1970, for example, 79.6% of the reptiles imported were turtles and tortoises, while 6.5% were crocodilians, 12% were lizards, and only 1.8% were snakes. By contrast, in 1996, turtles and tortoises made up only two percent of imported reptiles, crocodilians less than one percent, lizards 86%, and snakes 11%.

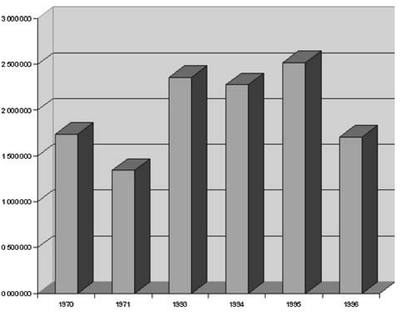

Figure 1. Total number of live reptiles imported to the USA.
Sources: 1970-71 data derived from Busack, 1974; 1993-96 data derived from TRAFFIC analysis of USFWS data.

Figure 2 shows US import figures from 1983 to 1995 for the approximately 100 species selected for review. Of these, it would appear that there has been an enormous increase in the number of specimens imported. However, it is important to note that many of these species have only been assigned species-level codes in the last few years, and that they may previously have been imported, but recorded only under more general codes. This makes the review of species-specific data extremely difficult. For example, approximately 30 of the species reviewed were not entered into the database at the species level in 1983 and 25 of these 30 species had still not been assigned species-level codes in 1988. However, 70 of the species selected for review are currently listed in CITES Appendix II, and all of these species were recorded at the species level. Only four of the species reviewed were added to CITES Appendix II since 1983 - the beginning of the period reviewed. Thus Figure 2 provides a fairly accurate picture of the subsequent trade trend.

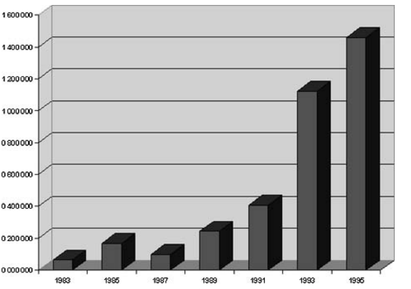

Figure 2. US import figures for approximately[1] 100 selected reptile species.
[1]*The figure of q00 is approximate owing to the fact that some taxa were reported at the genus level and some species were recorded during a portion of this time period.*

Source: TRAFFIC analysis of USFWS data.

The species imported in the greatest numbers over the period covered was the Common Iguana *Iguana iguana* (listed in CITES Appendix II) which accounted for both the dramatic increase in the total number of live reptiles imported and fluctuations in import numbers from 1993 to 1995. As Tables 1 and 2 indicate, not only have Common Iguana imports risen dramatically, they also constitute a growing proportion of the total imports.

Reptile Imports	1970	1971	1993	1994	1995	1996
Total number	1 736 695	1 343 172	2 358 324	2 276 453	2 519 711	1 707 838
Number of Common Iguanas	142 377	210 594	858 467	717 892	1 143 720	693 790
Common Iguanas as % of total	8.2%	15.7%	36.4%	31.5%	45.4%	40.6%
Total excluding Common Iguanas	1 594 318	1 132 578	1 499 857	1 558 561	1 375 991	1 014 048

Table 1. Comparison of total US live reptile imports with Common Iguana imports.
Source: TRAFFIC analysis of USFWS data

Species		Volume Imported
Common Iguana	*Iguana iguana*	3 443 469
Ball Python	*Python regius*	466 974
Boa Constrictor	*Boa constrictor*	137 851
Savanna Monitor lizard	*Varanus exanthematicus*	129 410
Senegal Chameleon	*Chamaeleo senegalensis*	50 399

Table 2. Top five species imported into the USA of those reviewed, 1991-1995.
Source: TRAFFIC analysis of USFWS data

Year	Total reptiles exported/re-exported	Red-eared Sliders exported	Red-eared Sliders as % of total	Total excluding Red-eared Sliders
1993	8 160 137	6 857 486	84.0%	1 302 651
1994	9 770 472	8 511 147	87.1%	1 259 325
1995	9 125 399	7 725 975	84.7%	1 399 424
1996	9 505 489	8 376 216	88.1%	1 129 273

Table 3. Comparison of total US live reptile exports and re-exports with exports of Red-eared Sliders.
Source: TRAFFIC analysis of USFWS data

Exports and Re-exports

The USA has also played a substantial role in the export of live reptiles, especially turtles. In fact, it presently exports or re-exports more live reptiles than it imports, largely owing to the export of farm-raised hatchling Red-eared Sliders to Europe and Asia (Table3). The trade in this species and in other North American turtles appears to supply two very different industries: the pet trade (almost worldwide), and live animals for the food trade (primarily in East and Southeast Asia).

Even more substantial than the influence of Common Iguana imports on total reptile trade is the volume of Red-eared Sliders exported to destinations worldwide, which represents more than 80% of the total number of live reptiles leaving the USA. This species has caused great concern to conservationists owing to its potential to become established in the wild and out-compete native turtle fauna (Jenkins, 1995; Branch, 1988). Cognisant of this fact, the European Union has suspended the importation of live Red-eared Sliders (under Article 4(6) of Council Regulation (EC) 338/97 and Commission Regulation (EC) 2551/97 which provides for restriction of imports of species that present an ecological threat to native wildlife in the EU). Though Red-eared Sliders in trade are produced primarily at farming operations throughout southeastern USA, it is unclear what negative impact this enormous trade may be having on wild populations of this species which, presently, is common in the wild throughout southeastern USA: farming operations incur some mortality of adult breeders each year, and this breeding stock is supplemented by wild-caught animals.

Aside from the voluminous trade in Red-eared Sliders, more than one million specimens of other reptile species have been exported/re-exported from the USA each year from 1993 to 1996. The North American genus second to the Red-eared Slider in terms of export volume is the Map turtles *Graptemys* spp. Based on export data, just two species (out of 12) make up 90% to 95% of the Map turtles exported - *G. geographica* and *G. pseudogeographic* (Ventura, pers. comm., May 1997; Weissgold pers. comm., May 1997). The number of Map turtles exported jumped from fewer than 10 000 in 1990 to more than 80 000 in both 1995 and 1996. However, this apparent growth in trade may be the result of a failure in previous years to record this group of turtles in the USFWS database, even at the genus level as was required at the time.

It is important to note that the greatest proportion of the export trade (excluding Red-eared Sliders) comprises re-exports of previously imported foreign species. The term "re-export" refers to animals that have been imported to the USA and later exported, as opposed to animals that are merely shipped through the USA in transit. One species that is re-exported in growing numbers is the Common Iguana, even though the numbers imported may be declining. Table 4 shows three species commonly re-exported from the USA.

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PUBLICATIONS:

African Elephant Range States Dialogue Meeting

Update on Poaching Since CoP10

The CITES Secretariat presented an explanation of the several distinct but compatible information collection efforts it has been tasked to implement in the context of CITES CoP10 elephant listings. These include collection of seizure data in collaboration with TRAFFIC for Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), incident reports and national level reports on illegal killing.

Concern was expressed about the considerable spread of misinformation since CITES CoP10 with respect to the Conference decisions and unsubstantiated reports of elephant poaching. There is a risk that any such misinformation could lead people to believe that the ban on ivory trade was lifted with immediate effect at CoP10 and this could stimulate illegal killing. It was agreed that efforts should be made to correct these misconceptions, especially with those who may be the source of such misinformation.

The CITES Secretariat explained how it was attempting to verify unsubstantiated reports of illegal killing of elephants through dialogue with the range States and other authoritative sources. The meeting recognized that many range States already commit considerable resources to detecting and preventing illegal hunting. It was noted that elephant population surveys, especially those that also collect data on mortality, provide valuable additional information. The Secretariat encouraged the range States to provide as much information as possible regarding known incidents of illegal hunting. The meeting acknowledged that the dedicated efforts of the CITES Secretariat to verify anecdotal and unsubstantiated claims of illegal elephant hunting and to report their findings to the Parties are of considerable importance.

At the same time, delegates fully recognized that illegal killing of elephants does persist in many range States and that there is a need to establish the true motivations behind such activity, both external and local. For example, as noted in the first two Dialogue meetings, more attention must be paid to understanding the links between illegal ivory trade and the dynamics of other economic activities in the same areas, such as the timber trade in parts of Central Africa.

Finally, the meeting re-emphasized that ultimately the future of Africa's elephants will depend on the people with whom they share the land. Empowerment of these people is fundamental to finding long-term solutions for elephant conservation.

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If you would like us to contact you in 12 months time to ask you about renewing your 'Friend of TRAFFIC' support, please tick this box. ☐

Name _____ Email _____

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Email: traffic@trafficint.org *(click **here** for contact details of other TRAFFIC offices)*

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Make a donation
- Become a Friend of TRAFFIC
- Other ways to support TRAFFIC
- Where does your support go?

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HOW YOU CAN HELP

Though factors such as habitat destruction due to agricultural land conversion may be the greatest threat to most species, there is no doubt that over-exploitation of wildlife is closely linked and plays an important part in driving the extinction crisis. Over-harvesting, unsustainable use and illegal trade of some species is threatening not only their continued survival but also that of ecosystems and the livelihoods of communities and local economies that depend upon these species.

Wildlife is especially important to people in the developing world, providing them with an accessible source of food, affordable medicines as well as vital resources upon which livelihoods are dependent. This use and value, in many cases, provides positive incentives for the protection of these resources and their natural habitats.

A great deal of wildlife trade is legal and likely to be at sustainable levels that do not adversely affect the conservation status of the species in the wild. But some of the trade is illegal or unsustainable.

TRAFFIC has been leading the way in monitoring and investigating trade in wildlife for 25 years. Whether your interest is in a particular species or a specific region, we hope that you have been impressed by our work, and believe that it is imperative that TRAFFIC continues to contribute to the conservation of threatened species.

Whether it is through a donation or through the actions you can take yourself, we really need your support to continue our work, and help to ensure that the trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.

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LINKS

TRAFFIC on the Internet

- TRAFFIC network (in English)
- TRAFFIC East Asia – Japan (in Japanese)
- TRAFFIC East Asia – Taiwan (in Chinese)
- TRAFFIC East Asia – China (in Chinese)
- TRAFFIC Europe – Russia (in Russian)
- TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Indochina (in English)

IUCN on the Internet

- IUCN-The World Conservation Union
  - Species Survival Commission
  - SSC/IUCN Wildlife Trade Programme
  - IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
  - IUCN Sustainable Use Team

- World Commission of Protected Areas
- Commission on Environmental Law
  - The Environmental Law Centre

- Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)
- Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)
  - Sustainable Livelihoods
  - Environment and Security
  - Environment, Trade and Investment

Commision on Ecosystem Management(CEM)
- Forest Innovations, a joint WWF/IUCN project.

WWF on the Internet

- WWF, the global conservation organization. WWF's mission is to stop and eventually reverse environmental degradation and to build a future where people live in harmony with nature.
- WWF International Species Programme
- WWF International Forest Programme
- WWF International Marine Programme
- WWF offices around the globe
- The TRAFFIC/WWF-UK wildlife trade campaign 2003

Multilateral Environmental Agreements / Secretariats

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- Convention on Wetland (Ramsar)
- World Heritage Convention (WHC)
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

International Organisations

- United Nations UN
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Environment Programme UNEP
- United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- World Bank
- World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Regional Organisations

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
- European Commission, Environment
  - The European Community and trade in wild fauna and flora
  - Wildlife Trade in the European Union (website developed by TRAFFIC)

International non-governmental organisations

- Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS)
- Birdlife International
- Botanic Gardens Conservation International
- Conservation International (CI
- Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)
- Fauna and Flora International (FFI)
- Greenpeace
- International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD)
- International Institute for and Development (IIED)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Society for Conservation Biology
- Wetlands International
- WildAid
- Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
- Wildlife Society

Timber Resource Organisations

- International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)
- Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)
- Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF)
- Forestry Department of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Forest Stewardship Council International (FSC)

Marine Resource Organisations

- Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT)
- Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
- International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea (CIESM)
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- International Whaling Commission (IWC)
- North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)
- North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)
- Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

Enforcement assistance related websites

- Interpol
- Europol
- World Customs Organization
- EU-TWIX - ONCE ONLINE!

Species databases on-line

- The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
- CITES listed species database
- CITES trade database
- Global Invasive Species database

National links

- UK Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime, UK (PAW)
- National Criminal Investigation Service, Wildlife Crime Unit, UK (NCIS)
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Our supporters

- The Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation

Publications, journals, newsletters, joint initiatives and other useful links

- The World Conservation Bookstore offers a wide selection of publications by the CITES Secretariat, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, TRAFFIC, and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre.
- BRIDGES Trade BioRes - Trade and Biological Resources News Digest
- Species – IUCN/SSC newsletter
- The IUCN/WWF Arborvitae Newsletter (forest conservation)
- FAO Forestry NWFP Digest (Non-Wood Forest Products) Stewardship Council International (FSC)
- · Forest Stewardship Council International (FSC) FSC News + Notes
- Precautionary Principle Initiative

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Job opportunities with TRAFFIC

Director - TRAFFIC North America
TRAFFIC is seeking a Director to oversee the activities of its US, Mexico and Canada offices, including strategic and long-term planning, administration and supervision of staff, and fundraising for the organization and specific projects.

The chosen candidate will be responsible for co-ordination with TRAFFIC's overall programme, and with ensuring strong technical support to priority programmes of partner organizations, specifically the Network Initiatives of WWF International, WWF-US and other WWF national and associate organizations, IUCN, and the CITES Secretariat.

Basic Requirements: Master's degree or equivalent experience in a relevant field such as natural resources management, biological sciences, law, public policy, or similar. 10 years experience in international wildlife trade policy, with demonstrated success in developing and managing a large and complex conservation monitoring programme. Ability to travel domestically and internationally essential.

The position will be based in Washington, DC where TRAFFIC is legally hosted by World Wildlife Fund.

To apply, please visit http://www.worldwildlife.org/about/jobs_iframe.cfm job # 28082

Affirmative Action & Equal Opportunity Employment (AA/EOE) Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

The closing date for accepting resumes is **27 December 2007**.

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ABOUT TRAFFIC

ABOUT TRAFFIC

TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature. TRAFFIC is a joint programme of WWF and IUCN - The World Conservation Union.


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TRAFFIC's **vision** is of a world in which trade in wild plants and animals will be managed at sustainable levels without damaging the integrity of ecological systems and in such a manner that it makes a significant contribution to human needs, supports local and national economies and helps to motivate commitments to the conservation of wild species and their habitats.

Over the past 30 years, TRAFFIC has gained a reputation as a reliable and impartial organization, a leader in the field of conservation as it relates to wildlife trade. It is a global network, research-driven and action-oriented, committed to delivering innovative and practical solutions based on the latest information. See other section for more information on **how TRAFFIC works to achieve its goal**, to learn more about **wildlife trade** and about TRAFFIC's **establishment and history**.


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On 6 July 2006, Kaohsiung harbour Customs officials in Taiwan discovered 744 pieces of ivory (including whole tusks), weighing a total of 3026 kg, hidden in wooden boxes.

TRAFFIC is governed by the TRAFFIC Management Committee, a steering group composed of members of TRAFFIC's partner organizations -WWF and IUCN. A central purpose of TRAFFIC's activities is to contribute to the wildlife trade-related priorities of these partners. TRAFFIC also works in close co-operation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Since TRAFFIC was initially set up in 1976, it has developed into a worldwide network with its headquarters at TRAFFIC International, in Cambridge, UK and regional bases in Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and Oceania with national offices within these regions. **Contact details** and more information on **TRAFFIC network**.

25 Years of TRAFFIC

Partners IUCN and WWF

Contact Us

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A new report on Marine Turtles in the Caribbean is now available

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WHAT IS WILDLIFE TRADE?

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Wildlife trade in simple terms is any sale or exchange by people of wild animal and plant resources. This can involve live animals and plants for the pet and horticultural trades, or the trade in a diverse range of wild animal and plant products needed or prized by humans – including skins, medicinal ingredients, tourist curios, timber, fish and other food products. Most wildlife trade is probably within national borders, but there is a large volume of wildlife in trade internationally.

Fish market in Maputo, Mozambique.

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