

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Nineteenth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 18-21 August 2003

Regional Reports

ASIA

1. As this report was submitted after the deadline, it will be provided in its original language (English) only.
2. During the present meeting a regional meeting of Asian countries was held, on 18 August 2003.
3. The regional representative for Asia, Mr Pourkazemi (Islamic Republic of Iran) chaired the meeting and it was co-chaired by Mr Giam (Singapore), alternate regional representative for Asia.
4. The representatives of the following countries were present at the meeting: Brunei Darussalam, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea and United Arab Emirates
5. The countries represented were asked to present their reports and activities since the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP12) and to provide a summary report to be included in the Asian regional report. Some Issues relating to the Saker falcon, shark and also brief summaries from some countries were discussed and it was suggested that it would be appropriate that the regional representative contact the new members of CITES in the region and provide assistance for their participation in meetings of the Animals Committee. The summary reports provided are as follows:

Brunei Darussalam

6. A summary report of eight pages regarding trade, stating that there was no record that high volumes of CITES-listed animals had been detected or confiscated in the country. Brunei Darussalam informed the meeting that there were no firms or companies dealing with exports of wildlife apart from a few pet shops. This would indicated that Brunei Darussalam has never been used as a hub or a transit point for illicit trade in southeast Asia.
7. To date, there has been very little illegal smuggling of CITES-listed fauna and flora (live or derivatives) in this country. This is most probably because of its small population that depends almost entirely on oil and gas-driven economy. The only confiscated items recorded have been a few elephant (*E. maximus*) tusks, deer (*cervus* spp.) horns and tiger (*Panthera tigris*) paws and reproductive organs. The rest of the summary report consisted of a CITES capacity building programme in this country and imports and exports of specimens of CITES-listed species in 2002.

Japan

8. The representative of Japan provided a brief summary report on a regional technical meeting on shark fisheries, which was organized by southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (ASEAN/SEAFDEC) in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (26-28 May 2003). Experts from Cambodia, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam discussed how to manage shark fisheries, and each country agreed to collect necessary information on shark fisheries and to do its utmost to establish its national Plan of Action

for the Conservation and Management of shark stocks in accordance with FAO International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of sharks. The results will be released before CoP13.

Israel

9. A three-man delegation from Israel attended the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Santiago, Chile in November 2002. Israel submitted Dr Simon Nemtzov as a candidate for Asian representative in the Animals Committee, but he was defeated in the election.
10. Israel sent one observer to the 49th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Publicity

10. The Israeli Management Authority was the subject of a publicity attack by international animal rights' groups for allowing the export of *Macaca fascicularis* (crab-eating macaques) monkeys from a breeding facility in Israel to government research laboratories in the United Kingdom. An investigation by Israel's Minister of the Environment, showed that all the monkeys were exported legally from Israel. They carried an 'F' source code as they were born in captivity in Israel, from parents originally imported from Mauritius, where they are considered an invasive alien species.

Legislation

11. In order to meet the deadlines set by the Standing Committee for Category 2 countries, Israel is in the process of completing its National Legislation Plan and updating its domestic CITES legislation.

Enforcement

12. Israel has made a number of seizures of illegally imported wild birds recently, and continues to improve its enforcement efforts against illegal imports.

United Arab Emirates

13. Since the lifting of the trade suspension imposed on UAE, the Management Authorities of UAE have been very active in implementing the various decisions taken. A capacity building and training programme is being conducted with the assistance of the CITES Secretariat. This programme could be expanded to the other GCC countries in the following year.
14. Following the CITES Asian regional meeting that took place in Ulaan-Batan, Mongolia in August 2002, UAE is working with the CITES Secretariat to organize a consultation meeting in falcons trade, involving range States, importing countries and captive breeding producing countries.
15. A falcon registration scheme was established by UAE in 2002 and to date nearly 3,200 falcons have been registered [48% hybrids produced in captivity, 4.5% peregrines, 6.5% gyr and 41% Saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*)].
16. Regarding the Saker falcon, 91.6% of the birds are wild caught, 8.4% only are captive bred. The import of Saker falcons are imported from 16 different countries. Gun data also showed that a minimum of 6,500 Saker falcons could be imported into the GCC countries every year; a huge majority without any CITES permits from the country of origin.
17. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.18 on Trade in Appendix-II and III species, UAE is seeking the assistance of the CITES Secretariat (under the provisions of Article XIII) in reviewing and taking the appropriate actions to control the trade in Saker falcon, as the UAE is of the opinion that the current level of trade may be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild. From the data collected, a number of issues are obvious. The level of harvest seems unsustainable compared to the population estimates, the sex-ratio imbalance (90% of the falcons seen are females) is also a serious concern for the future of the wild population.
18. The UAE will urge the Saker range States to establish proper scientific monitoring of their Saker populations, on which realistic, reasonable and enforced quota can be based. The basis and the process of issuance of export permits needs to be made stronger and more transparent.
19. The implementation of CITES concerning Saker falcons exports from Pakistan needs to be thoroughly reviewed and an assessment of the Saker falcon in the wild should be done at the international level.
20. The UAE has prepared a summary report on the Saker falcon trade and provided copies to the members of the Animals Committee, interested Parties and NGOs.