

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
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TIGER RANGE STATE REPORT – VIET NAM

The attached document has been submitted by Viet Nam in compliance with Decision 14.65 (*Asian big cats*)*

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Conservation of trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species (Conf. 12.5)

Report to the CITES secretariat from the CITES Management Authority of Vietnam

July 2009

Introduction:

Vietnam is home to the Indochinese Tiger *Panthera tigris cobertii*. There is no comprehensive tiger survey recently, but according to some scientists the number in the wild is estimated to be under 150 individuals (Vietnamese red data book 2007) protected areas, especially in central of Truong Son and Plateau. Wild tigers. The wild tiger is significant decline in last five decades due to several reasons such as war, habitat lost, poaching.

Legislation:

Vietnam has one of the most extensive legislative frameworks for wildlife protection in the region.

- Tigers are protected at highest level under Decree 32/2006/ND-CP which prohibits hunting, killing, trapping, catching, keeping and slaughtering tigers and trading or transporting tiger products
- A violation involving Tigers is considered a criminal offence in Vietnam and the Penal Code (2009 revisions) state that people found illegally hunting, killing, transporting holding, raising, trading tigers or trading or transporting their products should be fined from 50-500 million VND (US\$2,800-US\$28,400), or a prison sentence from 6 months to 7 years. Vietnam has issued CITES implementing legislation in the form of Decree 82/2006/ND-CP that provides regulations on the management of export, import, re-export and introduction from the sea, transit, breeding, rearing and artificial propagation of rare, endangered and precious wild animals and plants
- Tiger's prey is quite various
- Some Tiger's prey such as bangteng, gaur, muntjac are also listed in Decree 32/2006/ND-CP mentioned above.
- Vietnam has a Protected area system with over 2.2 million ha of forest land and according to Decision 186/2006/QD-TTg of prime minister and Forest Protection and Development Law 2004 the hunting of wild animal inside Core zone is prohibited totally.

Protection of tigers:

Vietnam has established a Protected areas system of 120 areas throughout the country covering a total area of more than 2.3 millions ha (off 330,000Km² country's land cover). A number of these PA's are connected and also some adjoin to PA's in Lao PDR and Cambodia with tiger populations. Hunting in PA's is totally prohibited.

There are five main agencies involved in protecting tigers in Vietnam and controlling their trade: The Forest Protection Department (Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development), The Environmental Police and Economic Police (Ministry of Public Security), The Anti-smuggling department (General Department of Customs) and The Market Control Department. The civil defense force and Border guard also play an important role. A number of inter-agency co-operation agreements are in place and others are currently under development to strengthen co-operation in tackling forest crimes.

In 2007, the National Forest Protection Department established a National Forest Crime Task Force with a roaming remit to investigate and settle forest crimes across the country. In addition, the FPD has established three regional offices (north, central and south) with mobile units that following a period of training will also have a roaming remit across their regions to investigate forest crimes.

Enforcement successes:

Since 2008 there are total 4 confiscated case of illegal trade, transporting and processing tiger parts as presented in the table below:

No	Date	Location	Quantity/type	Agency in charge	Fine/punishment given
1	6 June 2008	Hanoi	01 Frozen	Police	Under investigation
2	20 September 2008	Quang Ninh province	01 Set of Tiger bone	Police	
3	7 January 2008	Hanoi	2 Live 4 Frozen tiger	Police, Forest ranger	Three year in Jail
4	16 July 2009	Hanoi	1 Frozen tiger and 2 tiger bone set	Police	Under prosecution

Awareness raising campaign

- Vietnam is an active member of the Global Tiger Forum and hosted the GTF submit in 2006. This event also helped raise the awareness of policy makers in Vietnam to tiger conservation needs.
- FPD co-operates with a number of national and international NGOs on awareness campaigns through mass media and dissemination of communication materials (e.g. poster, brochure, calendars).
- FPD has supported the development of a number of species and product identification guides for enforcement units, by several NGOs that have included techniques to identify tigers and tiger products
- Many protected areas carry out awareness programs with local communities and visitors.

Tiger breeding facilities:

- At present there are three facilities breeding tigers in Vietnam (including licensed and state zoos). The total known captive population of tigers is 77 individuals (According to scientists most of it is Bengal tiger but not indochinese Tiger).
- All of three mentioned tiger breeding facilities is for non-commercial purpose but just only for 'experimentally breed' tigers for conservation (specifically for awareness and securing genetic diversity for future reintroduction programs).
- If any of the facilities are found breaking laws on wildlife management (e.g. commercially trading tigers/tiger products) the permission would be voided and the tigers would be confiscated. The operation of those facilities is strict monitor by local rangers and environment police
- Following Circular 90/2008/BNN any live Tigers confiscated from breeding farms would first be assessed for release back to the wild, if that is not suitable (which for many tigers in the farms it would not be); then the animals will be either (i) transferred to a scientific research centre or environmental education centre (ii) Sold to a zoo, circus or legal breeding farm; if these are not available then the animal would be euthanized and destroyed. If the tiger is injured, sick or weak it would be transferred to a rescue centre, if it has contracted a disease the tiger would be euthanized and destroyed. Any tigers that are confiscated dead or that die in the breeding facilities must be reported to the local FPD who either transfer the remains to a scientific body/training centre or museum or destroy the remains.
- The FPD is currently exploring the feasibility of establishing a marking system to control the tiger in captive (the suggestion is using of DNA profiling or microchip).

International cooperation

- Vietnam has been an active member of the Global Tiger Forum since 1995
- Vietnam is also a member of the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network and FPD, Environmental Police and the Anti-smuggling dept of Customs have participated in a number of ASEAN-WEN meetings
- Vietnam has recently signed a MOU and work plan with Lao PDR on cooperation to strengthen enforcement of cross-border forest crimes

- Vietnam has also signed MoU's at provincial and national level with the Kingdom of Cambodia on the control and monitor the cross border trade of wildlife.

Challenges:

- Vietnam lacks in-country resources for reliable and accurate wildlife forensic analysis, particularly DNA to confirm products containing tiger or identifying what sub-species live tigers in breeding operations are.
- Mechanisms to share intelligence between ASEAN countries are limited and need developing

Future plans:

- A comprehensive status survey of wild tigers and its prey in Vietnam and the establishment of a monitoring program
- A revised and endorsed National Tiger action plan
- Capacity-building to enforcement units in professional law enforcement techniques and investigations.

References:

- This report is developed in the cooperation with WCS and based on information provided by scientists.
- Vietnamese Red Data Book 2007, the Natural Scientific and Technology Publishing House.
- Forest Protection Department 2005, Tiger conservation in Vietnam, country report for GTF submit in Hanoi 2005.
- Decree No 82/2006/ND-CP of Government, on the export, import, re-export, transit and captive breeding of wild fauna and flora.
- Decree No 32/2006/ND-CP of Government on the list of rare and precious fauna and flora and mechanism of management of those species.