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Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Department of Forest Resource Management

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No:/DFRM

Vientiane Capital, Date: 23 FEB 2016

Party: [Progress Report]

Implementing on National Ivory Action Plan (NAIP) –Lao PDR

Reporting period: [Sep-2015] – [January-2016]

Background

Lao PDR ratified the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora in on May 30th 2004. According to the Law on Wildlife and Aquatic Life of Lao PDR (2007) article 40 Trade in Wildlife and Aquatic from husbandry activities shall be practiced as follow:

- The prohibited category of wildlife and aquatic can be traded from the second generation and next generation, the breeding as father and mother from the first generation not allow to trade, they shall be preserved for breeding or released into the nature.
- The managed category of wildlife and aquatic can be traded since from the first generation and subsequent following generations. The breeding of father and mothers not allow to trade. They shall be preserved for breeding purposes or released back into the nature.
- The wildlife and aquatic in the common or general category can be traded as prescribed in the laws and regulations.

Action Plan

The Department of Forest Resource Management is the agency responsible for the management of wildlife. The Department of Forest Resource Management is the designated CITES Management Authority of Lao PDR, and the Ministry of Science and Technology is the national CITES Scientific Authority.

Since last year, the National Ivory Action Plan has been developed by the Department of Forest Resource Management (DFRM), which is the key coordinating/implementing agency of the plan. The National Ivory Action Plan was developed in conjunction with several National Agencies and Departments including the Department of Forest Inspection (DOFI) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Department of Import and Export under the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC), Department of Customs under the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Department of Environmental Police and Department of International Police under the Ministry of Security, Department of Interior Defense from Ministry of National Defense and the

Court, which came together in three consultation workshops culminating in July 2015. The NIAP has been endorsed and approved by MONRE.

This Action Plan broadly follows the subject areas (“pillars”) of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime’s Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit in the development of this plan. It is therefore, progress report broken down into the following categories:

✦ **Legislation**

The ivory registration needs to follow the law on wildlife and aquatic life. DFRM is developing the “draft” of the regulation to manage wildlife and aquatic life in Lao PDR currently so that it can be a tool to manage and protect wildlife in Lao PDR.

Implementation:

- Conduct a revision of the Regulation on National Biodiversity Conservation, Wildlife and Aquatic Management in Lao PDR, No.0360/MAF.2003, dated: 8/12/2003, to update it in accordance with relevant legislation such as the Wildlife Act. **Draft is submitted for comments and suggestion from others line agencies.**

✦ **Enforcement**

Weakness in combating the illegal ivory trade currently occur at international checkpoints, custom clearance, national highways and transit routes, businesses and individuals participating in the trade. As such, the Lao PDR NIAP needs a united, cross-agency approach to combating the illegal trade in ivory.

The main agency responsible for law enforcement against violators, e.g. illegal trade in wild species is the Department of Forest Inspection (DOFI) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) with a LAO-WEN ad-hoc team which comes from many relevant sections and different levels. In two provinces, namely LuangNamtha and Bolikhamxay, the provincial governor already established provincial WENs. At province level, the Provincial Office of Forest Inspection (POFI) is the leading agency; however, it lacks equipment for the inspection and for analyzing different species, modern communication equipment, insufficient vehicles and lack of staffing.

Implementation:

Some activities on NAIP implementation; Two cases involving confiscation; one is ivory products has been confiscation at Wattay International Airport, Vientiane Capital dated September 03, 2016 weighing about 48 Kg and the arrest of Ant Eater (pangolins) 350 Kg has been reported.

✦ **Strengthening cooperation and sharing information**

Lao PDR takes steps to increase inter-agency and transboundary cooperation for investigating and prosecuting cases of wildlife crime, and ensure Customs and border control agencies are well trained and equipped to detect wildlife trafficking. Lao PDR will ensure regular and comprehensive reporting to the CITES Secretariat on the implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) and provide regular reports on ivory seizures and cases.

Furthermore, we will investigate and develop mechanisms through which we can increase the sharing of information related to wildlife crimes, to support intelligence-led enforcement action.

Communication will be enhanced through other relevant agencies and mechanisms such as INTERPOL, WCO, and ASEAN.

Every year, bilateral meeting between Lao PDR and Thailand and Vietnam are conducted. There is a change of hosting the meeting for discussing and exchanging information and the way to solve the issue concerning the resistance and intercept of illegal wildlife trade along the border. At the same time, in each year, the forestry officers of Lao PDR also participated in training on investigation in Thailand.

In September 2016, the Cites Management Authority of Lao PDR and the CITES Management Authority of China have signed the MOU on Strengthening the Enforcement of CITES to Ensure information sharing and exchange on cooperation in efforts and activities on wildlife law enforcement, curbing the illegal harvesting and taking of and illegal trade in wildlife.

Implementation:

- o Law Enforcement Technical Advisor Working Group Meeting, on 17 Nov, 2015.

✦ **Judiciary and Prosecutions**

There is a need in Lao PDR to enhance the awareness of the judiciary and prosecutors of the seriousness of wildlife crime, and to increase the capacity of law enforcement agencies to gather evidence, investigate and prepare cases of wildlife crime for the court.

✦ **Prevention and Awareness**

Lao PDR does not have a significant domestic market for the consumption of ivory of African or Asian origin, although it is accepted that some illicit markets exist. Monitoring of these markets will increase on a regular basis, with appropriate reporting on findings.

Currently, DOFI plans to implement the inspection activities and awareness creation for people and entrepreneurs in markets, hotels and restaurants so that they can see the significance of wildlife for the natural ecosystem and the participation to take a lead in not eating and hunting wildlife including not illegally trade wildlife and hence support the protection and prevention from illegal trade of wildlife in Lao PDR. It is partly funded by LENS 2 project for the inspection of the wildlife trade in a number of places throughout the country especially in critical areas and international borders.

✦ **Management of Stockpiles**

Lao PDR will establish appropriate procedures for the management of ivory seizures, including the development and maintenance of a national database, processes for registering and inventorying ivory seizures and managing a centralized ivory stockpile securely.

✦ **Capacity Analysis and Development**

Lastly, we will explore the possibility of implementing the ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Analytic Toolkit in Lao PDR, or other similar framework, to conduct a review of Lao PDR's legislation, law enforcement, judiciary and prosecution, drivers and prevention, data and analysis, to help strengthen Lao PDR's response to wildlife crime.

✚ **Expenditure**

DOFI and DFRM will work with technical partners in order to implement the National Ivory Action Plan. We have highlighted actions in the Ivory Action Plan for which completion will be contingent on securing additional funding.

✚ **Monitoring and evaluation**

The implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan will be monitored by DFRM to ensure activities are implemented as planned and within the timeframe provided. Lao PDR will aim to comply with the reporting requirements as requested by CITES Standing Committee.

Lao PDR is firmly committed to prevent, combat and eradicate illegal ivory trafficking. We are taking serious step to end the Ivory trade in Lao PDR. We affirm our continued commitment to preserving and protecting Elephants under the obligations of the CITES.

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