

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



Seventy-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6–10 November 2023

Illegal trade and enforcement

Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)

ASIAN BIG CATS IN CAPTIVITY

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 14th meeting (CoP14, The Hague, 2007), the Conference adopted Decision 14.69 on *Asian big cats*, which remains in effect, as follows:

Directed to the Parties, especially Appendix-I Asian big cat range States

14.69 *Parties with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale shall implement measures to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers; tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives.*

3. At its 19th meeting (CoP19, Panama City, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.102 (Rev. CoP19), 18.108 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.109 (Rev. CoP19) on *Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)* as follows:

Directed to Parties

18.102 (Rev. CoP19) *Parties in whose territories there are facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity referred to in Decision 18.108 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph a) are invited to welcome a mission from the Secretariat, to visit these facilities.*

Directed to the Secretariat

18.108 (Rev. CoP 19) *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *subject to external funding, undertake a mission prior to the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee to those Parties identified in document SC70 Doc. 51 and in whose territories there are facilities which may be of concern keeping Asian big cats in captivity, with the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the operations and activities undertaken by these facilities; and*
- b) *report to the Standing Committee at its 77th meeting on implementation of Decision 18.108 (Rev. CoP19), paragraph a), and progress with regard to the missions concerned and formulate recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

18.109 (Rev CoP19) *The Standing Committee at its 77th and 78th meetings shall review the report and recommendations of the Secretariat concerning the implementation of Decisions 18.102 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.108 (Rev. CoP19) and determine whether any further*

time-bound, country specific measures are needed to strengthen the implementation of the Convention, of Decision 14.69 and of paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19).

Implementation of Decisions relating to Parties with facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity

4. The Secretariat hereby summarizes the work conducted that led to the missions undertaken in accordance with Decision 18.108 (Rev. CoP 19).
5. Document [SC70 Doc. 51](#) considered by the Standing Committee at its 70th meeting (SC70; Sochi, October 2018), included a review of the number of facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity and the number of Asian big cats kept in these facilities. The Secretariat also explained in this document that it concluded that facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity could be “of concern” for the following two reasons:
 - a) Parties with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale which might be failing to implement measures to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers; tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives [Decision 14.69].
 - b) Parties which may be failing to ensure that adequate management practices and controls are in place to prevent parts and derivatives of Asian big cats from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities [paragraph 1 g) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP17) – now paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19)].
6. Concerning Decision 14.69, drawing on information obtained regarding the practices of members of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) – the principal membership body for zoos around the world – as a baseline, the Secretariat concluded in the absence of other benchmarks that facilities holding fifty or more tigers would be of concern, as this figure exceeds the highest number held by any member of WAZA holding tigers for conservation purposes.
7. Concerning the facilities from or through which parts and derivatives of Asian big cats might be entering illegal trade, the Secretariat used its experience of cases which had come to its attention in the course of its regular work, together with three other sources of information: consultation with ICCWC partners, literature review and a direct request to all CITES observer organizations that have spoken on this topic at CITES meetings.
8. The results of these two exercises combined resulted in the identification of facilities keeping Asian big cat species in captivity, which may be of concern. These facilities were in China, the Czech Republic, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), Thailand, South Africa, the United States of America and Viet Nam and information in this regard were presented in paragraph 12 of document SC70 Doc. 51.
9. At the 75th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC75; Panama City, November 2022), the Secretariat provided information from the seven Parties on the situation concerning the facilities that may be of concern in advance of a possible mission to selected facilities (see document [SC75 Doc. 9](#)). Responses from the Lao PDR, South Africa, Thailand and the United States of America were summarized in Annex 1 to document SC75 Doc. 9. China did not complete the questionnaire but provided information in an e-mail dated 25 October 2022 relating to the facilities referred to in the Standing Committee document and legislative provisions implemented to conserve tigers. Additional responses to those in Annex 1 to document SC75 Doc. 9 were received from the Czech Republic, Viet Nam and an updated response from the Lao PDR. For ease of reference a summary of all responses received is included in Annex 1 to the present document.
10. The Secretariat shared the terms of reference for the missions to the concerned Parties with the 75th meeting of the Standing Committee (see Annex 2 to document [SC75 Doc. 9](#)); these were used for the missions that took place in 2023.
11. The Secretariat provides a summary of the missions undertaken in 2023 as per Decision 18.108 (Rev. CoP19) in paragraphs 13 to 19 below. Summaries of the facilities keeping tigers in captivity visited by the Secretariat and the observations of the Secretariat are provided in paragraphs 20 to 78 below.
12. Four of the concerned Parties (China, South Africa, Thailand and the United States of America) submitted responses to the Notification to the Parties [No. 2023/091](#) on *Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)*. Reporting on responses to the Notification is provided in document SC77 Doc. 41.1 on *Asian big cats*. The Secretariat

considered responses to the Notification containing information relevant to captive breeding facilities and the Parties concerned by Decision 18.102 (Rev. CoP19) in the preparation of the present document and has referred to these responses where information has been included.

Summary of missions undertaken by the Secretariat

13. Using funds provided by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Secretariat conducted missions to visit tiger facilities of concern in Thailand from 5 to 8 February 2023, the Lao PDR from 8 to 12 February 2023, Viet Nam from 12 to 14 February 2023, South Africa from 8 to 11 May 2023 and the Czech Republic from 29 to 31 May 2023:

Party	Number of facilities which may be of concern	Number of facilities visited in 2023	Number of tigers at the facilities visited based on information provided by the authority at the time of the mission	
			Facility (Code corresponds to code in Annex 1)	Number of tigers
Czech Republic	2	2	CZ*	4
			CZ1	3
Lao PDR	6	3	LA4	91
			LA9	36
			LA5	53
South Africa	4	4	ZA1	78
			ZA2	31
			ZA3	7
			ZA4	42
Thailand	13	3	TH1	182
			TH4	26
			TH12	116
Viet Nam	7	2	VN4	25
			VN5	11
Total	32	14		705

14. The delegation of the Secretariat comprised a staff member with responsibility for scientific issues, one staff member with responsibility for enforcement issues and a tiger expert whose participation was kindly facilitated by the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) as part of the MoU between WAZA and the CITES Secretariat. The Secretariat would like to express its appreciation to the authorities of the five Parties for facilitating the Secretariat's mission and for their active engagement, as well as WAZA for its expert support and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for its generous financial support.
15. The Secretariat held online meetings with all five Parties to prepare for the missions. The format for the missions themselves was similar in the five Parties: an introductory meeting with representatives from all relevant Government departments, a briefing session with local stakeholders and non-governmental organizations, followed by field visits to selected identified facilities. The facilities visited were chosen by the Secretariat to ensure logistical feasibility within the time and funding available, and to encompass various types of facilities in the Parties visited. This included both public and private facilities, as well as those holding larger or smaller number of tigers, reflecting the range of concerns.
16. At the time of writing (September 2023), missions to the United States of America and China had not been conducted. The United States of America extended an invitation to the Secretariat to undertake the tiger mission in the last quarter of 2023. The Secretariat held informal consultations with China in the margins of the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee (AC32; Geneva, June 2023). However, at the time of writing, the Secretariat has not received an invitation from China.

* One facility of concern was not visited, but an alternative facility proposed by the Czech Republic was included in the mission.

17. In its response to [Notification to the Parties No. 2023/091](#), the United States of America reported that the [Big Cat Public Safety Act \(BCPSA\)](#) was signed into law on 20 December 2022 (Pub. L. 117–243). The purpose of the BCPSA is to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 (16 U.S.C. 3371–3378) to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act (CWSA) and to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, including ending private ownership of big cats as pets and prohibiting exhibitors from allowing direct public contact with big cats, including cubs. The BCPSA aims to ensure the health and welfare of big cats, protect the public from the dangers associated with private ownership of big cats, and strengthen the ability of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to combat wildlife trafficking. The Act introduces new restrictions on the commerce, breeding, possession, and use of certain big cat species. To legally possess privately owned big cats, individuals or entities must register any big cat(s) that were in their possession before the date of enactment with the USFWS, unless another exception of the Act applies. For more information, see “What You Need to Know About the Big Cat Public Safety Act” which can be found at the USFWS website: <https://www.fws.gov/what-you-need-know-about-big-cat-public-safety-act>.
18. In an e-mail dated 25 October 2022 (included in Annex 1 to the present document), China provided information regarding the legislative provisions in place to conserve Asian big cat species, including tigers. In its response to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/091, China indicated that it has taken strict measures to control tigers and their products. In 1993, China prohibited tiger bone usage for medicinal purposes. Since 2018, it has further tightened control measures and banned the sale, purchase, delivery, carrying, transportation, import and export of tigers and their products. China also reported that there are no facilities commercially breeding tigers in China.
19. Paragraphs 20 to 79 provide short summaries of the facilities keeping tigers in captivity and the observations made by the Secretariat during its missions. The observations of the Secretariat inform the recommendations proposed for consideration by the Committee in paragraph 92. Information on the legislative provisions implemented by the Parties visited and enforcement actions taken by them were compiled by the Secretariat and are contained in Annex 2 to the present document.

Czech Republic

Facilities keeping tigers in captivity visited by the Secretariat

20. The Secretariat conducted the mission to the Czech Republic in May 2023. At the time of the mission, the Czech Republic had a total number of 145 captive live tigers registered compared to 177 specimens in 2018. These tigers were distributed among various facilities, including 15 zoos housing 47 tigers, 17 private facilities housing 69 tigers, and 7 circuses with 29 tigers. A continuous decrease in the number of tigers born and bred in captivity in the Czech Republic has been reported, with 21 in 2020, followed by a decline to 10 in 2021, and a further decrease to 5 in 2022.
21. The Secretariat visited two facilities in the Czech Republic, both owned by the same individual. A third facility, also owned by the same individual and located within the owner’s private residence, could not be visited. According to information provided, this facility served as the primary facility where the owner bred tigers prior to the enactment of the new legislative provisions in January 2022.
22. None of the facilities that were visited by the Secretariat breed tigers and the owner confirmed that the tigers were sterilized. The owner expressed concern about the loss of income due to new legislative provisions (prohibition of breeding in private facilities – see information in Annex 2).
23. Both facilities display tigers and indicated that the facilities serve an educational and awareness-raising purpose. Limited information is however available to visitors in terms of signs or posters, etc.
24. The facilities are inspected by the relevant CITES authorities or State Veterinary Administration (under the Ministry of Agriculture) at least twice a year.
25. Disposal of specimens from these facilities is done based on the protocol for destruction of carcasses at rendering plants and documentation must be provided to the rendering plant when carcasses are delivered for destruction.
26. The facilities must obtain approval from the relevant competent regional State Veterinary Administration to move tigers between facilities and veterinary certificates are issued for these transfers.

Observations by the Secretariat

27. Regarding Decision 14.69 and the provisions in Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19), the legal provisions in place prohibit tiger breeding in privately owned captive facilities and only registered zoos can be authorized to breed tigers. The legal provisions also require accurate record-keeping for tigers in captivity and provide guidelines for the disposal of carcasses when tigers die in captivity. The key provisions include the following:
 - a) registration of the individual tigers kept at the facility,
 - b) authorization and reporting of movement of specimens (live or dead specimens),
 - c) DNA samples are required (for both live and dead specimens) and microchipping of individual live specimens,
 - d) regular inspections of facilities to ensure compliance with legal provisions,
 - e) restrictions on breeding to limit the population in captivity, except for licensed zoos; and
 - f) a compulsory protocol for incinerating all carcasses, along with a requirement to report such incinerations to the relevant authority (State Veterinary Administration).
28. The implementation of Act No. 501/2020 Coll. amending the Act No. 246/1992 Coll. on the protection of animals against cruelty that came into effect in February 2021 may have resulted in an increased need for rescue centres and additional capacity may be needed to address this.
29. Further attention may be required to oversee the transfer of carcasses to taxidermists to ensure that parts and derivatives do not enter the illegal trade through these practitioners.
30. Strengthened and formalized collaboration among relevant authorities is essential to enhance the effectiveness of the disposal process and ensuring the complete destruction of carcasses in accordance with regulatory requirements (verification that complete carcasses are destroyed). The protocols relating to the destruction of carcasses by rendering facilities may need to be strengthened, particularly with regards to the movement and disposal of specimens at these facilities. This includes formalizing reporting and exchange of information between the State Veterinary Administration and the Czech Environmental Inspectorate.
31. More frequent inspections may be necessary to ensure compliance with legal provisions, particularly the prohibition of breeding, especially at the facility that could not be visited by the Secretariat (the main facility where tigers are kept).
32. The electronic permit and reporting system seem to facilitate monitoring, mainly because the Ministry of Agriculture has access to the system and can report directly on the system when the destruction of specimens takes place.

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

Facilities keeping tigers in captivity visited by the Secretariat

33. The Secretariat recalls that the Lao PDR is subject to the Article XIII compliance process and the Standing Committee has adopted several recommendations relating to the monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade that are relevant to the keeping of tigers. This included conducting an inventory and audit of the tigers kept in captivity at the farms, combined with a marking scheme and genetic analysis of the animals to ascertain their origins and traceability.
34. The Secretariat conducted the mission to the Lao PDR in February 2023. During the mission, the Secretariat was informed that there were six facilities keeping tigers in captivity in the Lao PDR holding a total of 447 tigers.
35. During the mission, the Department of Forests indicated that the preliminary audit of tigers kept in captivity was completed for tiger farms in two provinces in April 2018 and in a third province in May 2018.

36. Full audits of six facilities were completed in 2019 and 2020. DNA samples were collected at these facilities and photos and videos of individual tigers for individual identification were collected at facilities, where possible (no samples were collected from gravid females, and in one facility juveniles were kept together and not accessible for the audit). The audit of tigers kept in captivity was undertaken in response to a recommendation regarding the monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade adopted by the Standing Committee in the context of the Article XIII process for Lao PDR.
37. The Secretariat visited three facilities keeping tigers in captivity in the Lao PDR. Originally, the plan was to visit four facilities. However, access to one of the tiger facilities was denied due to the owner's illness. At another facility owned by the same individual, the Secretariat was unable to access a significant portion of the premises.
38. Most of the facilities that were visited were previously used for breeding activities for commercial purposes. The Secretariat was informed that the facilities are in the process of being transformed into tourist-oriented operations. Concerning facilities that stated that they were open for the public, information was shared with the Secretariat by the owners regarding visitor numbers and entry fees. This information indicated that the revenue generated from these activities appeared to be insufficient to cover the expenses associated with managing and maintaining the facility, including caring for the tigers. Some owners indicated alternative sources of income (e.g., coconut plantations, textiles).
39. Facilities are required to register with the relevant authority. The tigers are not microchipped, but some facilities have photos to assist with individual identification. DNA samples were also taken in some facilities as part of the audit referred to in paragraph 36 to assist with individual identification. The tigers are not sterilized, but the males and females are kept separately in some facilities to limit breeding. Inspections are conducted every 2 to 3 months by local officials. There is no procedure in place to manage the disposal of dead tigers, but one facility indicated that the death of a tiger must be reported to the relevant authority.
40. It seems that stockpiles of tiger parts and derivatives are not kept by the facilities, but it was not clear how these are securely disposed of to prevent entry into illegal trade.

Observations by the Secretariat

41. The Secretariat made the following observations relating to the facilities and the implementation, compliance monitoring and enforcement of the regulatory provisions:
 - a) As stated in document SC77 Doc. 33.10, the national legislation of Lao PDR, including the Penal Code, now fulfills some, but not all, of the CITES minimum requirements under the National Legislation Project.
 - b) Regarding Decision 14.69, it appears that the majority of tigers housed in the facilities visited by the Secretariat lack inherent conservation value; breeding is not restricted in all facilities; and there is no procedure in place to manage disposal of dead tigers and tiger parts and derivatives. The audit of tiger farms recommended by the Standing Committee in terms of the Article XIII process for the Lao PDR is expected to be valuable in determining any potential conservation significance.
 - c) Breeding activities are taking place in some tiger farms in the Lao PDR. However, the details regarding the purpose and the financial viability of these breeding activities remain unclear. This raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of these facilities and the potential risk that tiger specimens may enter illegal trade.
 - d) It appears that there is a common misunderstanding among the visited facilities keeping tigers in captivity in the Lao PDR that the CITES Secretariat would cover the expenses for converting breeding facilities into zoos.
 - e) The Secretariat notes that only an estimated 220 *Panthera tigris corbetti* (Indochinese tiger) remain in the wild. Therefore, efforts should be focused on identifying any pure specimens of this native subspecies and encouraging holders to engage in collective/coordinated conservation breeding for these animals.
 - f) To limit the number of tigers currently held in captivity to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers, the following steps could be considered by the authorities:

- i) restricting the breeding of tigers in captivity (sterilization of females / males, separating male and female specimens), except for specimens of *Panthera tigris corbetti* that is a native subspecies that may benefit from coordinated conservation breeding initiatives;
 - ii) not authorizing any further import of live tigers, with the exception of *Panthera tigris corbetti* for conservation breeding purposes;
 - iii) prohibiting the establishment of any new tiger facilities;
 - iv) implementing more stringent regulations for tiger husbandry standards to improve care and discourage expansion of captive facilities.
42. The denied access of the Secretariat to one of the tiger facilities and to a significant area of another facility of the same owner raises serious concerns relating to the extent of the power of the Lao PDR authorities to conduct inspections of tiger facilities.
43. Local officials might benefit from additional training, resources, and oversight to ensure that they have the necessary context, expertise, and funds to carry out inspections effectively.
44. The presence of weak management practices and inadequate controls to regulate the activities of these facilities, including disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity, is a cause for concern because of the possibility that tiger parts and derivatives might enter into illegal trade. Recommendations addressed to Lao PDR in this regard are contained in document SC77 Doc. 33.10.

South Africa

Facilities keeping tigers in captivity visited by the Secretariat

45. The Secretariat undertook the mission to South Africa in May 2023. Based on the information provided to the Secretariat by South Africa, there are 73 facilities that keep tigers in South Africa and collectively they house more than 460 tigers.
46. Three of the four facilities visited during the Secretariat mission are open to the public for education and awareness-raising purposes, but are also registered as breeding facilities that trade internationally for non-commercial purposes (mainly zoological purposes). One facility is not open to the public and is registered for domestic trade only (selling/buying).
47. Three of the four facilities indicated that dead tigers are incinerated, although in some instances dead cubs were removed by a 'removal company' to be disposed of or carcasses were sent to taxidermists to be processed. One facility has reported very low mortality considering the number of animals in captivity in a facility operating for more than a decade.
48. None of the facilities restricted breeding and all facilities confirmed that registers must be kept and updated with information relating to births and deaths and submitted to the provincial authorities. Three of the four facilities indicated that the registers are updated and shared with the provincial authority, but one facility did not comply with this requirement. The detailed information captured in the registers does not seem to be standardized across the provinces.
49. Tigers in three of the four facilities visited are marked with microchipped, while one facility did not comply with marking requirements and tigers are not microchipped.
50. Inspections are carried out regularly (monthly in some provinces and quarterly in other provinces) and all the facilities indicated that they do not have stockpiles of tiger specimens due to the fact that all carcasses must be incinerated.

Observations by the Secretariat

51. The legal provisions used to regulate the activities of facilities keeping tigers seem to address to some extent the main activities of these facilities and enable the national and provincial authorities to monitor the facilities, the tigers they keep and international trade. The provisions address registration of the facilities, the keeping and reporting of registers, microchipping of individual specimens, inspections and the incineration of all carcasses.

52. South Africa is considering various options to strengthen the legislative provisions [i.e., provisions to ensure all keeping of tigers are regulated across the country through national legislative provisions; standardized provisions across all nine provinces; and effective implementation of the welfare (well-being)]. In addition to these aspects, the following could be considered:
- a) regulatory requirements for the movement / transport and possession of tiger specimens – this will address concerns relating to the disposal of specimens by persons / facilities other than the tiger-keeping facility (e.g., taxidermists, removal companies, veterinarians);
 - b) the development of a Standard Operating Procedure / Protocol relating to inspections, including the frequency of inspections;
 - c) the development of a Standard Operating Procedure / Protocol relating to the destruction of dead specimens;
 - d) the development of a standardized template for the register to be kept and to ensure that all relevant information is captured, especially information relating to movement, import, export, domestic trade and disposal of tiger specimens;
 - e) compulsory DNA testing to confirm parental lineage and enhance ability to monitor that the animals were bred at the facility; and
 - f) addressing legislative gaps relating to the regulation of activities involving alien Appendix-I listed species.
53. The monitoring of the permit conditions is inadequate for one of the facilities with long term non-compliance matters being brought to the attention of the Secretariat during the visit to the facility. The government representatives indicated that the necessary processes will be followed to address this situation.
54. Information suggests that cubs are removed from their mothers at an early age for international and national trade purposes (between 3 to 8 months) and to maximize production at some of the facilities and therefore regular inspections should be carried out to ensure registers are updated and submitted as required.
55. Endorsement of permits at the port of exit is taking place and owners of facilities indicated that multiple inspections are carried out by the authorities, prior to shipment and at the port of exit.

Thailand

Facilities keeping tigers in captivity visited by the Secretariat

56. At the time of the Secretariat's mission to Thailand in February 2023, there were 105 tigers in private possession, 1,270 tigers in public zoos, and 170 tigers in government facilities.
57. There are 36 government-owned specimens of the subspecies *Panthera tigris corbetti* (Indochinese tiger) that are kept in seven government zoos, and 17 specimens are owned by a private zoo in Thailand. *Panthera tigris corbetti* may benefit from a conservation breeding programme utilizing this captive population.
58. Three facilities in Thailand were visited by the Secretariat. Two of the facilities were open to the public, while one was not open to the public yet because it was still under construction.
59. One of the facilities had sterilized male tigers in 2019 to prevent breeding, but the two other facilities have not sterilized males or females; but they are kept apart to prevent / limit breeding. Incidental breeding does take place if they are not separated in a timely manner.
60. All three facilities confirmed that all the tigers are implanted with an identification microchip and have their stripe patterns photographed and filed with the Department of National Parks (DNP).
61. Thailand reportedly implements the following management practices and controls to prevent tiger specimens from entering illegal trade from or through the facilities: In the event of a change in tiger population, the DNP must be notified immediately within 24 hours through a hotline. An official notification must also be submitted to DNP within 60 days. Newly deceased tigers are to be kept for inspection by officials. The carcass is not allowed to be moved outside the facility until it is inspected by officials to verify the cause of death, the tiger's

identification mark, and to collect DNA samples. In case of safekeeping of the specimen, a request must be submitted to the official for approval, along with a statement of intent and details of the specimens. All specimens that are kept must bear an identification mark. The preservation of biopsy, skeleton, organs, or skins of a dead tiger must be properly registered, including information of species, sex, date the animal died and identification number (microchip) of the preserved specimens, and records must be kept in the laboratory. The samples have to be kept in a sealed room, locked with a key, and all withdrawals and deposits must be recorded. If the facility does not wish to preserve the carcass, it is disposed of by incineration in the presence of officers from local authorities.

Observations by the Secretariat

62. The legal provisions used to regulate the activities carried out by the facilities appear to address the minimum activities necessary for the government to monitor the facilities and the tigers kept by these facilities.
63. Thailand plays a vital role in supporting the remaining wild populations of *Panthera tigris corbetti* (Indochinese tiger) (an estimated 148 to 189 tigers exist in the wild in Thailand) and stands as one of the last strongholds for these tigers within the Greater Mekong region.
64. There exists an opportunity for the six facilities of the Zoological Park Organization (ZPO) of Thailand, which seem to currently house specimens of *Panthera tigris corbetti*, to collaborate in the management of this subspecies in captivity. Emphasis should be placed on prioritizing genetic testing for the *Panthera tigris corbetti* subspecies. Additionally, it is imperative to establish a well-organized and coordinated breeding programme for this subspecies. Despite the limited number of individuals held in captivity, it is noteworthy that *Panthera tigris corbetti* possesses a significant genetic diversity of alleles, underscoring its vital role as a key genetic resource for tiger conservation efforts. This strategic approach potentially presents an opportunity to enhance and supplement wild populations in the future.
65. The Secretariat made similar observations as for the Lao PDR in terms of Decision 14.69: Most tigers kept in the facilities in Thailand visited by the Secretariat did not seem to have intrinsic conservation value and are not currently being used for any broader educational purposes. To limit the number of tigers currently held in captivity to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers, the steps in paragraph 41 f) of the present document should be considered.
66. *Panthera pardus delacouri* (Indochinese leopards) are also kept in two Thai facilities, and it is essential to conduct genetic testing of these animals. These leopards are on the verge of extinction in the wild, with only small populations remaining in Thailand, Myanmar and Malaysia.
67. Coordination between the headquarters and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNPWPC) local offices currently relies on paper inspection reports. There is a desire for an online database that all staff members can access and update.

Viet Nam

Facilities keeping tigers in captivity visited by the Secretariat

68. At the time of the Secretariat's mission to Viet Nam (February 2023), there were 21 tiger farms in the country with a total of 372 tigers. These included two rescue centres with 43 tigers, three national zoos with 32 tigers, 12 private zoos and tourism areas with 238 tigers, two pilot raising (keeping) facilities with 42 tigers and two households with 17 tigers. The majority of facilities keeping tigers are privately owned. Facility owners are requested to sign a commitment not to carry out the following activities: buying, selling, and using tigers and tiger products. No breeding of tigers for commercial purposes is allowed in Viet Nam.
69. The Secretariat visited two facilities keeping tigers in captivity in Viet Nam. One of the facilities is open to the public; and one facility houses animals forfeited to the government by the court, but as part of the sentencing the offender convicted must look after the tigers. This facility is not open to the public.
70. None of the tigers at the two facilities were sterilized. Registers containing information regarding the animals in the facility and any birth or death are kept by facility owners together with inspection reports issued by the Forest Protection Department and Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources. The owner of the facility must report any birth or death of tigers at their facility to the Forest Protection Department and all carcasses of tigers are reportedly incinerated.

71. At the facility open to the public, all tigers are microchipped. However, the facility lacks a microchip scanner. As an alternative, the facility uses photos of tigers for identification purposes. The Secretariat was informed that the World-Wide Fund for Nature had committed to collect DNA samples and images of stripe pattern in the future. The tigers in the other facility were not marked.

Observations by the Secretariat

72. Viet Nam's legal provisions used to regulate the activities carried out by the facilities appear to provide a minimum basis for the government to monitor the facilities and the tigers kept by these facilities. The provisions address registration of the facilities, the keeping and reporting of registers, inspections and a process to report dead specimens to inform disposal (incineration). Although it is not a legal requirement, some facilities have taken measures for identifying and tracking captive tigers, including the use of microchips for imported tigers.
73. Viet Nam should be encouraged to focus on identifying any pure specimens of the native subspecies *Panthera tigris corbetti* (Indochinese tiger). If any facilities are found to be keeping these subspecies, they should be encouraged to participate in coordinated conservation breeding programmes for these animals, with inputs and guidance by relevant zoological associations.
74. The Secretariat made similar observations as for the Lao PDR and Thailand in terms of Decision 14.69: Most tigers kept in the facilities visited by the Secretariat did not seem to have intrinsic conservation value, breeding is not being restricted and one of the facilities is not being used for any broader educational purposes. To limit the number of tigers currently held in captivity to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers, the steps in paragraph 41 f) of the present document should be considered.
75. There seems to be some demand for tiger parts and derivatives in Viet Nam, and strengthening demand reduction programmes could be effective in addressing this issue.
76. Local officials would benefit from additional training, resources, and oversight to ensure that they have the necessary expertise and funds to carry out inspection of facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity in a more effective manner.
77. Verifying the identify of individual animals by microchip poses certain challenges, mainly due to the absence of chip-readers or the difficulties and costs associated with collecting DNA samples and applying the microchip under anaesthesia. Using stripe pattern photos for identity checks appears to be a more feasible option. This task could be carried out by any local official empowered through the legislation to carry out inspections. The results could be promptly transmitted to headquarters for verification.
78. Current management practices and controls regarding the disposal of confiscated specimens of Asian big cats [see Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*] and of specimens that die in captivity [see Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*] could benefit from a review to ensure that they are adequate in preventing specimens such species from entering illegal trade through or from such facilities.

Conclusions

79. Critically endangered subspecies of tigers [*Panthera tigris amoyensis* (South Africa) and *Panthera tigris corbetti* (Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam)] and leopard (*Panthera pardus delacouri*) (Thailand) were reported to be kept in facilities or observed in some of the facilities and these specimens could be important from a conservation perspective and may benefit from conservation breeding programmes.
80. Regarding implementation of Decision 14.69, the Secretariate notes that facilities keeping tigers in captivity still exist in the five Parties with captive tiger populations that are not directly contributing to the conservation of tigers in the wild. The Secretariat did not find any evidence that the facilities visited are breeding tigers for their parts and derivatives and most countries have carcass destruction procedures in place. However, the Secretariat could not visit all facilities and in some cases were not allowed access to those scheduled to be visited. Furthermore, information provided by non-governmental organizations to the Secretariat indicates that the continued availability of products claiming to contain tiger specimens is occurring in Southeast Asia, which raises concerns that such specimens are still being produced.

81. There is a general lack of understanding of what constitutes conservation breeding, and the majority of facilities visited believed that education and public awareness activities contribute to and support wild tiger conservation. Although this could be the case, only a few facilities visited had adequate education material, signage, and guided visits to support such efforts.
82. It was noted that the majority of the facilities visited employ restrictions such as sterilization or keeping male and female tigers separated to control breeding. Some facilities however actively engage in breeding for trade in live specimens, primarily for zoological purposes, especially in South Africa.
83. Legislative provisions to regulate the activities of facilities keeping tigers seem to be in place, including registration of the facilities, the keeping and reporting of registers, microchipping of individual specimens (except for Viet Nam), inspections and the destruction of carcasses. The strict implementation, monitoring and enforcement of these provisions are needed, and a zero-tolerance policy should be applied, and any irregularities strictly penalized.
84. Thailand's national hotline for keepers to declare tiger births and deaths could serve as a model for replication elsewhere.
85. Decision 14.69 recommends that the captive population should be restricted to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers and that tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives. In this regard, the Secretariat recalls that Decision 14.69 and the issue of restricting trade in Asian big cat specimens has generated considerable debate since the Decision was adopted at CoP14[†].
86. For several of the facilities visited, especially in the Lao PDR and Thailand, which house a large number of tigers, finding alternative use for these captive tigers, such as transforming tiger farms into zoos, may prove challenging due to their remote locations and the associated costs.
87. Facilities with a large number of tigers and with no sustainable income require rigorous monitoring and control measures to reduce the risk of tiger specimens entering the illegal trade.
88. Should some facilities keeping tigers in captivity be forced to close, actions may be necessary to address the likely imminent need for rescue centres and sanctuaries. In extreme cases involving large numbers of animals, other disposal measures, including euthanasia, may have to be considered.
89. Parties with facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and facilities housing large numbers of tigers could benefit from taking a more methodical approach regarding these facilities to improve their conservation and educational value, as well as to put an end to the activities of facilities that do not have conservation or educational value, fail to comply with regulations and pose a risk regarding parts and derivatives from these animals entering illegal trade.
90. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is currently subject to the Article XIII process and recommendations regarding monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade were adopted by the Standing Committee at its previous meetings. Therefore, the recommendations emanating from the tiger missions concerning Lao PDR are included in document SC77 Doc. 33.10, for further discussion under that agenda item.
91. The Secretariat also takes this opportunity to draw the attention of Parties to the [outcome](#) document of the CITES Big Cats Task Force meeting, in particular paragraph 2 in the outcome document which emphasizes the need to strengthen the regulation of facilities breeding big cats in captivity to prevent and detect any illegal trade from such facilities and deploy strengthened enforcement measures. Reporting on the CITES Big Cats Task Force meeting is presented in document SC77 Doc. 39.3 on the *CITES Big Cats Task Force (Felidae spp.)*.

Recommendations

92. The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - a) encourage all Parties in whose territories there are facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity to:

[†] See paragraphs 22 to 26 of document [CoP17 Doc. 60.1](#) and paragraphs 26 to 35 of document [SC66 Doc. 44.1](#)

- i) implement paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*; and
 - ii) strengthen compliance monitoring and enforcement of legislative provisions relating to facilities keeping tigers in captivity through the strict implementation of regulatory requirements ensuring that registers are accurately maintained; identification of individual tigers is a compulsory requirement (using microchips, DNA analysis and stripe identification images as appropriate); inspections are carried out regularly; that the disposal is done with the necessary controls and oversight, and any irregularities strictly penalized;
- b) further encourage all Parties in whose territories there are facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and facilities housing large numbers of tigers to consider taking a more methodical approach regarding these facilities to improve their conservation and educational value, as well as to put an end to the activities of facilities that do not have conservation or educational value, fail to comply with regulations and pose a risk regarding parts and derivatives from these animals entering illegal trade. Such an approach could include:
- i) identification of facilities keeping tigers of genetic and conservation value and engagement of these facilities in coordinated conservation breeding for such animals;
 - ii) identification of facilities keeping tigers in captivity that are suitably located to ensure public access and that meet husbandry and welfare conditions based on national and international guidelines, and implementation of support programmes where needed (for example providing guidance on development of educational materials, signs and posters), for these facilities to fully transform into facilities with educational value that are raising awareness benefitting conservation of tigers in the wild, including bringing the attention of the public to illegal trade and the need to combat it;
 - iii) implementing and enforcing measures to reduce the number of tigers in facilities that are not contributing to conservation of wild tigers or have limited educational value, by restricting breeding of tigers (e.g., by separating male and female tigers, sterilization or other disposal measures, including euthanasia) within these facilities, as well as restricting these facilities from acquiring any new animals;
 - iv) taking into consideration Decision 14.69 that directs Parties to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers and that tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives, prohibiting the establishment of new facilities keeping tigers in captivity with narrow exemptions where warranted;
 - v) assessing the need for rescue centres, sanctuaries, or other disposal measures, including euthanasia, etc. as may be required due to the phase-out of intensive tiger operations; and
 - vi) reviewing of management practices and controls to regulate activities of facilities keeping tigers in captivity to ensure that they are adequate to prevent tiger specimens from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities, including licensing of such facilities, accurate record keeping of individual tigers, regular inspections and well-regulated disposal of tigers that die in captivity.
- c) also encourage all Parties where a demand for tiger parts and derivatives exist to enhance their efforts in demand reduction activities related to illegal trade in Asian big cats in accordance with Resolution Conf. 17.4 (Rev. CoP19) on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* taking into consideration the *Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*;
- d) encourage all governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations to urgently provide funds and other assistance to Parties with facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and those housing large numbers of tigers, to support the implementation of paragraph 92 b) above;

in addition to the recommendations in paragraph 92 a), b) and c) addressed to all Parties,

e) encourage the **Czech Republic** to:

- i) continue to collaborate with the State Veterinary Administration to strengthen procedures relating to the disposal process, including improved monitoring to ensure complete destruction of carcasses; and
- ii) conduct an inspection of the facility that the Secretariat could not visit during its mission and provide a report on its findings to the Secretariat by 30 days before the document deadline of SC78 (i.e., 5 November 2022).

f) encourage **South Africa** to:

- i) standardize and strengthening legislative provisions relating to activities involving the keeping, breeding, international trade in and disposal of tigers;
- ii) standardize processes relating to registers to be kept by facilities, inspections of facilities and destruction of carcasses through the development of standard operating procedures or other similar mechanisms;
- iii) develop educational materials and displays to enhance the public education and awareness-raising value associated with the display of tigers;
- iv) initiate a process to address the legislative gap relating to the regulation of activities involving alien Appendix-I listed species (including tigers);
- iv) address compliance monitoring and enforcement of the existing permit conditions for all facilities with a specific focus on the facilities with long term non-compliance matters;

g) encourage **Thailand** and **Viet Nam** to:

- i) identify any specimens of the subspecies *Panthera tigris corbetti* and encourage facilities to engage in coordinated conservation breeding for these animals and other appropriate actions;
- ii) strengthen measures to:
 - A. restrict the breeding of tigers in captive facilities and the importation of tiger to these facilities to levels supportive only to conserving tigers;
 - B. monitor individual tigers kept in facilities through the use of microchips, stripe pattern identification and DNA analysis, as appropriate;
 - C. prohibit the establishment of new facilities keeping tigers in captivity with narrow exemptions where warranted; and
 - D. restrict the parts and derivatives for which possession is authorized to prevent these specimens from entering illegal trade;
- iii) develop educational materials and displays to enhance the public education and awareness-raising value associated with the display of tigers;
- iv) enhance standard operating procedures for inspections and disposal of specimens (including destruction of carcasses after verification of individual that died and train officials to undertake inspections and monitor the disposal of carcasses, where needed).

RESPONSES FROM PARTIES

China

Monday, September 18, 2023 at 23:01:28 Central European Summer Time

Subject: Re: CHINA FW: Implementation of Decisions 17.229 and 17.224: Facilities keeping Asian big cat species in captivity
Date: Tuesday, 25 October 2022 at 03:04:26 Central European Summer Time
From: 李林海
To: David Morgan
CC: David Morgan, cites_chinama@163.com, surui8423@sina.com, UNOG-UNEP-CITES Info, 何语霏
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Mr. David Morgan,

By this opportunity, on behalf of China CITES Management Authority, I would like to express our appreciation for your work in CITES implementation and close communication with China, and to sincerely apologize for not being able to complete the questionnaire by September 15th, taking into consideration that more than 30 captive breeding facilities in China were mentioned and that a lot of time has been taken to collect the information and it has not been completed yet.

Regarding your questionnaire on Asian big cats captive breeding facilities, which involved dozens of captive breeding facilities in seven Parties, including China, and came from some documents that were presented and noted at relevant CITES meetings in the past. Regard this, it is noted that according to the results of the questionnaires showed in the SC75 Doc.9, many facilities for education, conservation, rescue, etc., which are not related to breeding in commercial scale, are also included. This reflects some existing problems that should be given more attention. For example, the identification of facilities in each country listed is not supported by scientific and reliable data and information. Some information are collected from the Internet, and has neither been officially confirmed by the Parties, nor generally accepted by globally recognized experts. Besides, there is an obvious duplication in the list (20 and 21 are both "Yichang Sanxia Forest and Wildlife Zoo").

Despite the above mentioned, we are committed to fulfill the decisions of CITES and provide the following information for your reference regarding the

conservation and management of Asian big cats.

China has enacted and amended the Wildlife Conservation Law to strengthen the conservation of wildlife, including the Asian big cats. Many wild animals, including tiger, leopard, snow leopard, are all listed as species under Grade I state protection. Under the law, it is prohibited to hunt, catch and kill wildlife under the state key protection except for such purposes as scientific researches, population control, epidemic sources and epidemic monitoring, or for other special purposes. For selling, purchasing, or utilizing wildlife under the state key protection and its derivative products, there are similar provisions in this law. Even in special cases, the approval of competent authorities in charge of wildlife conservation under the State Council is required.

The import and export of wildlife under the state key protection and their products shall, in accordance with the law, be subject to the approval of competent authorities in charge of wildlife conservation under the State Council or the State Council, and a permit issued by China CITES Management Authority. Regarding this, China has further adopted a series of measures stricter than CITES, such as the requirement of import permit for all CITES appendice-listed species and no exemption for personal or household effects, to strengthen the management of wildlife and its import and export. Every year, China organizes special supervision and inspection on hunting, selling, purchasing, using, importing and exporting of wild animals and their products, and urges relevant captive breeding facilities to strictly comply with all Chinese laws and regulations and CITES regulations.

Regard tigers and their products, China has implemented the most stringent control measures in the world, prohibiting the sale, purchase, delivering, carrying, transporting, importing and exporting, as well as medicinal use. Currently, there are no facilities breeding tigers for commercial purpose in China.

China has continued to promote the construction of a nature reserve system

with national parks as the mainstay. Five national parks and tens of thousands of nature reserves have been established, with a total area of over 170 million hectares, accounting for 18 percent of the country's land area. We have further strengthened patrol guards and promoted the recovery and restoration of wildlife habitats, to create a better habitat for wildlife. In particular, the Northeast Tiger and Leopard National Park and the Sanjiangyuan National Park were established, and the populations of tigers, leopards, snow leopards and other big cats have steadily increased.

China has established Inter-Ministerial Joint Conference on Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, consisting of 27 ministries and National Inter-agency CITES Enforcement Coordination Group, consisting of 12 departments and bureaus, with tigers, leopards, snow leopards and other large cats as priority species of concern. Regular meetings are held to summarize the progress of work, analyze the problematic situation, and determine the next step of work, covering all aspects of law and regulation revision, deployment of special enforcement actions, publicity and education, promotion of international cooperation, and all links of wildlife and its products such as field patrol and guarding, captive breeding, trading, transportation, import and export, and utilization.

China organizes a large number of public awareness and education activities every year, and at specific time points such as World Wildlife Day and Wildlife Protection Publicity Month, thematic publicity activities are organized to raise public awareness of wildlife protection and refusing illegal trade.

International cooperation has been continuously strengthened. China has participated in the Global Tiger Forum, the Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation, and the Steering Committee meetings of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Project to strengthen communication with other range States and promote cross-border conservation actions. China has taken the lead in or participated in international joint law enforcement operations such as the "Thunder" series, and promoted a chain of crackdown on

illegal trade in wildlife and its products in source, transit and destination countries. Training courses are organized annually for relevant developing countries to strengthen communication on wildlife conservation management in their country.

We would appreciate it if you could take the above information and concerns into consideration and report to SC75 in an appropriate manner.

In addition, it seems that there are some language problems in SC75 Doc.9. In the second line of paragraph 4 "captive facilities for Asian big cats" are mentioned. In fact, not all the facilities proposed according to the b) standard are captive facilities, e.g. some are taxidermy companies.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,

Li Linhai (Mr.),

Director,

Fauna Conservation and Management Division, China CITES Management Authority

 李林海
citeslhb@126.com

Czech Republic

Background

Implementing Decision 14.69?	Yes
Implementing paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)?	Yes
Implementing Decision 17.226?	Yes
Received copies of national legislation applies these management practices and controls?	Details relating to provisions received
Management practices and controls reviewed in accordance with Decision 17.226?	Yes
Competent authority for ensuring that provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226 are complied with	Czech CITES Enforcement Authorities – Czech Environmental Inspectorate, Customs Authorities, Police
Actions taken during the past 5 year to ensure compliance with these provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226, including the number of inspections of facilities breeding tigers and measures taken by the authorities as follow up on inspections.	Czech Environmental Inspectorate conducted 58 inspections of the facilities breeding tigers and other Asian big cat species
Illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities detected during the past 5 years? (If yes, number of seizures, arrests and prosecutions made and convictions and penalties imposed).	As a result of inspections of breeding facilities conducted by the Czech Environmental Inspectorate in past five years, 12 cases of violation of the Czech CITES National legislation or the EU Wildlife Trade regulations concerning tigers and other Asian big cat species were revealed by the Czech Environmental Inspectorate. These violations included e.g. not following the rules for registration of the specimens according to the CITES national legislation, offering tiger specimens for trade without the permission, not proving legal origin of the specimens kept etc. and the offenders were punished by fines with total amount of 120 000,- CZK. Detailed information about the individual cases are available upon request. Criminal investigation of several cases concerning suspicion of illegal handling with Tiger carcasses in the years 2021 and 2022 based on the findings of the Czech Environmental Inspectorate, Customs Authorities and Police have been initiated. Seizures: In 2019, two live specimens of white tigers were seized and confiscated because the specimens were not marked with microchips. In the same year, a tiger skeleton (without a skull), and a separate tiger skull were confiscated and a stuffed tiger body , without proof of legal origin, was seized . A live female tiger cub was seized in August 2022 without marking by microchip and proof of legal origin and placed into the rescue center (zoo) in the Czech Republic

Facilities which may be of concern

Question	Facility	
	CZ1	CZ2
Is the facility still open/operational?	Yes, open for public from May to September (tourist season)	Yes
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	-	-
How many tigers are presently at the facility?	3 females (12/09/2022)	21 tigers
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	0 - Exhibition (no breeding)	2017 (8), 2018 (4), 2019 (0), 2020 (3), 2021 (6), 2022 (1)
Is the facility open to the public?	Yes	No
Who is the owner of the facility?	Provided	Provided
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?	Exhibition	Keeping without breeding since strengthened conditions according to the amended National Veterinary legislation came into force in 2022, exhibition for public in other facilities (during tourist season from April to September)

What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?	Records kept by the owner in written form and all tigers are also registered in accordance with the Act No. 100/2004 Coll. (on Trade in Endangered Species) and the relevant National Veterinary legislation	Records kept by the owner in written form and all tigers are also registered in accordance with the Act No. 100/2004 Coll. (on Trade in Endangered Species) and the relevant National Veterinary legislation
Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?	No, only females in the facility	Tigers are not sterilized, nor kept apart, tigers receive contraception (<i>Covinan</i>)
Are the tigers marked or individually identified?	All specimens marked by microchips	All specimens marked by microchips
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?	No deaths of tigers recorded, no disposal of tiger carcasses.	No disposal of carcasses, carcasses are immediately sent to the rendering plant.
Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?	No	No
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?	There are strengthened veterinarian measures focused on the check of tiger carcasses in rendering plants before they are further processed. The protocols for destruction of tiger carcasses issued by veterinarians after the death of the tigers are duly checked with respect to the weight, age and sex of the dead specimen sent for processing in order to be assured that no parts of carcasses have been misused for illegal trade. If missing parts of carcasses are identified relevant CITES enforcement bodies are informed by veterinarians for further check of the owner of the tiger	Same as for other facility

Lao PDR

Background

Implementing Decision 14.69?	Yes
Implementing paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)?	Yes
Implementing Decision 17.226?	Yes
Received copies of national legislation applies these management practices and controls?	List of legislation used to implement the decisions and resolution provided
Management practices and controls reviewed in accordance with Decision 17.226?	Yes
Competent authority for ensuring that provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226 are complied with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lao PDR's CITES MA—Department of Forestry under Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Lao PDR's Lao WEN agencies: Department of Forest Inspection, Police, Customs, Prosecutors, Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Corruption, and Military.
Actions taken during the past 5 year to ensure compliance with these provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226, including the number of inspections of facilities breeding tigers and measures taken by the authorities as follow up on inspections.	<p>From 2018 to 2023, the Department of Forest Inspection—in collaboration with Lao PDR's CITES MA—conducted 05 inspections of tiger facilities. Measures taken include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inspections were conducted based on the MAF Decision No. 0188 (2019) on Establishing and Managing Zoos, Farms, Rehab and Breeding Centers Registration and listing of all captive species of tiger
Illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities detected during the past 5 years? (If yes, number of seizures, arrests and prosecutions made and convictions and penalties imposed).	From 2018 to 2023, there has not been illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities in Lao PDR been detected

Facilities which may be of concern

Question	Facilities							
	LA1 + 2	LA3	LA4	LA5	LA6	LA7	LA8	LA9
Is the facility still open/operational?	Open and operational	Open and operational	Open and operational	Open and operational	Not existing	Not existing	Open and operational	Open and operational
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	--	-	-	-			-	-
How many tigers are presently at the facility?	63	149	146	53			None	36
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	No evidence of breeding found	No evidence of breeding found	No evidence of breeding found	No evidence of breeding found			None	No evidence of breeding
Is the facility open to the public?	In process of upgrading for public visits	In process of upgrading for public visits	In process of upgrading for public visits	Open for public visit			Yes	Yes
Who is the owner of the facility?	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided			Provided	Provided
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?	Tourism	Previously for commercial breeding purposes, now turning into zoo for tourism and scientific purposes	Previously for commercial breeding purposes, now turning into zoo for tourism and scientific purposes	Previously for commercial breeding purposes, now turning into zoo for tourism and scientific purposes			Rescue center	Previously for commercial breeding purposes, now turning into zoo for tourism and scientific purposes
What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?	Registration Species-listing	Registration Listing of tiger species	Registration Listing of tiger species	Registration Listing of tiger species			None	Registration Listing of tiger species

Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?	No sterilization, but sexes are separated	No sterilization, but the sexes are separated	No sterilization, but the sexes are separated	No sterilization, but the sexes are separated			None	No sterilization, but the sexes are separated
Are the tigers marked or individually identified?	Not yet	No	No	No			None	No
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?	Buried in the designated area approved by DAFO and the facility	No evidence of dead tigers	No evidence of dead tigers	No evidence of dead tigers			None	No evidence of dead tigers
Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?	No	No evidence of dead tigers	No evidence of dead tigers	No evidence of dead tigers			None	No evidence of dead tigers
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?	None	None	None	None			None	None

South Africa

Background

Implementing Decision 14.69?	No
Implementing paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)?	Yes
Implementing Decision 17.226?	No
Received copies of national legislation applies these management practices and controls?	-
Management practices and controls reviewed in accordance with Decision 17.226?	-
Competent authority for ensuring that provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226 are complied with	-
Actions taken during the past 5 year to ensure compliance with these provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226, including the number of inspections of facilities breeding tigers and measures taken by the authorities as follow up on inspections.	Details provided
Illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities detected during the past 5 years? (If yes, number of seizures, arrests and prosecutions made and convictions and penalties imposed).	Four cases. Details provided

Facilities which may be of concern

Question	Facility			
	ZA1	ZA2	ZA3	ZA4
Is the facility still open/operational?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	-	-	-	-
How many tigers are presently at the facility?	65	30	13	41
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	35	40	13	75
Is the facility open to the public?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Who is the owner of the facility?	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?	Enhance property's economic productivity and for personal effects	Exhibition and breeding	Education, awareness-raising and export of offspring to zoos	Conservation, breeding and export of live specimens
What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?	Captive breeding register submitted quarterly	Stock sheets/records	Register	Records kept
Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?	Not routinely	No	Sexes normally kept apart	Sometimes kept apart
Are the tigers marked or individually identified?	No	Some microchipped	Microchipped	Microchipped.
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?	Consumptive use of meat by themselves. Skins tanned for own use.	Burned	Small animals burned or buried; larger ones stuffed.	Incinerated
Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?	No	No	No	No
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?	Deaths to be declared to authorities and logged in breeding register.	Burning	Authorities notified. Veterinarian assessment of cause of death.	Self-regulation.

Thailand

Background

Implementing Decision 14.69?	Yes
Implementing paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)?	Yes
Implementing Decision 17.226?	Yes
Received copies of national legislation applies these management practices and controls?	Details and copies provided
Management practices and controls reviewed in accordance with Decision 17.226?	Yes
Competent authority for ensuring that provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226 are complied with	Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation
Actions taken during the past 5 year to ensure compliance with these provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226, including the number of inspections of facilities breeding tigers and measures taken by the authorities as follow up on inspections.	<p>In case of a tiger's death and the facility wishes to keep the carcass, the facility should state its desire to preserve the carcass to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation within 60 days of the tiger's death. Sor Por 26 (สพ.๒๖) report form with information and the objective of keeping the carcass stated should also be submitted. The carcass will then be marked for identification purposes. In case the facility does not wish to preserve the carcass, the carcass should be disposed of in the presence of officers from local authorities.</p> <p>The Wildlife Conservation Office, the Protected Area Regional Office 1-16, and relevant local branches are to monitor and inspect the permit holders regarding actions related to protected species and their carcass (tiger) at least once every 30 days. If the permit holders are found to violate the law, they will be strictly punished accordingly</p>
Illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities detected during the past 5 years? (If yes, number of seizures, arrests and prosecutions made and convictions and penalties imposed).	<p>One case recorded in November 2020 that might be linked to tiger facilities for possessing protected species (tiger) without permission, not for illegal trade. Officers from Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation investigated the facility implicated and seized five tiger cubs and a cub carcass of which the DNA did not link to any tigers in the zoo, and a tiger skin with a stripe pattern that was not matched with recorded photo. The officer charged the zoo committing the crime in violation of section 17 of the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act, B.E. 2562 (2019), as the zoo possesses those tiger specimens without license. The seized tigers were brought into the care of a DNP facility.</p> <p>At the Prosecutorial stage, the criminal proceeding has been abated upon the death of the offender (zoo owner) in 2023. Legally possessed tigers will be transferred to other captivities in response to revocation of the zoo permit.</p> <p>Cooperation with and regular meetings with neighbouring countries to address concerns relating to illegal trade in wildlife including tigers.</p>

Facilities which may be of concern

Note: Three of the 16 facilities identified as facilities of concern are not operational anymore and were therefore not included in the tables below. Tigers from these facilities were transferred to other facilities – Thailand indicated that the transfer procedures were legally conducted in accordance with the Wildlife Conservation and Protection Act, B.E. 2562.

Question	Facility					
	TH1	TH2	TH3	TH4	TH5	TH6
Is the facility still open/operational?	Yes	Currently under maintenance	Yes	Yes	No. (Permit revoked on 20 July 2021)	Yes
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	-	-	-	-	-	-

How many tigers are presently at the facility?	181 live tigers	209 tigers as of 31 August 2022	54 live tigers	26 tigers	37 live tigers are still housed at the facility, as the case is currently undergoing legal proceeding.	27 live tigers
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	97 cubs in 2018 60 cubs in 2019 22 cubs in 2020 12 cubs in 2021 15 cubs in 2022	54 cubs in 2018 55 cubs in 2019 51 cubs in 2020 23 cubs in 2021 0 cubs in 2022	10 cubs over the span of 5 years	An average of 1 newborn cub per year.		A total of 13 tiger cubs were born over the span of 5 years.
Is the facility open to the public?	Yes.	Not at the moment, (under maintenance).	Yes	Yes	No.	Yes.
Who is the owner of the facility?	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?	For business purposes as a public zoo.	For business purposes as a public zoo.	To attract tourists	For visitors' study purposes.	Formerly for business purposes, with a permit legally issued by DNP.	For business purposes as a zoo. Visitors can look forward to educational and exciting experiences with tigers.
What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?	Record of the estrus period of tigers, breeding cycle, and female breeders are recorded, including numbers of cubs given birth to and behaviour toward the cubs.	Records of captive tigers are being kept. Increases and decreases of tigers are also being recorded in Sor Por 26 (Rev.26) report form.	Record of their birth, health, death, serial number, and parents' history are being kept.	A database recording their information and characteristics is established in compliance with DNP's regulation. Breeding of tigers occurs in a large natural open area.	Record of DNA samples and stripe patterns were recorded.	Information regarding tigers' behaviors and health, including blood check results, weight, Body Condition Score, disease/sickness and the cures, and so forth.
Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?	After 2019, sterilizing male tigers is a norm in the facility. Those of different sexes are also being kept apart.	Tigers of different sexes are kept apart.	Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart. Some of them are sterilized.	None of the tigers is sterilized. All of them are being kept together in a very wide and open natural area.	Tigers of different sexes were kept apart.	No tigers were sterilized. Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart, in separated cages.
Are the tigers marked or individually identified?	The tigers are implanted with a microchip for identification purposes. All of them are registered by the authorized officer, in compliance with regulations of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.	The tigers are implanted with a microchip for identification purposes and registered in captive tiger database.	All tigers are marked for identification purposes.	All of them are marked and had their stripe patterns photographed in compliance with DNP's regulation.	All tigers were marked and can be identified from their stripe patterns.	All the tigers are implanted with an identification microchip and have their stripe patterns photographed. Every single one of them can be identified individually.
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?	The carcasses are preserved in cold storage while waiting for the authorized officer's arrival. They will then be verified by the forensic officer to find the cause of death, and be properly disposed of later on.	The carcasses are preserved in cold storage while waiting for the authorized officer's arrival. They will then be properly disposed of in the presence of the officer later on.	Incineration	Tiger's death is reported to authorities via the 1362 hotline. The carcass will be inspected and properly disposed of if in accordance with DNP's regulations.	When a tiger dies, its death would immediately be reported to DNP via the 1362 hotline within 24 hours. The carcass was preserved for officers to inspect and dispose of later on.	The carcass will be disposed of by incineration in the presence of authorized officers from the Protected Area Regional Office 5. In case the facility wishes to preserve the carcass or any derivative, the facility

						will state its desire to the authority and register the carcass/ derivative to the system.
Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?	Only carcasses waiting to be disposed of are being preserved in accordance with regulations.	-	Skeletons, bones, and taxidermized carcasses.	No.	2 taxidermized carcasses 1 tiger skin	Currently, there are carcasses and derivatives being kept in the facility for educational purposes as follows: cub carcass preserved in formaldehyde; skulls; claws; and taxidermized skin. All of the carcasses and derivatives are properly registered and acquired legally.
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?	All actions in the facility are strictly following the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation's regulation.	A tiger's death will be immediately reported via hotline 1362. Documents reporting its death will also be sent to the Protected Area Regional Office responsible for inspection and disposal of the carcass.	Find the cause of death and incinerate later on.	In case of a tiger's death, the microchip implanted in its body will be verified. Their death will be reported to the authority via the 1362 hotline, and their body will be preserved in cold storage waiting for official's investigation.	Actions were taken in accordance with the laws and regulations of DNP.	Tiger's death is reported to authorities via the 1362 hotline. The carcass will be inspected in case the tiger suddenly died due to an unknown cause, and properly disposed of in a presence of the authorized officer from Protected Area Regional Office 5.

Question	Facility						
	TH7	TH8	TH9	TH10	TH11	TH12	TH13
Is the facility still open/operational?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
How many tigers are presently at the facility?	60 live tigers	43 live tigers	4 live tigers	79 live tigers	29 live tigers	116 live tigers	149 live tigers
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	Since 2014, there is a total of 32 tiger cubs born in this facility over a span of 8 years.	None	Still in the process of compiling information, due to former staff responsible for the data passed away	A total of 15 tiger cubs were born over the span of 5 years, 3 of which have died.	A total of 16 tiger cubs were born from breeding over the span of 5 years.	A total of 35 tiger cubs were born in this facility over the span of 5 years.	None. (No tigers are being bred in this facility.)
Is the facility open to the public?	Yes.	Yes	Yes	Yes.	Yes. The facility is also accepting trainees and volunteers who wish to do internships.	The facility is still under construction and not opened to the public as of now.	The facility is accepting trainees and volunteers who wish to do internships or

							research. The public can experience being a tiger keeper through "Keeper for a Day" event, in collaboration with the volunteers.
Who is the owner of the facility?	Provided	Responsibility of Protected Area Regional Office 3, The DNPWPC	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?	For conservation and study purposes. For business purposes.	Taking care of the confiscated tigers and for education purpose.	For business purposes as a public zoo.	For business, conservation, research, and breeding purposes.	For business purposes as a zoo. Visitors can observe tiger for to education purpose and exciting experiences.	In favorite of care taking and business purpose as public zoo.	To house tigers retired from the other facilities (same owner). The main purposes of this facility are to give the best living environment possible for the retired tigers until their death, and to be an educational research facility that provides the public with knowledge regarding tigers.
What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?	In the case of any newborn tiger cub, it will be reported to DNP immediately and will then be photographed, and implanted with microchip.	Records of DNA samples and photographed stripe patterns are being kept. No further breeding has been conducted since 2013.	Records of serial numbers and basic DNA testing are being kept.	Records of tigers' family trees, health, disease/sickness, and causes of death are being kept.	Information regarding tigers' behaviours and health, including blood check results, weight, Body Condition Score, disease/sickness and the cures, and so forth.	All the relevant records are being kept in a computer system of this facility.	Information regarding tigers' behaviours and health, including blood check results, weight, Body Condition Score, disease/sickness and the cures, and so forth.
Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?	No tigers are sterilized. Some of the tigers of different sexes are being kept apart, while there are also some that are being kept together.	Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart.	No tigers are sterilized. Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart.	Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart.	No tigers were sterilized. Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart, in separated cages.	No tigers were sterilized. Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart.	No, the tigers were not sterilized, with an exception of 1 female tiger with endometritis. Tigers of different sexes are being kept apart, in separated cages.

Are the tigers marked or individually identified?	All of the tigers are implanted with a microchip and have their stripe pattern photographed for identification purposes.	Tigers can be identified using stripe patterns and microchips implanted in their body.	All of the tigers are implanted with a microchip and have their stripe pattern photographed for identification purposes. DNA data is being collected using fur and blood samples	A database recording each tiger's marks and characteristics is established in this facility. Each of them is also implanted with a microchip.	All the tigers are implanted with an identification microchip and have their stripe patterns photographed. Every single one of them can be identified individually.	All the tigers are implanted with an identification microchip and have their stripe patterns photographed.	All the tigers are implanted with an identification microchip. They also have their stripe patterns photographed and recorded in a tiger database. All of them can be identified individually.
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?	All increases and decreases in the tiger number are reported to the Protected Area Regional Office 3 (Phetchaburi branch). The carcass will be inspected by authorized officers and disposed of later on.	The carcass will be inspected by authorized veterinarian officers from DNP to identify the cause of death. It will then be disposed of in the presence of this facility's and Protected Area Regional Office 3's officers.	1. Reported to DNP via the 1362 hotline. 2. Preserve the carcass in cold storage. 3. Wait for the arrival of officers from the Protected Area Regional Office 2 (Sriracha branch) for carcass inspection. 4. After the inspection, the carcass will be incinerated by the authorized officer from DNP.	Incineration	The carcass will be inspected and incinerated at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Chiang Mai University. In case the facility wishes to preserve the carcass or any derivative, the facility will state its desire to the authority and register the carcass/derivative to the system.	Preserved in cold storage and disposed of later on.	The carcass will be inspected and incinerated at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Chiang Mai University. In case the facility wishes to preserve the carcass or any derivative, the facility will state its desire to the authority and register the carcass/derivative to the system.
Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?	None.	None.	None.	None.	Currently, there are carcasses and derivatives being kept in the facility for educational purposes as follows: carcass preserved in formaldehyde; skeletons; skulls; claws; and taxidermized skin. All of the carcasses and derivatives are properly registered and acquired legally.	Yes. The carcasses and derivatives being kept here are: Tanned leather; Skulls; Bones; and Skeletons	Currently, there are carcasses and derivatives being kept in the facility for educational purposes as follows: carcass preserved in formaldehyde; skeletons; skulls; claws; and taxidermized skin. All of the carcasses and derivatives are properly registered and acquired legally.
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding	In case of a tiger's death, it will immediately be	All actions are in compliance with relevant wildlife laws.	All actions are in compliance with DNP's regulations regarding	When a tiger died, its death will immediately be	Tiger's death is reported to authorities via the 1362 hotline.	Incinerated, and taxidermized. The	Tiger's death is reported to authorities via the

<p>the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?</p>	<p>reported to the relevant officer, and request for carcass disposal, in compliance with the regulations.</p>	<p>Carcasses of dead tigers will become state property.</p>	<p>public zoos establishing.</p>	<p>reported via the 1362 hotline within 24 hours. Authorized officers from DNP will be present at the facility for the inspection and disposal of the carcass.</p>	<p>The carcass will be inspected and properly disposed of in a presence of the authorized officer from Protected Area Regional Office 16.</p>	<p>whole skeletons are preserved.</p>	<p>1362 hotline within 24 hours. The carcass will be inspected and properly disposed of in a presence of the authorized officer from Protected Area Regional Office 16.</p>
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United States of America

Background

Implementing Decision 14.69?	Yes
Implementing paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)?	Yes
Implementing Decision 17.226?	Yes
Received copies of national legislation applies these management practices and controls?	Details received
Management practices and controls reviewed in accordance with Decision 17.226?	No reply
Competent authority for ensuring that provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226 are complied with	Several agencies mentioned.
Actions taken during the past 5 year to ensure compliance with these provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226, including the number of inspections of facilities breeding tigers and measures taken by the authorities as follow up on inspections.	No reply
Illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities detected during the past 5 years? (If yes, number of seizures, arrests and prosecutions made and convictions and penalties imposed).	Some information on enforcement provided

Facilities which may be of concern

Question	Facility					
	US1	US2	US3	US4	US5	US6
Is the facility still open/operational?	Yes Facility is a sanctuary/rescue and does not allow breeding nor does it sell animals	No Facility has been permanently closed. All of the big cats were seized under court order and transferred to bona fide sanctuaries	Yes Facility is a sanctuary/rescue and does not allow breeding nor does it sell animals	Yes Facility is a sanctuary/rescue and does not allow breeding nor does it sell animals	Yes, but owner has been indicted on federal wildlife trafficking and money laundering charges. Case remains ongoing. For more information, see: https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/doc-antle-owner-myrtle-beach-safari-and-others-indicted-federal-wildlife-trafficking-and	Yes Facility is a sanctuary/rescue and does not allow breeding nor does it sell animals
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	-	Transferred to bona fide sanctuaries (not named).	-	-	-	-
How many tigers are presently at the facility?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information
Is the facility open to the public?	No	-	Yes	Yes	No information	Yes
Who is the owner of the facility?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?	Sanctuary/rescue. Does not sell animals	-	Sanctuary/rescue. Does not sell animals	Sanctuary/rescue. Does not sell animals	No information	Sanctuary/rescue. Does not sell animals
What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information
Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?	No breeding occurs at facility	-	Does not allow breeding	Does not allow breeding	No information	Does not allow breeding
Are the tigers marked or individually identified?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information

Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?	No information	-	No information	No information	No information	No information

Viet Nam

Background

Implementing Decision 14.69?	Yes
Implementing paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)?	Yes
Implementing Decision 17.226?	Yes
Received copies of national legislation applies these management practices and controls?	Information provided in response: Criminal Code of Viet Nam in 2015 - Article 234 and Article 244 Investment Law in 2020: Article 6; Decree No.06/2019/ND-CP; Decree No.35/2019/ND-CP
Management practices and controls reviewed in accordance with Decision 17.226?	
Competent authority for ensuring that provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226 are complied with	CITES Management Authority, Forest Protection Department and local Forest Protection Department
Actions taken during the past 5 year to ensure compliance with these provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.226, including the number of inspections of facilities breeding tigers and measures taken by the authorities as follow up on inspections.	<p>From 2016 to present, Vietnam authorities have implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular monthly inspection of tiger breeding facilities and increased weekly inspection during 'stormy' times, to prevent animals from roaming and escaping. - Update the herd increase and decrease data of each establishment, ask the establishment owner to sign a commitment not to carry out the acts of buying, selling, and using tigers and tiger products. - CITES, Forest Protection Department and Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources will take DNA samples from every individual at tiger breeding facilities to verify the origin of these specimens (expected to be completed in early 2023). - Develop a tiger conservation action plan for the period 2022-2034, which is expected to stop the operation of illegal tiger farming facilities in Vietnam.
Illegal trade of tiger specimens linked to tiger facilities detected during the past 5 years? (If yes, number of seizures, arrests and prosecutions made and convictions and penalties imposed).	<p>In 2017 - 2021, state management and enforcement agencies in Vietnam actively investigated, arrested, prosecuted and settled illegal trading and captive cases, for examples:</p> <p>(i) confiscated 07 individual tigers illegally on road from Nghe An to Ha Noi in July 2019.</p> <p>(ii) confiscated 17 individual tigers illegally captivated in Nghe An Province in February 2022;</p> <p>(iii) arrested 3 offenders transporting 1 tiger weighted 200kg in Lai Chau Province in 3/2022;</p> <p>(iv) arrested 3 offenders transporting 7 individual tiger in Ha Tinh Province in 8/2021.</p> <p>All offenders of tiger trade were prosecuted, many of them were sentenced over 5 years of imprisonment, for example: on 05/01/2020 Hanoi Municipal People's Court sentenced 03 offenders of illegal tiger trade with total punishment of 16 years in jail; on 03/3/2022 Nghe An Provincial Court sentenced one offender of illegal tiger raising of 7 years imprisonment.</p>

Facilities which may be of concern

Question	Facility							
	VN1	VN2	VN3	VN4	VN5	VN6	VN7	VN8
Is the facility still open/operational?	No, it is closed	Yes, it is operational	Yes, it is operational.	Yes, it is operational.	Yes, it is operational.	Yes, it is operational.	Yes, it is operational.	Yes, it is operational.
If not, where are the tigers that were previously housed in it?	The tigers are kept in another facility.							
How many tigers are presently at the facility?	0	14 tigers	02 tigers.	25 tigers.	11 tigers.	33 tigers (include 02 imported tigers)	36 tigers	09 tigers
How many tigers have been bred in the facility in each of the last 5 years?	0	14 tigers	31 tigers.	25 tigers.	11 tigers.	31 tigers	36 tigers	09 tigers

Is the facility open to the public?	No	Yes, it is open to the public	No, it is not open to the public.	Yes, it is open to the public	No, it is not open to the public.	Yes	No	No
Who is the owner of the facility?		Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided	Provided
Why are tigers being kept at the facility? – what is its purpose?		The purpose is conservation and tourist.	The purpose is conservation and tourist.	The purpose is conservation	The purpose is conservation	Piloting and exhibition.	The purpose is rescue.	Piloting
What records of tiger presence and breeding are kept by the facility?		There are logbook of animals, inspection report and original files.	There are logbook of animal, inspection report and original files.	There are logbook of animal, inspection report and original files.	There are logbook of animal, inspection report and original files.	There are logbook of animal, inspection report	There are logbook of animal, inspection report and original files.	There are logbook of animal, inspection report
Are the tigers sterilized and/or are the sexes kept apart?		No, they are not	No, they are not.	No, they are not.	No, they are not.	No, they are not.	Yes, they are sterilized and kept apart.	No.
Are the tigers marked or individually identified?		Yes, they are individually identified.	No, they are not.	Yes, they are taken in pictures.	No, they are not.	Yes, they are named	Yes, they are taken in pictures.	Yes, they are taken in pictures.
How are the carcasses of tigers which die at the facility disposed of?		Dead tigers are incinerated.	Dead tigers are incinerated.	Dead tigers are incinerated.	Dead tigers are incinerated.	As dead tigers, they are kept in the freezer house and disposal or hand-over to museum.	The dead tiger will be transported to The Museum of Nature.	As dead tigers, they are kept in the freezer house and disposal or hand-over to museum.
Do any stockpiles of tiger carcasses or parts and derivatives from the facility exist?		Yes, this facility has kept the carcasses (or parts and derivatives) in the freezer house.	Yes, this facility has kept the carcasses (or parts and derivatives) in the freezer house.	No, it does not exist.	No, it does not exist.	Yes	Yes.	Yes.
What kind of management practices and controls are in place regarding the disposal of specimens from tigers that die in captivity?		As tiger die, the owner report to Forest Protection Department to make decision.	As tiger die, the owner report to Forest Protection Department to disposal methods.	As tiger die, the owner report to Forest Protection Department to disposal methods.	As tiger die, the owner report to Forest Protection Department, Police, veterinarian, local committee to make disposal methods.	As tiger die, the owner report to Animal Health Department to make decision (burning or hand-over to museum)	As tiger die, the owner report to Forest Protection Department, Police, veterinarian, local committee to make disposal methods.	As tiger die, the owner report to Animal Health Department to make decision (burning or hand-over to museum)

ASIAN BIG CATS IN CAPTIVITY:
LEGISLATIVE AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES IMPLEMENTED BY PARTIES

A. Czech Republic

Legislative provisions and implementation

1. The Czech Republic indicated that it implements Decision 14.69 and paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* through various legislative provisions.
2. The current European Union (EU) Wildlife Trade Regulations (Council Regulation 338/97, Commission regulation 865/2006) together with the Czech CITES National legislation (Act 100/2004 Coll.) and Decree No. 210/2010 Coll, [Act No. 501/2020 Coll. amending the Act No. 246/1992 Coll. on the protection of animals against cruelty](#) and national veterinary legislation ([Act No. 166/1999 Coll., on Veterinary Care](#)) are used to implement Decision 14.69 and paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19). These provisions allow for the implementation of strict measures to restrict the captive population of tigers to ensure tigers are not bred for trade in their parts and derivatives.
3. On 1 February 2021, [Act No. 501/2020 Coll. amending the Act No. 246/1992 Coll. on the protection of animals against cruelty](#) came into effect in the Czech Republic. The section §14a of this Act, that came into effect subsequently on 1 January 2022, address animal welfare issues and is directly linked to the implementation of Decision 14.69 because it prohibits the breeding by private breeders (only licensed zoos could be authorized to breed tigers) and the transport / import of individuals of big cat species (including *Panthera tigris*) to the Czech Republic. In terms of section §14a of the Act No. 501/2020 Coll., the only exemption from these prohibitions is with respect to tigers in licensed zoos or imported to licensed zoos (there were 28 licensed zoos at the time the mission took place). Physical contact between the public and tigers and public walking with tigers (and other big cats) are prohibited as is the use of tigers in circuses. Minimum standards for welfare conditions are set in terms of Act No. 501/2020 and compulsory educational courses for breeders have been developed and almost all of the breeders have already undertaken these courses.
4. The Czech Republic national veterinary legislation ([Act No. 166/1999 Coll., On Veterinary Care](#) (§40) places an obligation on owners of tiger-keeping facilities to take tiger carcasses to officially authorized rendering plants after the death of tigers to be disposed of. Violation of this law is classified as an offence with a penalty of a fine of up to 50 000 CZK for physical person (§71) or up to 500 000 CZK for legal entities (§72). A protocol is in place relating to the disposal of tiger carcasses by the rendering plants. This includes weighing the carcass before its destroyed, the submission of documentation (cause of death, registration certificate of the individual that died) and photos are taken. The information is captured on the electronic permit system used by the Ministry of Environment that State Veterinarian Administration has access to.
5. In 2019, measures relating to veterinary provisions were strengthened to focus on the physical verification of tiger carcasses in rendering plants before they are further processed as a part of guidance for veterinarian bodies in the Czech Republic. The protocols for destruction of tiger carcasses issued by veterinarians after the death of the tigers are duly checked with respect to the weight, age and sex of the dead specimen sent for processing in order to be assured that no parts of carcasses have been misused for illegal trade. If missing parts of carcasses are identified, relevant CITES enforcement bodies are informed by veterinarians for further check of the owner of the tiger. Focus is particularly on the cases when parts of tigers (e.g., skins, bones etc.) are given for further processing to taxidermists as there is a risk of their misuse for illegal trade.
6. It is compulsory for the owners of registered specimens to announce all relevant changes concerning the specimens bred including change of ownership or marking, death or loss of the specimen etc. to the competent CITES bodies according to the CITES National Legislation (§23a of the Act 100/2004 Coll, On Trade In Endangered Species). When a tiger's death is reported, the owners should provide copies of the specimen's certificates / permits and, in terms of the protocol for destruction of tiger carcasses, send the

carcass to an authorized rendering plant where the carcass is verified by veterinarians, all potential discrepancies are communicated to the CITES enforcement focal points for further investigation. Any violation of the announcement requirements for registered specimens according to the CITES National legislation is classified as an offence with the fine set up to 500 000- CZK (§34c of the Act 100/2004 Coll, On Trade In Endangered Species).

7. Any unauthorized disposal of tiger specimens including illicit commercial activities can be classified as criminal offence according to the §299 of the [Act No. 40/2009 Coll. \(Criminal Code\)](#) which may carry an imprisonment sentence up to eight years.
8. The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture collaborate to ensure the seamless implementation of the legislative provisions referred to above. The Ministry of Environment is the CITES Management Authority and responsible for the implementation of the EU CITES Regulations (Main National Authority) and the national CITES legislation (Act No 100/2004 Coll.) as well as the regulation of zoological gardens (Act No. 162/2003 Coll.). The Czech Environmental Inspectorate, responsible for CITES enforcement matters, falls under the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for National Welfare legislation (Act No. 246/1992 Coll.) and ordinances related to animal welfare and the National Veterinary legislation (Act. No. 166/1999 Coll.). Enforcement of welfare matters is the responsibility of the State Veterinary Administration.
9. The municipality also has a role to play in terms of engagements with owners / breeders and if animals are seized or forfeited to the state the municipality is responsible to place the animals in rescue centres. The Ministry of Environment must ensure the care of the animals placed in rescue centres [Act No. 2019/2000 Coll. Section 11 (1) (d)]. A temporary solution is to place these animals in zoos or other breeding facilities that have capacity to care for the animals.
10. The capacity of rescue centres is limited and the government has initiated processes to address this. During the process to amend the national welfare legislation (Act No. 246/1992 Coll.) (2018-2020), the Ministry of Environment considered possible solutions to address the insufficient capacity of CITES rescue centres, especially with regards big cats. A case study was prepared for the construction of a central rescue centre for big cats (at two identified sites), but the final decision was to upgrade and/or expand the capacity of the existing CITES rescue centres. In 2020, the National Environment Programme issued a call for submission of proposals and the total budget allocated was CZK 20 million. The intended beneficiaries were licensed zoos and CITES rescue centres. Based on this process, two projects are currently being implemented with the anticipated completion date of 2024. It is expected that the capacity of the facilities will increase to care for at least six big cats. In February 2023, another call for proposals was announced under the EU Operational Programme on the Environment with a total budget allocation of CZK 180 million and the intended beneficiaries are also CITES rescue centres. It is anticipated that, by 2025, CITES rescue centres and zoos will be able to care for big cats.
11. In 2018, the Czech Republic suspended the issuance of CITES permits for (re-)export of live captive bred tigers from the Czech Republic to countries outside of the EU for commercial purposes to prevent captive bred tigers entering the illegal trade in tigers and tiger parts. The Czech Republic only considers applications for the export of tigers from the Czech Republic for breeding in zoos in countries outside the EU. Similarly, the conditions for issuing EU certificates allowing trade in captive-bred tigers within the EU have been strengthened in the Czech Republic and the regional Management Authorities can only issue transaction specific certificates for purposes of breeding, research and education in zoos to minimize the risk of misuse of tigers for illegal trade in parts and derivatives.
12. During the mission, it was found that the total number of live tigers registered in the Czech Republic was 145 compared to 177 specimens in 2018. These tigers were distributed among different facilities, with zoos having 15 facilities with 47 tiger specimens, private facilities having 17 facilities with 69 tiger specimens, and circuses having 7 facilities with 29 tiger specimens. Notably, there has been a continuous decrease in the number of tigers born and bred in captivity in the Czech Republic. In 2020, there were 21 specimens, followed by a decline to 10 specimens in 2021, and a further decrease to 5 specimens in 2022. This decrease reflects the strengthening of national legislation as described above, aiming to implement Decision 14.69.

Enforcement actions

13. The Czech CITES enforcement focal points, i.e., the Czech Environmental Inspectorate, customs authorities, police, supported by the bodies of the State Veterinary Administration enforce the provisions used to implement Decision 14.69

14. Since 2017, inspections have been conducted at all existing breeding facilities of tigers in the Czech Republic. Between 2017 and 2022, the Czech Environmental Inspectorate conducted 58 inspections of the facilities breeding tigers and other Asian big cat species. Facilities of concern are inspected by state veterinary/relevant CITES authorities at least twice a year. During these inspections, the legal origin of tigers bred in the facility was verified. Inspections also verify whether the tiger specimens are duly registered according to the CITES national legislation. The marking of the live tiger specimens is also verified, where feasible. Additionally, in most cases, samples of hair or excrements have been also taken for DNA analysis and storing in Tiger DNA Database within the project Tigris ID and subsequent For Wild project.
15. The project TigrisID was funded by the Czech Republic and implemented by the Forensic DNA Service Laboratory (FDNAS) between 2018 to 2021. Under the project, two methods have been developed for species identification of tiger biological material in different types of products and for determination of tiger individual profile using STR loci. A report about the results of TigrisID project was reported at SC74 as information document [SC74 Inf. 16](#). The research is ongoing and has been extended also for other Asian Big Cat Species within the For Wild project conducted by the Faculty of Science of the Charles University in Prague.
16. The trial of the case from 2018 relating to the illegal killing of tigers and illegal trade in tiger specimens including tiger parts and derivatives (see details in information documents [SC70 Inf. 23](#) and [SC70 Inf. 24](#)) has been finalized. The three perpetrators, consisting of a breeder of tigers, a taxidermist and a Vietnamese citizen, were found guilty and sentenced to 18 months in prison with 3 years' probation, 18 months in prison with 3 years' probation and 2 years in prison with 4 years' probation respectively.
17. Over the past five years, the Czech Environmental Inspectorate, in conjunction with the Customs Authority, conducted inspections of breeding facilities. These inspections resulted in the identification of 13 cases of violation of the Czech CITES National legislation or the EU Wildlife Trade regulations concerning tigers and other Asian big cat species. These violations included failure to comply with the registration rules of the specimens according to the CITES national legislation; offering tiger specimens for trade without the necessary permission; and inability to provide proof of the legal origin of the specimens, among others. The offenders were subsequently fined, with a total amount of CZK 370 000 imposed in penalties.
18. In addition, criminal investigations have been initiated in several cases related to the suspected illegal handling of tiger carcasses in the years 2021 and 2022, based on the findings by the Czech Environmental Inspectorate, Customs Authority and the Police. As reported in document SC74 Doc. 36, in 2019, two live specimens of white tigers were seized and confiscated because the specimens were not marked with microchips for identification. In the same year, a tiger skeleton (without a skull), and a separate tiger skull were confiscated and a stuffed tiger body, without proof of legal origin, was seized. In August 2022, a live female tiger cub was seized without proper marking (microchip) and proof of legal origin. It was subsequently placed into a rescue centre (zoo) in the Czech Republic. This tiger cub has been confiscated in April 2023 and transferred to a Wildlife Sanctuary in Germany on 26 July 2023. Another live female tiger cub, also without proof of legal origin, has been seized and is currently kept by the original holder. It is scheduled for confiscation.

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

Legislative provisions and implementation

19. Lao PDR implements Decision 14.69 and paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* through national and provincial legislation.
20. The following legislation (laws and decrees) is used to regulate tiger-keeping facilities and the keeping of tigers in captivity:
 - a) Wildlife and Aquatics Law No 07/NA, dated 24 December 2007, has been reviewed, revised and subsequently divided into two separate draft laws: the Wildlife Law and the Aquatic Resources Law. The draft Wildlife Law was submitted by the Prime Minister's office for consideration by the National Assembly on 31 April 2023. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Department of Forest's report to the Secretariat regarding the Application of CITES Article XIII in Lao PDR dated 31 July 2023, further consultations were held from May to June 2023 chaired by the National Assembly Law Department to finalize the draft before the review of the National Assembly in July 2023. It is anticipated

that the law will be approved by the National Assembly in August 2023, and promulgated by the President in October 2023.

- b) On 11 November 2022, the Prime Minister of the Lao PDR signed the new Government's Decree No. 348/Gol implementing CITES to regulate international trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna listed in CITES Appendices. At the time of the mission by the Secretariat (February 2023), the CITES Management Authority indicated that the decree will be enacted in due course. In subsequent reporting, the Lao PDR informed the Secretariat that the Government Decree came into effect in January 2023.
- c) The Prime Minister's order No. 05/2018 on strengthening management and inspection of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
- d) Ministerial Decision No. 0188/MAF, dated 8 February 2019 on the *Establishment and Management of zoos, wildlife farms, centres for rehabilitation and breeding of wildlife and wild flora farms* serves as the foundation for the annual operating permits that tiger facilities are required to obtain. This decree is intended to undergo review as part of the legislative evaluation process.
- e) Penal Code No. 13/NA (2017)

Enforcement actions

- 21. The Lao People's Democratic Republic reported to the Secretariat on enforcement actions taken as part of the Article XIII process (report dated 31 July 2023)
- 22. The Lao PDR indicated that a Task Force Team, appointed by the Minister, is in the process of developing an Action Plan for wild and captive bred tigers, based on a model of an existing plan for Asian elephants.
- 23. The Task Force Team would appreciate guidance on the reintroduction of tigers into the wild and technical support on conversion of farms to zoo
- 24. The Department of Forests (DoF) has established a partnership agreement with a zoo in Japan and expressed an interest in considering the adoption of their zoo standards.
- 25. Facility inspections are conducted by officials from the District DoF, to whom births and deaths of tigers must be reported. These district officials subsequently report their findings to the provincial DoF, which in turn reports to the headquarters (HQ). HQ holds the authority to review any reports received from the district or provincial DoF. While district officials are responsible for inspections, they often face resource constraints in executing their duties due to limited funds.
- 26. The Department of Forestry Inspection (DOFI), comprised of a law enforcement team consisting of 70 staff members across the country, conducts inspections, including within the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone. Notably, there have been no reported tiger-related crimes committed by facilities thus far.
- 27. The Lao PDR has established law enforcement cooperation with neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Viet Nam. In order to enhance these collaborative efforts, the Lao PDR is preparing to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with both Thailand and Viet Nam. However, establishing similar cooperation with China seems to present more challenges.

South Africa

Legislative provisions and implementation

- 28. South Africa indicated that it does not implement Decision 14.69, but it does implement paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* through national and provincial legislation.
- 29. The tiger (*Panthera tigris*) is not an indigenous species in South Africa. This creates some challenges in terms of the current legislative framework to regulate activities involving tigers (an alien species) in a standardized manner across all nine provinces in South Africa.

30. South Africa regulates some activities involving tigers through the CITES Regulations promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No 10 of 2004) (NEMBA). This includes the following:
- a) All persons wishing to internationally trade specimens of any species listed in Appendix I (*Panthera tigris*) must be registered with the provincial Management Authority.
 - b) All persons wishing to produce captive-bred animals of any species listed in Appendix I for commercial international trade purposes must be registered with the provincial Management Authority and, where required, with the CITES Secretariat (Note: South Africa has not submitted any applications to register captive-breeding facilities for tiger to the Secretariat).
 - c) All persons registered with the provincial Management Authority for captive-breeding of tigers must keep registers of the parental stock and of captive-bred offspring, including markings (microchips) to facilitate identification, monitoring and to prove legal acquisition for future trading purposes. Registers must be kept and updated with information relating to deaths, births and exports and submitted to the provincial Management Authority on a monthly basis. Records of any transactions involving tigers must be kept for a period of five years. The provincial Management Authority may inspect the premises, registers and records kept at any time.
 - d) Specimens of animal species listed in Appendix I (*Panthera tigris*) that have been bred in captivity may not be traded unless they originate from a breeding operation registered by the provincial Management Authority and have been individually and permanently marked in a manner so as to render alteration or modification by unauthorized persons as difficult as possible.
31. Provincial legislation (ordinances) is also used to regulate tiger-keeping facilities and activities involving tigers, but the legislation is fragmented (with different requirements in the various provinces and differences in activities regulated). Some aspects covered by provincial legislation include camp sizes (minimum of 5,000m² in the provinces where the facilities were located that were visited by the Secretariat) and other specifications such as fencing, inspection requirements, the requirements relating to the information to be recorded in registers to be kept and timelines for submission of information relating to changes in the registers (deaths, births).
32. A permit condition is included in all authorizations relating to the keeping of tigers that specify that all dead specimens must be destroyed through incineration.
33. South Africa is considering various options to strengthen the legislative provisions to ensure all keeping of tigers are regulated across the country through national legislative provisions; to standardize provisions across all nine provinces; and to effectively implement the welfare (well-being) mandate that has been included in NEMBA, including the effective regulation / prohibition of certain tourism activities (petting).
34. A National Task Team have been established to consider and develop a national regulatory framework on the keeping of dangerous wild animals as pets (including the keeping of tigers).
35. In response to Notification to the Parties [No. 2023/091](#), South Africa indicated that, although it has intensive tiger breeding operations on a commercial scale, tigers are not specifically bred for trade in their parts and derivatives because most of these tigers are exported as live animals to zoos, safari parks and exhibition facilities and the live animals are thus imported into those countries for non-commercial purposes.
36. South Africa confirmed that a zero annual export quota was established for trade in specimens of bones, bone pieces, bone products, claws, skeletons, skulls and teeth for commercial purposes, derived from captive-breeding operations in South Africa since 2019. A High-Level Panel was also appointed in 2019 to review policies, regulatory measures, practices and policy positions that are related to hunting, trade, captive keeping, management and handling of elephant, lion, leopard and rhinoceros. The panel recommended that South Africa does not captive breed lions, keep lions in captivity, or use captive lions or their derivatives commercially. A consultation process has been initiated through a Ministerial Task Team to consider the implications associated with the implementation of these recommendations, including the fate of the captive lions if no commercial benefit can be derived from these specimens.
37. A tiger facility in one of the provinces in South Africa keeps a few specimens of South China tigers (*Panthera tigris amoyensis*), a subspecies that is extinct in the wild (it has not been seen in the wild since 1988) and considered functionally extinct. The status of this population was not clear during the mission but is of

potential conservation importance. Subsequent to the mission, South Africa indicated that there are 18 South China tigers in the facility.

Enforcement actions

38. Only one case was registered against the previous owner of one of the tiger-keeping facilities. Six Vietnamese nationals and two South Africans were charged under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act for the killing of lions, *Panthera leo*, on the farm. The six Vietnamese nationals were sentenced in 2019 to each pay a fine which varied from R8 000.00 to R50 000.00 or imprisonment which varied from 1 to 6 years. All of them had to return to their country of origin immediately after the case was concluded. The case against the two South African nationals is ongoing.
39. In 2019, skins and bones of four tigers were confiscated in North West Province, the case is ongoing. The investigation is complete. The criminal docket is with the Directorate of Public Prosecution for a decision.
40. In 2020, live tigers were confiscated among other animals in Mpumalanga Province because the owner did not have the necessary provincial permit for possession and keeping of the animals. The matter is finalised, and the owner paid a fine and was issued with a notice to comply with the provincial and national legislation by applying for a possession permit.
41. In 2020, two tiger skins were seized for possession without a permit in the Western Cape Province. The case was finalised and the items were forfeited to the state

Thailand

Legislative provisions and implementation

42. Thailand indicated that it implements Decision 14.69 and paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* through various legislative provisions, including the following:
 - Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act, B.E. 2562 (2019) (WARPA); and
 - Ministerial Regulation (No. 9) B.E. 2540 (1997) concerning establishment of public zoos pursuant to WARPA issued pursuant to the Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act, B.E. 2535 (1992).
43. Due to the need for effective measures to regulate possession, trade, import, export, and transfer of specimens, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation enacted the new Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562. The key improvement includes standardized provisions relating to zoos that impose stricter control measures for zoos, particularly limitations on the number of animals (including tigers) that may be kept and requirements relating to animal care and welfare. Penalties have been increased both in terms of imprisonment and fines.
44. The *Guidance to Actions Related to Protected Species and Their Carcass (Tiger)*, (Official DNP Document No. 0909.302/2599 dated 9 February 2016), is being implemented. The guidance is designed to ensure that the public zoo license holders, who are in possession of tigers, are strictly operating in accordance with relevant regulations, laws, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.
45. Subsidiary legislation promulgated under the Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) (WARPA) and aimed at addressing pertinent issues relating to tigers in captivity is expected by November 2023. As the majority of the captive tigers in Thailand are kept in zoos, the zoo-related legislation has been prioritized. Ministerial regulations concerning zoo operations and permissions are in the public hearing process. The Ministerial regulations require zoo facilities to follow zoo standards which will be prescribed by the DNP regulations.
46. The DNP regulations include comprehensive requirements ranging from housing, exhibition, care, nutrition, welfare, safety, and education for visitors. The regulation has been approved by the WARPA committee and the public hearing process will be initiated. It is anticipated to be enforced by November 2023.
47. Pursuant to provisions of the Ministerial regulation, the DNP regulations will furthermore specify requirements specific to each species kept in zoos. The DNP will impose restrictions for tigers, for instance

breeding limitation, breeding plan, zoo activities and reporting requirements. These requirements are being drafted.

48. Violation of provisions under these legislations shall result in suspension and revocation of zoo permits, as well as punishment by imprisonment, fine or both. Thailand anticipates that a range of legislative enactments will potentially come into effect around March 2024.
49. Tigers are a protected species under WARPA. Possession and use of tigers are not allowed. An exemption was granted for specimens possessed by facilities with zoo licenses, and those obtained prior to WARPA and declared during the registration period (private possession). These zoos and private persons are allowed to keep the animals under strict requirements.
50. According to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, the following actions must be adhered to by public zoo license holders who are in possession of tigers:
 - a) Any increase or decrease in the population of tigers must be reported to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation immediately within 24 hours via a hotline for verification by an official. It must also be reported in a specific report form relating to the increase or decrease in Protected Species and submitted within 60 days.
 - b) Any newborn tigers must be implanted with an identification microchip within 90 days of its birth. Samples for DNA analysis will also be collected, and the stripe pattern photographed and registered in the database for identification purposes.
 - c) In case of a tiger's death, its carcass must be preserved for officials of the Department to collect and for a veterinarian to verify the cause of death. The tiger will be identified using markings and microchip numbers as well as DNA analysis. The carcass is not to be disposed of or transported outside of the public zoo before being verified by an official of the Department.
51. According to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, the following are implemented by officials:
 - a) All public zoos must be monitored by officials from the Wildlife Conservation Office, Protected Area Regional Office 1-16, and relevant local branches, to ensure that wildlife protection laws and regulations are complied with. Inspections must be conducted at least once every 30 days. The inspection and monitoring results must be reported to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.
 - b) The Office of Forest Protection and Fire Control must assign officers responsible for the hotline 1362, to ensure the safe and systematic delivery of information concerning increases and decreases in the tiger population in captivity.
52. In the case of a tiger's death and the facility wishes to keep the carcass, the facility should state its desire to preserve the carcass to the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation within 60 days of the tiger's death. The facility should also submit a report form with the reason for keeping the carcass. The carcass will then be marked for identification purposes. In case the facility does not wish to preserve the carcass, the carcass should be disposed of by incineration in the presence of officers from the local authorities.
53. Thailand indicated that addressing the demand and enforcement concerning the use of and trade in tiger amulets, particular when they are sought for spiritual purposes, presents enforcement challenges. As part of the "Mercy is power" campaign under the GEF-6, Thais were encouraged to take a pledge against purchasing and owning ivory and tiger amulets.
54. Thailand indicated that education material and information relating to the keeping of tigers will be welcome. After the mission, Thailand invited the representative nominated by WAZA to support the Secretariat during the mission to present information to the Thailand CITES office on the keeping of tigers and other large cats. This information included standards for keeping animals for the purpose of display, minimum requirements for keeping mammals, enclosure size and furnishings, enrichment, feeding, security, signage and education materials.

Enforcement actions

55. Thailand reported one case recorded in November 2020 that concerned tiger facilities possessing protected species (tiger) without permission, but not for illegal trade. Officers from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation and police officers from the Natural Resources and Environmental Crime Division investigated a tiger zoo and farm and seized tigers whose DNA was not linked to any other tiger in the zoo. The seized tigers were brought into the care of a wildlife breeding centre of DNP.
56. At the prosecutorial stage, the criminal proceeding was abated upon the death of the offender (zoo owner) in 2023. Legally possessed tigers will be transferred to other facilities in response to the revocation of the zoo permit.
57. Cooperation with and regular meetings with neighbouring countries take place to address concerns relating to illegal trade in wildlife including tigers.

Viet Nam

Legislative provisions and implementation

58. Viet Nam indicated that it implements Decision 14.69 and paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* through various legislative provisions.
59. The following legislation is used to implement Decision 14.69 and the provisions in the Resolution:
 - a) According to Decree No. 06/2019) /ND-CP, the commercial use of tigers (listed in Group I-B, List of endangered, precious and rare forest plants and animals) is prohibited in Viet Nam, and the law does not permit the breeding tigers and big cats for commercial purposes.
 - b) According to the Investment Law 2020, tigers and wild animals of Group I, CITES Appendix I are prohibited from investing in and trading in specimens from nature.
 - c) Any violations of the law on protection of tigers and wild animals in Group I-B and CITES Appendix I shall be dealt with according to Article 244, Penal Code 2015 (amended in 2017). The penalty can be up to 15 years in prison and a maximum fine of VND 15 billion, depending on the seriousness of each violation.
 - d) Tigers are nationally conserved according to Decision No. 539/QD-TTg dated 16 April, 2014 of the Prime Minister on approving the tiger conservation programme for the period of 2014 to 2022.
60. In 2021, Viet Nam issued the National Technical Standard for tigers, lions, and sun bears enclosures, which outlines the necessary conditions for tiger raising facilities. This standard is designed to support management agencies in inspecting and supervising tiger and wild animals raising activities.
61. The CITES Management Authority, the Forest Protection Department and Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, took DNA samples from every individual at tiger breeding facilities to verify the origin of these specimens (expected to be completed in 2023).
62. People's Committees direct local authorities to check, supervise, implement the law on protecting and conserving wild animals. The Forest Protection Sub-department oversees inspection and supervision of breeding and keeping activities, enforces the law and handles violations according to the regulations.
63. All tiger raising facilities are subject to regular monthly inspections by the local Forest Protection Department and must report annually to the Viet Nam CITES MA on the number of tiger stocks, proportion of males and females and changes in tiger stocks.

Enforcement actions

64. Between 2017 and 2021, state management and enforcement agencies in Viet Nam actively investigated, arrested, prosecuted and settled illegal trading, transport and captive cases, for example:

- a) confiscated 7 individual tigers illegally transported on road from Nghe An to Ha Noi in July 2019. In May 2020, Hanoi People's Court sentenced 3 individuals for illegal trade in tigers to 16 years in prison;
- b) confiscated 7 tigers illegally transferred from Ha Tinli to Nghe An in August 2021. In March 2022, Nghe An People's Court sentenced 2 individuals to 9 years in prison;
- c) arrested 2 individuals for illegally raising 17 tigers in Nghe An in August 2021. In March 2022, Nghe An People's Court sentenced 1 individual to 7 years in prison and another one to 3.5 years in prison;
- d) arrested 1 person for keeping a tiger (200 kg) in Thai Nguyen in January 2022. Competent agencies are investigating to solve the case in accordance with the law;
- e) arrested 3 individuals for illegally transferring a tiger of 200 kg in Lai Chau in March 2022. The competent agencies are investigating to solve the case in accordance with the law; and
- f) arrested 3 individuals for trading and keeping a frozen tiger and tiger skin in Thanh Hoa in May 2022. In December 2022, People's Court of Thuong Xuan District, Thanh Hoa province sentenced 5 individuals to 9 years in prison.