

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



Sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 7-11 July 2014

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

ASIAN BIG CATS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*, the Conference of the Parties instructs the Secretariat to:

report to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties on the status of Asian big cats in the wild, their conservation, and trade controls in place in Parties, using information provided by the range States on measures taken to comply with this Resolution and related relevant Decisions and any relevant additional information provided by relevant countries.

3. At CoP16, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 16.68 to 16.70 on *Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)*, as follows:

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

16.68 *All Parties, particularly Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, are encouraged to:*

- a) *support the activities to be conducted in compliance with Decision 16.70, paragraph c), to enable the Secretariat to prepare a report with findings and recommendations, including reporting on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) (Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species), at the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee; and*
- b) *provide information on incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in all Asian big cat species, including their parts and derivatives, which will enable the compilation of a report for the law enforcement community, in compliance with Decision 16.70, paragraph d).*

Directed to the Standing Committee

16.69 *The Standing Committee shall review the conservation of and trade in Appendix-I Asian big cat species at its 65th and 66th meetings, and determine any actions deemed necessary to combat illegal trade in Asian big cats.*

Directed to the Secretariat

16.70 *The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funds, in cooperation with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime and, as appropriate, other experts and organizations:*

- a) *arrange national seminars in Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, involving all relevant enforcement agencies, to promote a multi-disciplinary approach that will*

facilitate improved coordination and cooperation in the detection, investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime offences;

- b) develop a leaflet containing simple illustrations and guidance, to increase awareness of illegal trade in Asian big cats and the endangered status of the species amongst front-line law enforcement staff and border control staff;*
- c) in consultation with Appendix-I Asian big cat range and consumer States, conduct a review of implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) in relation to all Asian big cats and prepare a report providing its findings and recommendations for the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee; and*
- d) gather information on incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in all Asian big cats since the beginning of 2010, undertake an analysis of the information, and prepare a report for the law enforcement community to be circulated in a restricted fashion to relevant enforcement agencies and range States.*

Implementation of Decisions 16.68, paragraph a), and 16.70, paragraph c)

4. On 27 August 2013,¹ the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2013/037, inviting Parties, in particular Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, in accordance with the provisions of Decision 16.68, paragraph a), to report on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16). The Secretariat also prepared a questionnaire to assist Parties in compiling their reports, and to provide a standard approach, which was made available as an Annex to the Notification². In response to the Notification, reports were received from China, Pakistan, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Viet Nam. The European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, submitted a compilation of seizures of tiger products derived from the EU-TWIX database, in Excel spreadsheet format, together with a short analysis of those data.
5. In support of the implementation of Decision 16.70, paragraph c), the Secretariat hired a consultant to conduct a review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) in relation to all Asian big cats. The Secretariat made the reports received from Parties, and the compilation on seizures of tiger products received from the European Commission, available to the consultant for the purposes of the review. At the request of the Secretariat, the consultant engaged directly with the CITES Management Authorities (MAs) of Appendix-I Asian big cat range States that had not provided a report, and invited them to provide such reports containing the information requested in the questionnaire prepared by the Secretariat. In response, the consultant received reports from Cambodia, Malaysia and Nepal, which were subsequently forwarded to the Secretariat. The consultant reviewed the reports received, consulted with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), other experts and organizations, and prepared a report for the present meeting. The full report is available in English only, and is attached to the present document as Annex 1. The executive summary of the report is available in English, French and Spanish.
6. The Secretariat draws the attention of the Standing Committee to the following findings of the review, as contained in Annex 1:
 - i) Seizures of live tigers are increasing in Asian big cat range States, and a significant number of seizures has occurred since 2010, with 61 animals seized in the period 2010-2012, compared to 62 in the period 2000-2009;
 - ii) Tiger skins are the most commonly seized item for this species. The number of live animals and frozen bodies detected reflects an increase in illegal trade in recent years;
 - iii) New forms of demand are emerging, with “wealth” replacing “health” as a primary consumer motivation. Tiger parts (such as meat) and derivatives (such as wine) are now less consumed for medicinal purposes, and more as exotic luxury products;

¹ <http://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2013-037.pdf>

² <http://cites.org/sites/default/files/notif/E-Notif-2013-037-A.pdf>

- iv) Other species are increasingly being used in the parts and derivatives trade, in particular the African lion;
 - v) There are seven species of Asian big cats, distributed across 31 range States. Out of 28 range States assessed under the CITES National Legislation Project³, more than half of the Asian range States still require legislative improvements, and only 11 of these States are in Category 1;
 - vi) Seizures reported in the CITES Trade Database and the EU-TWIX database,⁴ which are most complete for Europe and the United States of America, show that the most frequently detected big cat derivatives from tigers, followed closely by leopards. China and Viet Nam are the main countries of origin, and seizures of derivatives originating in China were from all species of cat occurring in Asia, with the exception of the snow leopard. Seizures reported in Europe and the United States consisted largely of derivatives. In comparison, most seizures in range States consisted of unprocessed specimens, such as skins or skin pieces, followed by bones or skeletons;
 - vii) Online wildlife trade poses significant enforcement challenges, and could be best addressed through the adoption of a “zero tolerance” policy between governments, online trading companies and non-governmental organizations. This approach to online advertising of the sale of specimens from protected species products in China, is highlighted by the consultant as a best practice;
 - viii) The “Standard Operating Procedure” for “Disposing of Tiger/Leopard Carcass/Body Parts” in India, which requires prescribed and monitored destruction, is highlighted by the consultant as a best practice;
 - ix) An online public database of tiger mortalities and illegal trade seizures, named Tigernet⁵, populated by wildlife officials with secure access and including a separate system for the public to provide information, which was established in India in January 2009 to record, share and analyse information on illegal trade in Asian big cats, is highlighted by the consultant as a best practice;
 - x) The implementation of the recommendations contained in the 2014 INTERPOL assessment of enforcement responses to tiger crime is encouraged⁶;
 - xi) It is reported that seizures of tiger specimens have increased in Southeast Asia in recent years, and that, of 61 live tigers seized in the period 2010-2012, 74% were confiscated in three South-East Asian countries – the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam. The report highlights concerns about the source of tigers in illegal trade, considering the presence of tiger-breeding facilities in these countries and the fact that they have small numbers of wild tigers;
 - xii) Significant illegal wildlife markets are alleged to exist in Myanmar, near its borders with China and Thailand, and particularly in the towns of Mong La, Golden Rock and Three Pagodas Pass;
 - xiii) Seizures of tiger specimens in Indonesia are reported to account for 20% of all such seizures in range States from 2010 to 2012;
 - xiv) Seven border towns in China, India and Nepal are reported to be primary sources of illegal trade in Asian big cats;
 - xv) Significant illegal trade is alleged to occur near Mong Cai, Viet Nam, across the Ka Long river on the border between China and Viet Nam.
7. The reports received from Parties on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) are comprehensive and informative, and it was not possible for the consultant to capture in her report all the detailed information contained in them. The reports from Parties have therefore been attached to the present document as further Annexes, in the language received. The Secretariat would like to thank Parties for the reports they submitted, and to briefly highlight the following information from those reports.

³ See document SC65 Doc. 22

⁴ <http://www.eutwix.org/>

⁵ www.tigernet.nic.in

⁶ <http://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-media/News/2014/N2014-055/>

- i) The report from Cambodia is attached to the present document as Annex 2. It states that no breeding populations of tigers currently exist in the country, and that despite intensive survey efforts, the last camera-trap photo of a tiger was taken in 2007. There have been no confirmed field records of tiger sightings since 2010, and Cambodia is currently developing a tiger recovery and restoration strategy, with support from the Global Tiger Initiative (GTI). Legislation in Cambodia makes provision for categorization of species, which allows different penalties to be imposed depending on the level of categorization. The report highlights that anti-poaching teams and enforcement units are not adequately resourced because of budget constraints, and that there is a significant need for additional resources, including additional staff, vehicles, equipment, training and improved salaries. The report further states that no illegal trade in Asian big cat specimens has been detected in recent years. It is further reported that Cambodia has signed an MoU with Viet Nam that facilitates cooperative law enforcement activities and information exchange between the Cambodia Forestry Administration and its Vietnamese equivalent.
- ii) The report received from China is attached to the present document as Annex 3. Legislation in China makes provision for strong deterrent penalties, and the administrative responsibilities of the various government agencies responsible for regulating trade in Asian big cats within and outside of protected areas, and in outlets for parts and derivatives, is clearly outlined. The establishment of the National Inter-agency CITES Enforcement Collaboration Group (NICECG), in December 2011, marked a significant development. The NICECG provides a cooperative law enforcement platform for relevant agencies, and it is worth noting that the CITES Secretary-General's Certificate of Commendation was awarded to the NICECG in May 2012, in recognition of two nationwide wildlife law-enforcement operations in that year, during which more than 100,000 enforcement officers were mobilized against wildlife crime. It is noted from the report of China, that agreements on CITES implementation with the CITES MAs of Indonesia and Viet Nam, are expected to be signed and implemented in the near future.
- iii) The report from Malaysia is attached to the present document as Annex 4. The report states that it is difficult to provide an accurate estimation of tiger populations as a result of dense forest cover, which makes it difficult to conduct surveys. It is, however, estimated that Malaysia has about 500 tigers. Asian big cats are fully protected by national legislation in Malaysia, which makes provision for deterrent penalties for wildlife crime. The report outlines a number of measures and activities that were implemented in Malaysia, for example the 2nd Malaysia-Thailand Bilateral Meeting on Wildlife Enforcement Cooperation,⁷ held in 2012, to develop a strategic action plan for implementation by agencies from both countries, specifically at the local levels in border areas, and the creation of 13 border check-points to prevent cross-border wildlife smuggling.
- iv) The report from Nepal is attached to the present document as Annex 5. Nepal reports a 63% growth in its tiger population since the last tiger census. The National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act of Nepal makes provision for strong deterrent penalties for wildlife crime. Measures have been implemented to ensure that enforcement units and personnel receive relevant and effective support in anti-poaching operations, and it is evident from the report that different authorities in the country work in close coordination to combat wildlife crime. A number of structures have been established to facilitate inter-agency liaison and cooperation, including a National Tiger Coordination Committee, a National Wildlife Crime Coordination Committee and others. Innovative enforcement methods have been introduced to combat wildlife crime, including Community-based Anti-Poaching Units, the use of an informant system, training on information and intelligence gathering, training on crime-scene management and evidence collection, and orientation training for border security forces on species in illegal trade and identified smuggling routes. Nepal engages bilaterally and trilaterally with China and India through regular joint working-group meetings and local-level transboundary meetings. A national system for the recording of information relating to illegal trade in Asian big cats has been implemented.
- v) The report from Pakistan is attached as Annex 6 and contains information on a wide range of measures implemented and activities conducted. CITES is implemented through the Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Act of 2012, which makes provision for imprisonment for a minimum period of one year and a maximum period of two years, or for a fine of between PKR 500,000 (approx. USD 5,000) and PKR 1 million (USD 10,000). Wildlife conservation and management in Pakistan is implemented at provincial level, in accordance with the 18th Amendments in the Constitution of

⁷ <http://www.asean-wen.org/index.php/news-announcements/331-2nd-malaysia-thailand-bilateral-meeting-on-wildlife-enforcement-cooperation>

Pakistan in 2011. Two species of Asian big cats are found in the wild in Pakistan, the leopard (*Panthera pardus*) and the snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*). The population of leopard in Pakistan is estimated to be about 150 to 250 animals, while the snow leopard population is estimated to be between 200 and 420 animals. The report from Pakistan includes a comprehensive document entitled "Guidelines for the Acquisition and Management of Felids (Cat Species) in Captivity". These guidelines were approved by the Pakistan Ministry of Environment in June 2011, and provide detailed guidelines regarding acquisition and management of felids in captivity. It is included in Annex 6 to the present document.

- vi) The report from Thailand is attached as Annex 7. The total population of tigers in protected areas in Thailand is estimated at 189 to 252 animals. The Wild Animal Preservation and Protection Act (WARPA) of 1992, prohibits international commercial trade in specimens of Appendix-I Asian big cat species, and products labelled as, or claiming to contain, their parts and derivatives. Hunting, possession and trading in specimens of these species are prohibited, except for scientific purposes. The Act makes provision for imprisonment not exceeding four years or a fine not exceeding THB 4,000 (USD 120), or both. The report outlines the responsibilities of the various government agencies responsible for regulating trade in Asian big cats within and outside of protected areas and in outlets for parts and derivatives. It is reported that Thailand has implemented measures to strengthen enforcement efforts in particular in the regions of its borders with China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Malaysia. The report also states that Thailand is developing a database on individual stripe-marks of captive bred tigers, in addition to microchipping these animals.
- vii) The report from the United Kingdom, attached as Annex 8, contains information on the United Kingdom Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW)⁸, which brings together a number of government bodies, national enforcement agencies and other parties who have an interest in tackling wildlife crime, including CITES offences. It is reported that the National Wildlife Crime Unit⁹, through the wildlife crime Conservation Advisory Group, has identified compliance with CITES as one of its priority areas of work, and that the United Kingdom has established a CITES Priority Delivery Group to address the issue. It is further reported that the PAW forensics working group has produced a guide on use of forensics techniques in wildlife crime¹⁰. The London Metropolitan Police force is working closely with The Federation of Traditional Chinese Medicine and The London Chinatown Chinese Association through Operation Charm¹¹, which was established to tackle illegal trade in endangered species in the United Kingdom. Information is also provided on a campaign entitled 'If They're Gone...', which is raising awareness about the plight of wild tigers, rhinoceroses, elephants and orang-utans¹².
- viii) The report from Viet Nam is attached as Annex 9. It states that results from a survey of tigers and tiger habitat conducted in 2011 indicate that fewer than 50 individuals remain, mainly in remote areas along the Viet Nam border areas with Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The report further states that hunting, trading, and transport of Asian big cats, their parts and derivatives are prohibited by law in Viet Nam. It contains information on legislative updates and revisions that have occurred in the period 2012-2013, as well as information on various regulations that are in the process of revision. The Viet Nam wildlife enforcement network (Vietnam-WEN) was established in 2010 to improve the monitoring capacity of central government on wildlife law enforcement activities, and it is reported that Vietnam – WEN has identified its priority as monitoring the illegal trade in Asian big cats, elephants, pangolins, and rhinoceros specimens. It is reported that there are 10 facilities for captive tigers in Viet Nam, managed by Provincial Forest Protection Departments, and that regulations on wildlife protection prohibit these facilities from using tigers for commercial purposes. Tigers that die at these facilities have to be disposed of according to established regulations. Viet Nam has entered into various MoUs, including an MoU between the Viet Nam Forest Protection Department and the Lao People's Democratic Republic Forest Inspection Department, signed in 2011, followed by a September 2013 agreement on a cooperation action plan for 2013-2014 to improve wildlife law enforcement at border areas. The Viet Nam Forestry Administration signed an MOU with the Forest Protection and Biology conservation General Department of Indonesia in 2012, in which tiger trade monitoring is identified as a priority cooperation matter. An MoU between the CITES Management

⁸ www.defra.gov.uk/paw

⁹ <http://www.nwcu.police.uk/>

¹⁰ <http://www.tracenetwork.org/pawforensics/>

¹¹ <http://www.operationcharm.org/>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/IfTheyreGone>

Authorities of Viet Nam and China has been finalized and will be signed in 2014, to strengthen management of wildlife trade at the border areas [as also reported by China in its report]. A number of challenges experienced by Viet Nam are highlighted in its report, including: that protected area patrol teams are not adequately resourced because of budget constraints; the need for training in the use of forensic technology to combat wildlife crime; and the need for training on wildlife crime scene management.

8. The findings of the review, as described in paragraph 6. v), above, indicate that more than half of Asian range States still require legislative improvements and that the legislation of only 11 of these States are in Category 1. Legislation and law enforcement depend upon and supports each other. Virtually any activity related to law enforcement will include references to and consideration of legislation. For this reason it is crucial for Parties to have appropriate legislation in place to enforce the provisions of the Convention.
9. The Secretariat expresses its sincere appreciation to the European Commission for the funding support it provided to enable the Secretariat to implement Decision 16.70, paragraph c).

Implementation of Decisions 16.68, paragraph b), and 16.70, paragraph d)

10. Criminals frequently change their tactics to avoid detection and organized crime groups are increasingly involved in wildlife crime. Law enforcement efforts must keep pace with the evolving nature of wildlife crime and the new dynamics and challenges that it brings. The gathering and analysis of information and intelligence is crucial for the design of effective law enforcement responses.
11. In Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*, the Conference of the Parties under URGES paragraph d), urges:

d) *all range States and other relevant Parties to implement systems for the recording of information relating to illegal trade in Asian big cats and to share this information as appropriate to ensure coordinated investigations and enforcement;*

12. INTERPOL, in its 2014 report on *Assessment of Enforcement Responses to Tiger Crime*, emphasizes that “intelligence is the foundation for effective law enforcement. When information is analyzed and shared in a timely manner and it reaches the agencies that can action the intelligence, there is an overwhelming benefit to the officers responsible for targeting wildlife criminals”.
13. The 2014 INTERPOL report recommends the establishment of an international network of intelligence analysts from range States of the tiger and other Asian big cats for the purpose of tactical and strategic analysis, and to work towards establishing a single international reporting system for sensitive law enforcement information on tigers and other Asian big cat incidents. The Secretariat strongly believes that the effective implementation of Decisions 16.68, paragraph b), and 16.70, paragraph d), could significantly contribute to the gathering and analysis of information and intelligence in support of the design of effective law enforcement responses to combat illegal trade in these species. The INTERPOL report notes that “Information gaps prevented a more robust analysis”, and the Secretariat will continue to work closely with its ICCWC partners, in particular INTERPOL, which has done significant work in this field, as part of their Project PREDATOR¹³, to ensure that activities conducted to implement these Decisions complement and support the work already done. The Secretariat will again report on the implementation of these Decisions at SC66.

Implementation of Decision 16.70, paragraph a)

14. The final report of the Heads of Police and Customs Seminar on Tiger Crime, which was hosted by ICCWC in Bangkok, Thailand, from 13 to 14 February 2012, was made available to Parties as an Annex to document SC62 Doc. 43¹⁴. One of the key needs identified during this seminar was increased awareness among law enforcement agencies about wildlife crime, and in particular crimes affecting Asian big cats. At CoP16, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 16.70, paragraph a), which direct the Secretariat to “arrange national seminars in Appendix-I Asian big cat range States”. Given that Asian big cats include seven species distributed in 31 range States, this will be a significant undertaking requiring substantial

¹³ <http://www.interpol.int/en/Crime-areas/Environmental-crime/Projects/Project-Predator>

¹⁴ <http://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/common/com/sc/62/E62-43-A.pdf>

financial resources. In view of its limited resources, the Secretariat intends, subject to external funding, to focus its efforts on the Parties specified in the recommendations in paragraph 31 below.

15. The Secretariat however believes that significant opportunities could exist for some Appendix-I Asian big cat range States to implement the Decision as part of the activities they are conducting through their participation in international conservation programmes. Parties could, for example, consider including a national seminar, as anticipated by Decision 16.70, paragraph a), amongst the activities to be delivered as part of their international conservation programmes. Parties could then, if required, request technical assistance from the Secretariat and ICCWC, or draw upon experts and organizations at national or regional level, as appropriate, in support of the design and delivery of the seminar. In this regard, Pakistan for example indicated in its report (Annex 6) that such activities may be undertaken in future under the Global Snow Leopard Conservation Program. Alternatively, Parties could consider hosting such a seminar by making provision for it in their national budget if possible. As an example, the report of Nepal (Annex 5), indicates that limited funding for this purpose might be available.
16. The Secretariat will continue to pursue the implementation of Decision 16.70, paragraph a), as part of its ongoing activities, the work of its ICCWC partners, and during other relevant events, as appropriate. In this regard, the Secretariat has taken the opportunity to participate in regional meetings related to Asian big cats, to draw attention to the threat that wildlife crime pose to Asian big cats, and to promote a multi-disciplinary approach that will facilitate improved coordination and cooperation in the detection, investigation and prosecution of wildlife crimes. The Secretariat wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the funding support provided by the European Commission, which enabled it to participate in the meetings reported on in paragraphs 17 to 20 below.
17. From 1 to 5 July 2013, the Secretariat participated in an Integrated Investigative Training and Operational Planning Meeting for South Asia, which was co-hosted by INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Sub-Directorate and India's Central Bureau of Investigation in New Delhi, India¹⁵. The meeting brought together police, Customs and wildlife officers from eight countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), as well as the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN). The meeting discussed modern investigative techniques, wildlife forensics and DNA analysis, controlled deliveries, and effective investigation and prosecution of wildlife crimes through the use of INTERPOL's global tools and services. The Secretariat drew attention to the threat that wildlife crime pose to Asian big cats, and placed strong emphasis on the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to combat wildlife crime.
18. From 8 to 12 July 2013, the Secretariat participated in a Capacity Development and Needs Assessment Meeting for Investigative Wildlife Operations in South-East Asia, in Bangkok, Thailand¹⁶. The meeting, which was hosted by INTERPOL's Environmental Crime Sub-Directorate in collaboration with the Royal Thai Police and the INTERPOL National Central Bureau¹⁷ of Thailand, was attended by police, Customs and environmental officers from seven Asian countries (China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam). The Secretariat placed strong emphasis, also at this meeting, on the threat that wildlife crime pose to Asian big cats, and the need for a multi-disciplinary approach to combat wildlife crime.
19. The Secretariat also participated in the *International Workshop for Transboundary Conservation of Tigers and Other Endangered Species and the Strategy to Combat Illegal Trade in Wildlife*, hosted by the Department of Wildlife Conservation and Nature Reserve Management of the State Forestry Administration of China, in Kunming, China, from 29 to 31 July 2013. At this workshop, representatives of the tiger range countries, international partner organizations of the GTI, and other role players met with the objective of identifying and promoting good practices to enhance and mainstream collaboration among countries in management of transboundary landscapes and corridors, combating illegal trade, and eliminating demand for illegal wildlife products.
20. The workshop adopted the Kunming Consensus¹⁸, which contains a number of recommendations on transboundary landscape management, and combating illegal trade and eliminating demand for illicit

¹⁵ <http://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News/2013/N20130705>

¹⁶ <http://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News/2013/N20130712bis>

¹⁷ <http://www.interpol.int/Member-countries/World>

¹⁸ http://globaltigerinitiative.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Kunming_Consensus_31July2013_adopted.pdf

wildlife products. The Kunming Consensus also strongly supports the implementation of the aims of Decision 16.70, paragraph a), and calls upon Parties to “strengthen within-country coordination and communication among all law enforcement and other agencies, as well as non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations and local communities with a role to play in combating wildlife crime and, as a priority, use existing international mechanisms to strengthen bilateral, regional, and global coordination and communication among counterpart agencies.”

21. The Secretariat will again report on the implementation of these Decision 16.70, paragraph a), at SC66.

Implementation of Decision 16.70, paragraph b)

22. The implementation of this Decision is included in the work plan of Secretariat enforcement staff, for the period between SC65 and SC66, and the Secretariat will report on its implementation at SC66.

Global Snow Leopard Conservation Forum

23. Representatives of Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan met at the Global Snow Leopard Conservation Forum, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on 22 and 23 October 2013, with the shared goal of conserving snow leopards and their habitats¹⁹.

24. The forum was jointly organized by the Office of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and the State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, and co-organized by the Global Tiger Initiative, Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union, Snow Leopard Trust, United Nations Development Programme, and World Bank and was sponsored by Global Environment Facility, Snow Leopard Conservancy and WWF.

25. The leaders adopted the Bishkek Declaration on the Conservation of Snow Leopards²⁰, and endorsed the Global Snow Leopard Ecosystem Recovery Program (GSLEP)²¹. The Secretariat participated in the forum, and a statement from the CITES Secretary-General was presented at the meeting. The Secretariat also delivered a presentation on subregional wildlife enforcement cooperation and the role of ICCWC in bringing coordinated support to wildlife law enforcement agencies and networks at national, regional and international levels. The Secretariat wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the funding support provided by Hong Kong, China, which enabled it to participate in the Forum.

Global Tiger Initiative

26. In July 2013, the Global Tiger Recovery Program published the *Global Tiger Recovery Program Implementation Plan (2013-14)*²². In this plan, the commitments from the Second Asian Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation (Thimphu, Bhutan, 2012)²³, is translated into a concrete action plan.

27. Key performance indicators are introduced in the action plan to monitor progress in implementing the Global Tiger Recovery Program. The results will be reviewed at the next annual stocktaking meeting of the tiger range countries, which, at the time of writing, was scheduled to be held in Bangladesh in late June 2014.

Final remarks

28. It is evident that significant work is being carried out to conserve Asian big cats and combat illegal in Asian big cat specimens. Illegal trade however remains an ongoing threat to Asian big cats and a challenge for law enforcement.

¹⁹ <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/10045>

²⁰ <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/eca/Bishkek-Declaration-on-the-Conservation-of-Snow-Leopards.pdf>

²¹ http://akilbirs.com/files/final_gslep_web_11_%2014_%2013.pdf

²² <http://globaltigerinitiative.org/publication/global-tiger-recovery-program-implementation-plan-2013-14/>

²³ <http://globaltigerinitiative.org/news/2012/10/2nd-asian-ministerial-conference-on-tiger-conservation/>

29. Similar to illegal trade in other wildlife specimens, crimes involving Asian big cat specimens cannot be addressed by one authority or one country alone, and strong cooperation following a multi-disciplinary approach amongst range, transit and destination countries is vital.
30. In addition, it remains crucial for all Parties to have appropriate legislation in place to enforce the provisions of the Convention, and for those Parties and non-Parties on whose territories tigers and other Asian big cat species are bred in captivity, to ensure that adequate management practices and controls are in place to prevent parts and derivatives from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities.

Recommendations

31. The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee:
 - a) request the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam to review their implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16), and in particular:
 - i) paragraph g) under URGES – for Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam; and
 - ii) paragraph c) under URGES, and paragraphs a), c) and e) under the first RECOMMENDS – for Myanmar, with a specific focus on its borders with China and Thailand, and the towns of Mong La, Golden Rock and Three Pagodas Pass;
 - b) request China, India and Nepal to take note of the information about the alleged illegal trade in Asian big cats from the seven border towns identified in Annex 1 to the present document, and to take it into account when developing work programmes and undertaking law enforcement operations;
 - c) request China and Viet Nam to take note of the information about the alleged illegal trade across the Ka Long river at the border between near Mong Cai, Viet Nam, identified in Annex 1;
 - d) request China, India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam to provide a report to the Secretariat, by 1 June 2015, on activities implemented in relation to recommendations a) to c) above, as applicable, for consideration by the Standing Committee at SC66; and
 - e) encourage Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, where possible, to promote the elements referred to in Decision 16.70, paragraph a), within existing or planned broader enforcement initiatives in order to implement this part of the Decision in a cost-effective manner, and to invite the Secretariat to support these as instructed by the Conference of the Parties.