

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

Species trade and conservation

Elephants

NATIONAL IVORY ACTION PLANS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. The annex to the present document contains correspondence from China to the Secretariat providing additional information on the implementation of the national ivory action plan of Hong Kong, China, and responding to the Secretariat's evaluation of this plan contained within document SC65 Doc. 42.2. The correspondence was received by the Secretariat on 2 July 2014 and could therefore not be taken into account in document SC65 Doc. 42.2. The correspondence is provided in the language in which it was received.

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2 July 2014

Mr. John Scanlon,
The CITES Secretary-General
International Environment House
Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Scanlon,

National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP)

With reference to our NIAP as well as SC65 Doc. 42.2, I have taken the liberty to make clarifications and provide updates to the implementation of our NIAP further to the last progress report submitted on 18 November 2013 as well as other activities pertaining to the NIAP.

1.1 Legislation and licensing control

For the progress towards this action, Hong Kong was evaluated as “UNCLEAR” in SC65 Doc. 42.2. We would like to clarify that we have actually provided the legislation and licensing control in respect of ivory in Hong Kong in our submission of NIAP in September 2013 (see 1.1 of Annex I). The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance is the domestic legislation which implements CITES in the HKSAR. The Ordinance stipulates that the possession of ivory for commercial purposes, regardless of its quantity or type of specimen, requires a Licence to Possess issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) of the HKSAR. Individual keeping premises of ivory engaged in commercial activities should obtain its own Licence to Possess.

Given the fact that appropriate legislation and an effective licensing control have already been in place, our implementation in this area was to maintain the strict licensing system to regulate the domestic sale of ivory. As such control is an on-going activity, no specific update was made in our last progress report. We cannot agree with the evaluation of the progress in this area as “UNCLEAR” that could be arisen from misunderstanding. We strongly encourage the CITES Secretariat to take into account our elaboration and review the evaluation result as appropriate.

1.2 Compliance monitoring

Hong Kong was also evaluated as “UNCLEAR” in SC65 Doc. 42.2 for the progress towards this action. Actually, we have specified in our NIAP that we would conduct a series of inspections in the domestic market targeted at premises licensed to trade ivory as well as “art and craft” and “antique” shops that might sell ivory by 30 April 2014 (see 1.2 of Annex D). No specific update was provided in our last progress report as such action had not been conducted by that time.

As an update, the above-mentioned inspections were conducted jointly by the AFCD and the Hong Kong Customs in January 2014. In the joint operation, about 100 shops were inspected and no irregularity was detected. We considered that the target on compliance monitoring has been accomplished.

In addition, acting to information made available in February 2014, we conducted investigation and have taken appropriate follow-up actions on two ivory traders implicated in possible illicit activities in ivory. Moreover, through the issuance of a circular letter, all ivory traders were reminded of the strict legislative and licensing control on ivory in Hong Kong.

2. Enforcement

The Hong Kong authorities maintained our enforcement momentum throughout the reporting period. Further to those significant cases reported to the Secretariat in November 2013, the Hong Kong Customs intercepted 16 in transit passenger departed from Angola in June 2014 and seized a total of 790 kg of ivory from them. All 16 offenders were arrested and prosecuted, and the legal proceedings are ongoing. Following our standing practice, relevant information is communicated to authorities in the implicated countries.

Further, I am glad to inform that a second batch of ivory sample obtained from a significant seizure exported from Nigeria was sent to a designated forensic laboratory for analysis in December 2013. Another batch of samples obtained from a seizure export from Kenya is ready to be sent out for DNA testing shortly.

3. Publicity and education

Following the decision of the HKSAR Government to destroy confiscated ivory, the AFCD held a “Destruction of Confiscated Ivory Launching Ceremony” on 15 May 2014. The Ceremony kick-started the phased destruction of 28 tonnes of ivory stockpile kept by the Government and aimed to send an unequivocal message that Hong Kong is determined to curb illicit trade in ivory. Education panels, samples of raw tusks, ivory products and residue of incinerated ivory were displayed at the Ceremony. The Ceremony attracted 34 local and foreign media and was widely reported.

As a new initiative, the AFCD collaborates with the tourist sector by providing training to tour guides in respect of the control of ivory as well as other endangered species. From May 2013, four training sessions were held for inbound and outbound tourist guides. This training programme is still ongoing.

In view of the evaluation prepared by the CITES Secretariat of progress reports on the implementation of NIAPs in SC62 Doc. 42.2, we would be pleased to verbally update the Standing Committee of the above in an intervention at its forthcoming meeting.

Yours sincerely,



(Alfred WONG)

for Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
CITES Management Authority of HKSAR

With enclosures

c.c.

CITES Management Authority of China

(Attn: Dr. MENG Xianlin)

Ivory Action Plan of HKSAR, China

Actions	Details	Target and timeframe
<p>1. Regulation of trade</p> <p>1.1 Legislation and licensing control</p>	<p>The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance is the domestic legislation which implements CITES in the HKSAR. The control regime of the Ordinance in respect of the import, export or re-export of CITES elephant ivory fully complies with the provisions of CITES. As a stricter domestic measure, the Ordinance stipulates that the possession of ivory for commercial purposes, regardless of its quantity or type of specimen, requires a Licence to Possess issued by the CITES Management Authority of the HKSAR. Individual keeping premises of ivory engaged in commercial activities should obtain its own Licence to Possess, except for specimens proved as being pre-Convention.</p> <p>The CITES Management Authority maintains licensing control on the commercial trade in registered stock of ivory in the domestic market. Applications for licences are strictly scrutinized and subject to proof of legal acquisition and proper record of transaction. If deemed necessary, specific conditions may be imposed in the Licence to Possess.</p>	<p>The CITES Management Authority will continue to uphold the stringent licensing control for the trade in elephant ivory as strong basis for enforcement of CITES provisions.</p>
<p>1.2 Compliance monitoring</p>	<p>Licensed keeping premises of endangered species is subject to inspection by authorized officers. In order to detect and deter illegal trade in endangered species, the CITES Management Authority conducts inspection to licensed keeping premises of ivory regularly and other art and craft shops on a risk based approach.</p> <p>Appropriate enforcement action will be immediately taken if irregularity is detected in inspection.</p>	<p>By 30 April 2014, the CITES Management Authority will conduct a series of inspections in the domestic market targeted at premises licensed to trade ivory as well as “art and craft” and “antique” shops that may sell ivory.</p>

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18 November 2013

Mr. John Scanlon,
The CITES Secretary-General
International Environment House
Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Scanlon,

National Ivory Action Plan

Thank you for your letter of 8 October 2013 and sharing with us the national ivory plans of the concerned Parties.

While the Secretariat has been kept informed of our ongoing enforcement work against illegal trade in elephant ivory and some of the associated work, I am pleased to provide a brief update on our implementation of ivory action plan from April to October 2013.

In the period, the Hong Kong authorities effected three significant ivory seizures as listed below:

- (a) raw ivory (1,148 pieces or 2183.2 kg in total) exported from Togo;
- (b) polished ivory tusks (1,120 pieces or 2,229.7 kg in total) together with other contrabands exported from Nigeria; and
- (c) ivory tusks (189 pieces or 768.6 kg in total) from three containers exported from Côte d'Ivoire.

Information pertaining to the above seizures has been communicated to the concerned Parties and to the INTERPOL through Ecomessage. We are glad to have received positive feedback from the exporting countries on their willingness to take appropriate actions on their side.

We have also obtained samples from the Togo seizure and provided them to a designated forensic laboratory. Preliminary result revealed that analysis was able to trace the origin of the elephant population. We are given to understand that this preliminary result had been shared with the wildlife enforcement community at a recent INTERPOL's meeting.

To deter illicit activities, the above-mentioned ivory seizures were all publicized through press-statement and/or press conference. Further, on publicity and education, we have established partnership with the tourist industry and initiated training programmes targeted to inbound and outbound tourist guides on the control of ivory under CITES.

Other areas in our ivory action plan are either ongoing or being progressively planned. We shall provide further update to the Standing Committee and the Secretariat when there are more concrete outcomes.

Yours sincerely,



(Alfred WONG)

for Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation
CITES Management Authority of HKSAR

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CITES Management Authority of China

(Attn: Dr. MENG Xianlin)