

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



Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

Species specific matters

HELMETED HORNBILL (*RHINOPLAX VIGIL*):  
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted four decisions relating to the helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*) as follows:

**18.266 Directed to Parties**

*Parties, especially range, transit and consumer States, should provide information to the Secretariat on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11 on Conservation of, and trade in, helmeted hornbill, including any challenges encountered, and provide information in response to the Notification issued pursuant to Decision 18.267, paragraph c) below.*

**Directed to the Secretariat**

**18.267 The Secretariat shall:**

- a) *subject to the availability of external funding and upon request, assist relevant Parties in their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11, especially regarding the implementation of the helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*): Status Review, range-wide conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2027) ("Action Plan"), and challenges communicated under Decision 18.266;*
- b) *liaise as appropriate with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) and other relevant networks and organizations to convey Resolution Conf. 17.11, draw attention to the Action Plan for the conservation of the helmeted hornbill, and invite them to consider these in planning and executing their activities; and*
- c) *through a Notification and bilateral consultation as needed, request Parties, especially, range, transit and consumer States and other relevant experts, to provide information on helmeted hornbill trade routes as well as the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11.*

**18.268** *The Secretariat shall provide a report, including the responses received and its recommendations, to the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decisions 18.266 and 18.267 and, on the basis of recommendations by the Standing Committee, take additional actions as appropriate.*

### **18.269 Directed to the Standing Committee**

*The Standing Committee at its 73rd and 74th meeting shall review the implementation of Decisions 18.266 to 18.268 and any other information made available to it and, based on its review and deliberations make any recommendations to the Secretariat and Parties (range, transit and consumer States) for further actions, and report to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.*

#### Implementation of Decision 18.267, paragraph a)

3. The Secretariat secured funding (USD 35,000) from the United States of America to support the implementation of Decision 18.267, paragraph a), and takes this opportunity to thank the United States for its support. The Secretariat wrote to the five extant or former range States of the helmeted hornbill [Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore (extinct), Thailand] in February 2021 to advise them of the availability of funding to assist with their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11 on *Conservation of, and trade in, helmeted hornbill* and the Action Plan for the conservation of helmeted hornbill.
4. The Secretariat received a response from Myanmar, explaining that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the political situation in Myanmar, it was not feasible to collect the necessary data and organize consultation meetings with the relevant stakeholders for the preparation of the Action Plan for the conservation of helmeted hornbill. Thus, funding was not needed at the time. No replies were received from the four other Parties.
5. The Secretariat reminds all range States of the helmeted hornbill that limited funds remain available which can, upon request, be provided to support their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.267, paragraph b)

6. In March 2020, the Secretariat liaised with its partners in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) to bring to their attention Resolution Conf. 17.11 and in particular encourage ICWC partners to explore how they may be able to support the Action Plan as part of ongoing and future activities, both through their individual programmes and through activities delivered under the auspices of the ICWC Strategic Programme.
7. The Secretariat has secured funding through the contribution of the European Union towards the ICWC Strategic Programme to support the convening by INTERPOL of a Regional Investigative and Analytical Case Management (RIACM) meeting in Asia with a focus on illegal trade in helmeted hornbill. In the intersessional period, the Secretariat also shared updates and information concerning illegal trade in helmeted hornbill with INTERPOL for its consideration. The RIACM has been tentatively planned to take place between April and August 2022.

#### Implementation of Decisions 18.266 and 18.267, paragraph c)

8. Pursuant to paragraph c) of Decision 18.267, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2020/011 on 19 February 2020. Responses were received from Cambodia, New Zealand, Thailand and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). They are shown in the Annex to this document in the language and format as received.
9. The information thus collected provides insights in the implementation of certain aspects of Resolution Conf. 17.11 by range, transit and consumer States, noting that the challenges encountered by Myanmar in implementing Resolution Conf. 17.11 in view of the travel – and meeting – restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic may apply to other countries in Southeast Asia (see paragraph 4).
10. In recent years, several non-governmental organizations have reported on the illegal trade in casques of helmeted hornbill. Some forensic and identification tools to assist enforcement agencies to combat this illegal trade are reported to be available or under development, as well as some work on demand reduction for casques has been initiated. Such information could further inform discussions that are to take place at the INTERPOL-led RIACM meeting mentioned in paragraph 7.

### Implementation of Decision 18.268

11. The postponement of the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee in 2020 and its online organization in May 2021 with a limited agenda did not allow the Secretariat to report to that meeting on the implementation of Decisions 18.266 to 18.268.

### Recommendations

12. The Standing Committee is invited to:
  - a) take note of this document on the implementation of Decisions 18.266 to 18.268;
  - b) recall paragraph 2 of Resolution Conf. 17.11 and encourage range States to respond to the Secretariat's invitation to provide assistance in their implementation of that Resolution;
  - c) encourage relevant range, transit and consumer States to actively take part in the INTERPOL-led RIACM meeting on illegal trade in helmeted hornbill, expected to be held in 2022; and
  - d) request the Chair of the Standing Committee to include information on the implementation of Decisions 18.266 to 18.269 in its report to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.



ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា  
Kingdom of Cambodia  
ជាតិ សាសនា ព្រះមហាក្សត្រ  
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Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
សមត្ថកិច្ចគ្រប់គ្រងសាយភ័ស្តកម្ពុជា  
CITES Management Authority of Cambodia

No: ០៩៨.៥/២០ CMAC

Phnom Penh... 27 April 2020

Ms. Ivonne Higuero  
Secretary-General  
CITES Secretariat, International Environment House,  
Chemin des Anêmones, CH-1219 Châtelaine,  
Geneva, Switzerland

**Subject: Implementation of Decisions 18.281 to 18.285 on Helmeted hornbill (Rhinoplax vigil)**

Dear Ms. Ivonne Higuero,

Reference is made to the CITES Secretariat notification to the Parties No. 2020/011, dated 19 February 2020, the CITES Management Authority of Cambodia herewith submits its response to the concerning associated with Helmeted hornbill (Rhinoplax vigil) that is required under Decisions 18.266 agreed by the Conference of Parties.

The Helmeted hornbill (Rhinoplax vigil) occupies lowland forest habitats in some countries in Southeast Asia, however, its native distribution range is not including Cambodia. Besides, this unique bird species is not native and found in Cambodia. The country also has never had any record on both local and international trades on this species. Therefore, Cambodia has not information relevant to the conservation, challenges encountered and trade in helmeted hornbill that response to the Notification issued pursuant to this Decision 18.266.

Please accept our warmest thanks for your consideration support, cooperation and assurance of our highest regards.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. NAO THUOK, PhD  
Secretary of State  
Chairman CITES Management Authority of Cambodia  
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

CC:

- Cabinet of the Minister
- Forestry Administration
- Cambodia CITES Secretariat
- File

**Thailand Report on the Implementation of Decisions 18.266 and 18.269  
on Helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*)**

The helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*) is a protected species in Thailand. Its natural habitats are found distributed in the protected forest areas in southern part of Thailand which includes a number of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries situated in the deep southern provinces of Thailand. The primary protected habitats include the Hala Bala Wildlife Sanctuary in Yala and Narathiwat Provinces; the Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary in Surat Thani Province; and the Budo–Su-ngai Padi National Park in Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani Province. The helmeted hornbills and their habitats in the national parks and wildlife sanctuaries are therefore protected under the National Park Act 2019 and the Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act 2019 respectively. Additionally, the most effective patrolling practice called the Smart Patrol System is applied in the protected areas in particular the area where endangered species are existing. The Smart Patrol System allows the forest guards to trace the threats while also collect biological data of important species during the patrol. These data were used for creating management plan accordingly.

The helmeted hornbill is listed in the Protected Species Appendix attached to Thailand's Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act 2019 (WARPA 2019). According to WARPA 2019 helmeted hornbill is protected from poaching, trading and possessing of its specimens and products containing its parts and derivatives. As a result, all international trade in its parts and derivatives are prohibited by this law. Possessing of helmeted hornbill specimens is allowed only for use in scientific research and study. Violation of this Act shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding 10 years or fined not exceeding four 1,000,000 Baht (about 32,000 \$US), or both. Thailand has made an effort to designate the highest legal protection status for the helmeted hornbill. The Technical Committee has been established to accomplish the transition of legal protection status of the helmeted hornbill from Protected Species List to Reserved Species List attached to WARPA 2019's

To monitor hunting and illegal trade of helmeted hornbill in Thailand, DNP and relevant law enforcement agencies such as the Royal Forest Department, Royal Thai Police and Customs Department, have been working collaboratively in preventing and detecting the illegal trade in its parts and derivatives. The illegal trades of helmeted hornbills and their parts over the internet are also inspected and investigated in corporation with the Cybercrime Police. Since 2017, there have been 3 recorded helmeted hornbill cases, with 3 live specimens and 1 carcass

For training efforts, the Hornbill Research Foundation (HRF) in cooperation with the DNP conducted the "International Hornbill Research Training" between May 1 – 11 2018 at Khao Yai National Park, Nakorn Ratchasima Province and Budo Su-ngai Padi National Park in Narathiwat Province. The training was funded by HRF and Shera Public Company Limited. It was participated by researchers from Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines and 15 Thai staffs, mostly from

DNP's field station in southern Thailand where they work for Helmeted Hornbill conservation. The training was also joined by 3 additional border patrol polices who were currently helping HRF with research. The training managed all participants to learn on Helmeted Hornbills biology, behaviors and research techniques. The following topics were presented:

- Hornbill habitat evaluation and monitoring.
- Hornbill population survey and monitoring; sampling techniques, occupancy, line and point transects
- Tree climbing technique
- Nest search and nest trees study including nest cavity management
- Breeding Ecology
- Hornbill food plant study including phenology study

Joining the training workshop were the many experts and researchers from Thailand Hornbill Project. It should also be noted that Thailand had already been in cooperation with Malaysia on researching and conserving hornbills at Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary in the State of Sarawak on Borneo Island for a continued period of 3 years.

Apart from species protection, the various studies and research works on helmeted hornbills are carried out. The research topics include the nesting behaviors of helmeted hornbills in the Khlong Saeng Wildlife Sanctuary, survey of helmeted hornbill nesting locations in the Hala Bala Wildlife Sanctuary, and cooperative efforts with Thailand's Hornbill Research Foundation (HRF) in informing the local communities on the importance of helmeted hornbill conservation.

To build public awareness on hornbills conservation, Thailand has introduced and celebrated the February 13<sup>th</sup> as "Love Hornbills Day" since 2004. This day aims to raise awareness to the general public by installing conservation efforts through the concept of "Coming together to give love to hornbills, before giving it to each other on Valentine". Annually, events and activities will be hosted with the help of various civil society sectors such as the research teams and support teams from various environmental agencies to build public engagement in hornbills and nature conservation. This day also provides opportunities for hornbill lovers to socialize with each other. The presentation on current status of hornbill interesting various researches and studies were usually promoted to the public as part of main activities on this day.

In view of sustainable management, Thailand prioritize the development of a conservation and strategic plan for helmeted hornbill both in national and regional level. We participated in the workshop which was held in Sarawak, Malaysia during 19-20 May 2017, and took part in the development of Helmeted Hornbill Status Review, Range-wide Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2018 – 2027) to ensure that the Helmeted Hornbill thrives in ecologically functional populations across its natural range, valued by local and global stakeholder communities and effectively protected from threats related to poaching, trafficking and habitat

loss. Thailand is also in the process of developing the draft of National Helmeted Hornbill Conservation Plan. The further steps necessary for helmeted hornbill conservation will be developed to implement the action plan.

**Implementation of Decisions 18.281 to 18.285 on Helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*)**

1. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.266 to 18.269 on Helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*). These decisions read as follows:

**18.266 Directed to Parties**

Parties, especially range, transit and consumer States, should provide information to the Secretariat on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11 on Conservation of, and trade in, helmeted hornbill, including any challenges encountered, and provide information in response to the Notification issued pursuant to Decision 18.267, paragraph c) below.

**18.267 Directed to the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall:

- a) subject to the availability of external funding and upon request, assist relevant Parties in their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11, especially regarding the implementation of the helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*): Status Review, range- wide conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2027) (“Action Plan”), and challenges communicated under Decision 18.266;
- b) liaise as appropriate with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and other relevant networks and organizations to convey Resolution Conf. 17.11, draw attention to the Action Plan for the conservation of the helmeted hornbill, and invite them to consider these in planning and executing their activities; and
- c) through a Notification and bilateral consultation as needed, request Parties, especially, range, transit and consumer States and other relevant experts, to provide information on helmeted hornbill trade routes as well as the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11.

**18.268 Directed to the Secretariat**

The Secretariat shall provide a report, including the responses received and its recommendations, to the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decisions 18.266 and 18.267 and, on the basis of recommendations by the Standing Committee, take additional actions as appropriate.

**18.269 Directed to the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee at its 73rd and 74th meeting shall review the implementation of Decisions 18.266 to 18.268 and any other information made available to it and, based on its review and deliberations make any recommendations to the Secretariat and Parties (range, transit and consumer States) for further actions, and report to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

2. Pursuant to paragraph c) of Decision 18.267, Parties, especially, range, transit and consumer States of helmeted hornbill, and other relevant experts, are hereby requested to submit to the Secretariat information on helmeted hornbill trade routes as well as their implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11. on *Conservation of, and trade in, helmeted hornbill*, including any challenges encountered.

3. In accordance with Decision 18.268, the Secretariat will make the responses received available, along with any recommendations it may have, to the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee (SC73, Geneva, 5-9 October, tbc).

4. Responses should be submitted by email to [info@cites.org](mailto:info@cites.org) and [karen.gaynor@cites.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@cites.org), no later than **31 May 2020**.



**New Zealand response (submitted by New Zealand CITES Management Authority)**

New Zealand has no recorded illegal or legal trade in Helmeted hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*). Current evidence indicates that New Zealand is not a destination country, nor part of any trade route associated with this species.

In response to Resolution 17.11 *Conservation of, and trade in, helmeted hornbill*, 2 a) New Zealand is unable to provide funding to relevant Parties, however we will seek to raise our border agencies awareness of the trade in helmeted hornbill, given New Zealand's close proximity to South East Asia.

Any detected illegal trade will be subject to investigation and consideration for enforcement action under Trade in Endangered Species Act 1989; legislation which implements the Convention in New Zealand.

Contact details: New Zealand CITES Management and Scientific Authorities

Department of Conservation, 18-32 Manners Street, Wellington 6011, New Zealand

Email: [cites@doc.govt.nz](mailto:cites@doc.govt.nz)



Helmeted Hornbill Working Group

# Helmeted Hornbill Working Group (HHWG) 2019 updates to the CITES Secretariat on the Implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.11

Prepared by Jessica Lee & Anuj Jain (HHWG Coordinators) with inputs from IUCN SSC Hornbill Specialist Group and HHWG subgroup leads and members

The [Helmeted Hornbill \(\*Rhinoplax vigil\*\): Status Review, Range-Wide Conservation Strategy And Action Plan \(2018 – 2027\)](#) identified three goals to tackle the trade, but also the conservation of the species – these are linked to specific objectives (and actions). This document will report on the various updates under each objective that are most relevant to CITES.

## 1 Recent Notable Trade Reports

### 1.1 Thai Hornbill Trade

TRAFFIC launched a report on the online trade in Thailand in August 2019 (<https://www.traffic.org/publications/reports/hornbills-losing-their-heads-to-online-trade-in-thailand/>).

The six-month online survey found a minimum of 236 online posts offering a minimum of 546 hornbill parts and products in 32 of the 40 groups surveyed on Facebook. These were posted over a period of 64 months, spanning June 2014 to April 2019. Helmeted Hornbill parts and products constituted 452 (83%) of all hornbill commodities recorded. 94 whole heads of eight other hornbill species—all native to and protected in Thailand—made up the rest of the hornbill commodities recorded in the survey.

### 1.2 Golden Triangle and Greater Mekong area Physical Market Surveys by TRAFFIC

Two physical market surveys were carried out. The first survey was from May to July 2019 across 11 locations in three countries – Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand, while the second survey was from September to December 2019 across 29 locations in four countries – Lao PDR, Myanmar, Cambodia and Thailand. The results are summarized in the table below.



Taxa/item type	Survey 1	Survey 2
Type of Helmeted Hornbill products	Bracelet (1) and necklace (1)	Bracelet (3) and necklace (1).
Locations found	Luang Prabang	Luang Prabang and Vientiane
Pricing info	CNY 3,000 each	LAK 800,000 (bracelet) THB 40,000 – THB 42,000 (bracelet) THB 58,000 (necklace)

1.3 Mainland China HH Surveys – Physical and Online Surveys by TRAFFIC

Physical market surveys of HH products in mainland China took place across four years from 2016-2019. The results of the survey are presented in the table below

Year	Number of cities visited	Number of outlets selling HH	Number of HH products (pieces) found in market
2016	7	32	138
2017	10	51	110
2018	11	43	82
2019	10	26	56

Online market surveys in mainland China, however, showed that almost no dealers sold HH products through traditional websites. Instead, HH product dealers mainly use social media platforms such as Wechat, Tieba, etc. which are more covert than websites. The current average price of HH was recorded to be ~ CNY 150/g.

1.4 Online & Antique Shops Survey in Hong Kong SAR (HK)

Online market survey of HH products in the HK by the University of Hong Kong (HKU) comprised a one-off survey in Dec 2019 Jan 2020 (8h/day across four days). It was focused on HK and mainland China traders. The survey recorded eight HH items sold over WeChat or Facebook:

- Beaded bracelet x 1
- Beaded necklace x 1
- Pendant + beaded necklace x 2
- Carved figurine (small) x 3
- Uncarved bill x 1
- A lot of fake products were identified, with some of high quality

1.5 Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade in Sarawak – Sarawak Forestry Cooperation (SFC), Malaysia

As the state government department for the protection of wildlife, the SFC actively carries out a range of activities with regards to tackling the illegal wildlife trade. These include monitoring illusive wildlife trade in the town areas, illegal wildlife trade across border, wildlife cybercrime and bio-piracy. The SFC applies a four-pronged approach in their intervention: Monitoring (e.g. urban area and cyber patrols, border patrols), Enforcement (e.g. market areas, clubs, national/international operations), Awareness (e.g. Conservation Education Public Awareness CEPA, volunteer wildlife ranger programs with NGOs, engaging local councils) and Publicity (e.g. signages, brochures and radio programs). The SFC has also undertaken joint SMART

patrols with the Royal Malaysia Police and Wildlife Conservation Society. In October 2019, an arrest of a trader and confiscation of 148 pieces of HH parts was carried out. The estimated local market value of the casques was RM296,000.00 or close to USD70,000.



The SFC have plans to review laws, regulations and standard operating procedures, as well as intensifying enforcement at state/national/international levels, but to also work with relevant partners on demand reduction and capacity building initiatives.

## 2.1 Trade-related Training

### 2.1.1 Law Enforcement Training

For law enforcement purposes, in February 2020, a guide for frontline border officers was produced by TRAFFIC. This was to improve the detection of illicit wildlife parts and products in trade. The guide is available in Burmese, Lao, Thai and English. It may be downloaded here:

<https://www.traffic.org/publications/reports/new-study-lifts-the-lid-on-addressing-corruption-in-cites-documentation-processes/>

Some snippets from the guide are provided below:



### 2.1.2 Enforcement Education - The Development of a HH Education Kit for Enforcement and Courts (HEKEC) in HK

This is led by a team from HKU's School of Biological Sciences and Faculty of Law, along with Gaia, a wildlife conservation NGO from Malaysia. The key objectives are to raise awareness via:

- Photos of casques for enforcement agencies use
- Short documentary including HK-seized casques & footage from Kinabatangan
- Presentations to enforcement members of THE HK Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and Customs and Excise Department
- A poster for the education centre in AFCD

This will be coupled with evaluations using audience surveys, and seizure monitoring post-education activities.

### 2.1.3 Bringing forensics to the courts using "Victim Impact Statements" (VIS)

Another project led by HKU's School of Biological Sciences and Faculty of Law, as well as Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden in HK. These VIS are statements prepared for HK's most smuggled species, to make them recognized as victims of crime. These statements establish the impact of wildlife crimes and can be utilised by prosecutors in their presentation of cases at court. Armed with knowledge of the role of animals as individuals and species victims of crime, sentences may be passed that take appropriate regard of wild animal suffering, their monetary and conservation value, and the impact of their loss on biodiversity. The

use of these statements is allowing for better-informed sentencing decisions in individual cases and improved environmental justice. They are based on information around:

- IUCN Red List category
- Ecosystem impact through exploitation
- Population depletion and food chain effects
- Current monetary value on the black market
- Welfare concerns in transport
- Invasive species, disease and pathogen concerns
- Forensic information and analyses

Two Case Studies applying VIS for CITES Appendix I species:

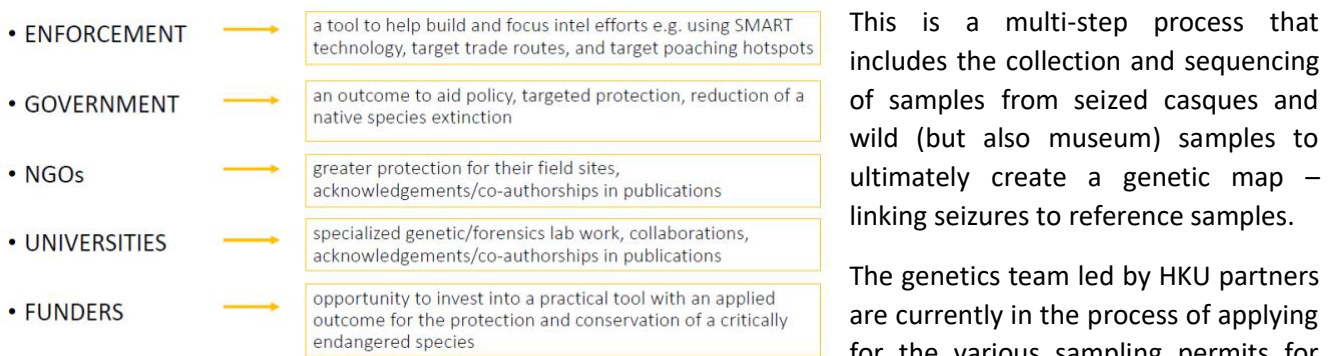
In May 2018, an amendment in HK legislation was made which raised the maximum penalty for importing Appendix I species to 10 years imprisonment. Five rhinoceros horn cases have since been prosecuted in the District Court (previously they were always tried in the inferior magistrates' courts). In each case, the defendant smuggled between 1.32 and 3.1 kg of horn into HK. Prior to the VIS for AFCD, along with over 6 hours of online training for judiciary on how to use the statements to inform their sentencing decisions, the last rhinoceros case heard had a 2-month minimum sentence. However, each of the defendants this time were imprisoned for between 8-12 months.

In July 30, 2019 a man was convicted for attempting to smuggle HH beaks using express air parcels. He received 32 months imprisonment = the highest sentencing received for a wildlife trade case in HK.

\* Significant increase in sentencing \* Judiciary feedback has been positive

## 2.2 Genetics Update

The key aim is to create a “genoscape” to determine the origin of casques, which will aid law enforcement and conservation by providing more in-depth information on: poaching hotspots, trade routes and populations most at risk.



each range state. Sampling from seized casques in HK has already began. We hope to commence museum sampling within the next six months, and field sampling once all the paperwork has been processed and approved. In preparation for this, feather, faeces and tissue/blood sampling kits and a guide have been prepared and standardised. The team will be supported by a Nat Geo Grant, and have applied for an additional Wild Genomes Grant to extend the work.

Separately, using confiscated casques stored in a museum in Indonesia, the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) carried out a number of genetic enquiries, and these include:



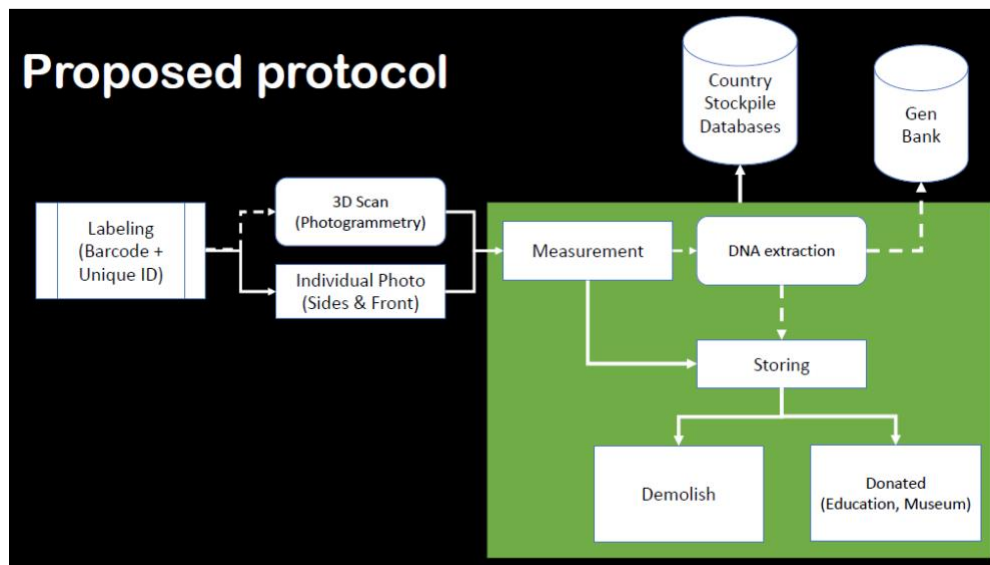
- Diagnostics (e.g. species identification)
- Sex determination using HH casques
- Genetic diversity and intraspecific variation among HH population, as well as geographic origin

As there is a need for efficient protocols for working with casques of varying conditions, a secondary aim of these studies is to optimize the laboratory protocol for keratinous material.

We understand that the Department of National Parks (DNP) Thailand as well as Perhilitan in Peninsular Malaysia have also developed expertise in carrying out a number of genetic enquiries on confiscated hornbill casques.

### 2.3 Stockpile Management (Seized Casques)

As per the action plan, a morphological assessment of confiscated casques has commenced in Indonesia. This includes looking at characteristics such as beak conditions across confiscations, as well as sex and age differences. This will allow us to better understand the features of the trade but also impact on wild populations. A preliminary assessment was carried out on 248 out of 259 beaks seized in 2013 and currently held in Jakarta (possibly from West Kalimantan), as well as a 2016 Samarinda confiscation with 101/150 beaks from East Kalimantan. Much information could be inferred and deduced from these seized specimens prior to stockpile destruction. The proposed management protocol led and drafted by Rangkong Indonesia is displayed below:



### 2.4 Notable Poaching Incidents in 2019

Malaysia (Sabah) - Across a number of months from May to October 2019, while carrying out field activities as part of the Kinabatangan Hornbill Conservation Project, members from local NGOs - Gaia and HUTAN–Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation Programme encountered poachers at one of the field sites in Kinabatangan, Sabah, Malaysia. During this time (October 2019), a female HH was noted to have gone missing, it is still unknown if the forest intruders and disappearance of the female hornbill are linked. The situation intensified as these intruders were armed and aggressive to field staff. Reports were made to the Malaysian authorities in November, and the police force as well as the Special Armed Forces PGA accompanied field wardens and researchers into the field site – the intruders appeared to have

disappeared. Subsequently, through the assistance of Gaia, five arrests were made at the site, and Gaia were forced to postpone near-future field activities.

Malaysia (Sarawak) – Recent seizures in Kapit, Sarawak include a massive seizure in October 2019 in which 800 animal parts were confiscated

(<https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2019/10/10/sarawak-forestry-discovers-hornbill-ivory-in-massive-wildlife-seizure/>). Of these, 148 were helmet-like blocks believed to be from the HH. It has been learned that the SFC has sent the samples for genetic analysis to Perhilitan, Peninsular Malaysia. The results of the analysis to confirm whether these helmeted like blocks were HH parts are pending.

Thailand - HH poaching incidents were reported from Thailand in the media in 2019.

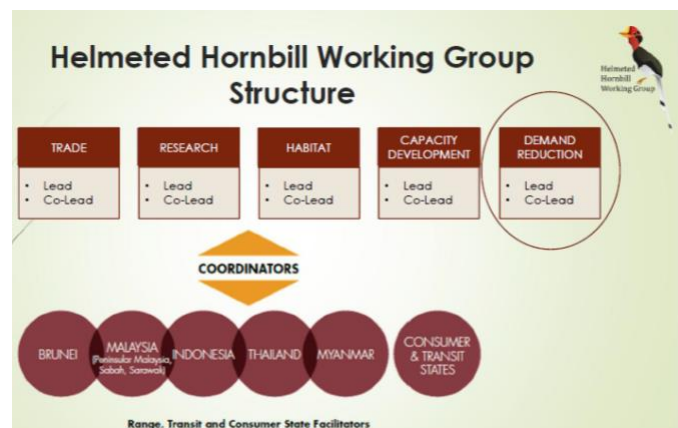
(<https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/1759979/urgent-action-called-for-over-hornbill-hunting>). DNP’s Wildlife Conservation Office Director Ms. Kanchana Nittaya stated that – “In three previous crackdowns on HH hunting, five hunters were arrested while three live HH and one carcass were seized”. There has also been news about HH products being sold in Thailand but fortunately, monks and celebrities have spoken against their superstitious use.

Indonesia – 72 HH casques were seized in Jakarta on 17 July 2019. The WCS Indonesia team supported the Government of Indonesia with the seizure, while Rangkong Indonesia supported the government with the identification of casques.

## 2.5 Demand Reduction

The HHWG has unanimously agreed to the establishment of a fifth subgroup for demand reduction (see proposed group structure in the image) in March 2020. The nominated and accepted Subgroup Lead is Mr. Jack Lam who is an independent researcher based out of HK.

The proposed subgroup’s plan to address behavior change, and therefore demand reduction is summarized briefly below in a series thought processes and pre-existing work:



- 1) Prevalence of Trade and Market Trends
  - What is the prevalence of trade online and in physical shops?
  - What are the key outlets (e.g. online forums, social media, e-commerce platforms and physical shops) of HH products?
  - What type of HH products (e.g. carvings, jewelry, cultural collectables) are in demand?
- 2) Consumer Profiling
  - Is there a core group of consumers that buy/collect regularly? Or are consumers one-off/opportunistic buyers? Which group represents a stronger driver of demands for HH products?
  - Consumer demographics, such as gender, age groups, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.
- 3) Consumer Motivations, Values & Triggers that drive purchase
  - What physical traits, descriptions and values are being attached to HH products?

- Identifying potential motivations and purposes of consumption, including:
  - Personal collection (cultural value—association with products such as elephant ivory and rhino horn, artistic value, historic value, rarity value).
  - Self-expression (status symbol, fashion statement).
  - Gifting (pertaining to cultural occasions such as new year, weddings, or other forms of networking).
  - Material investment.
- 4) Current (perceived) deterrents to buyers
  - Legislation – IUCN status, CITES regulations, and local protection statuses.
  - Law enforcement and penalties – perceived risk of arrest, conviction, and severity of punishment.
  - Animal welfare concerns – considerations for the cruelty of poaching.
  - Conservation values – consideration for the ecological significance, intrinsic value, and rarity of helmeted hornbills.
  - Social pressure against the consumption of wildlife products.
- 5) Co-occurrence with other high value wildlife collectibles
  - Does tightening of elephant ivory legislations have positive or negative impacts on HH purchase?
  - How do campaigns on other relevant wildlife products affect the consumption of HH products?
  - What is the expected trend over time?

## **2.6 Other matters**

The HHWG members conducted several projects on field surveys and community engagement at key HH to better understand distribution gaps and encourage and empower local communities to protect and conserve their resident HH populations.

### **2.6.1 Field Surveys of the HH**

Several rapid field assessments and detailed population surveys for hornbills were undertaken in the range countries to update knowledge gaps. These include activities in **Indonesia** (Kapuas Hulu in West Kalimantan, Indonesia conducted by Rangkong Indonesia; a protected area in West Kalimantan, Indonesia by Planet Indonesia; Harapan forest, Sumatera by Burung Indonesia and BirdLife International; Gunung Leuser National Park and Bukit Barisan Selatan National Park, Sumatera, Indonesia by the National Park authorities and WCS), **Malaysia** (Belum-Temengor forest complex in Peninsular Malaysia by Malaysian Nature Society and BirdLife International; Rimba and Terengganu Nature Guides; Perhilitan & Pelindung; Sarawak Forestry Corporation with Thailand Hornbill Foundation; HUTAN, GAIA and 1StopBorneo with Sabah Wildlife and Sabah Forestry), **Myanmar** (by Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Foundation and BirdLife International), **Thailand** (Bang Lang National Park and Budo mountain by Hornbill Research Foundation; and Khao-Sok and Khlong Saeng landscape by Bird Conservation Society of Thailand and BirdLife International), Brunei (new field surveys carried out by Universiti Brunei Darussalam, and part of a wider collaboration with Birdlife International Asia, United Arab Emirates University and Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS)).

### **2.6.2 Community Engagement**

Several projects on the community's perceptions of hornbill conservation were completed at several locations in 2019 such as in Indonesia (Kapuas Hulu District, West Kalimantan by Rangkong Indonesia, West Kalimantan by Planet Indonesia); Myanmar by Biodiversity & Nature Conservation Foundation



(BANCA) & BirdLife International); in Malaysia by the Malaysian Nature Society, BirdLife International and Sarawak Forestry Corporation, HUTAN, GAIA and 1StopBorneo; in Thailand by the Thailand Hornbill Project.

The Community Engagement subgroup of HHWG has created a list of guidelines that will help standardize the documentation of Hornbill Guardian programs across the range-states.

### 2.6.3 Ex situ discussion

- To-date, one bird is known to be held at Penang Bird Park – a male individual. As very few HH exist in captivity, there is an immediate to short-term aim of running a husbandry workshop on general hornbill-keeping for relevant stakeholders (e.g. zoos/rescue centres in Indonesia). This would be in preparation for a situation where a live HH is rescued from the wild or confiscated from the trade. This will be combined with the production of guidelines for the husbandry/health of HH under human care – Jurong Bird Park, part of WRS has been tasked to take the lead on this.
  - Ex-situ needs assessment – To look at carrying out a species-specific ICAP - The Integrated Collection Assessment and Planning (ICAP) workshop brings *in situ* and *ex situ* communities together to apply the decision process of the IUCN *ex situ* guidelines to the task of regional or global collection planning.
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## Recommendations for CITES

Context - The HH conservation strategy and action plan (2018 – 2027) outlines the key actions needed to tackle the trade in and conservation of the species. Whilst the strategy was developed and endorsed by several organizations including some range state governments, NGOs and research institutions and adopted by IUCN, it does not mandate a process through which governments and non-government stakeholders (such as NGOs) can collaborate in the joint implementation of the conservation action plan.

Given HH's sensitivity to poaching, data sharing agreements amongst key stakeholders (particularly governments and non-government actors) have been difficult to establish since the launch of the action plan in 2018. For example, HHWG members often do not have access to the results from the DNA analysis conducted by governments on confiscated seizures to ascertain the identity of HH products. Lack of such data is hindering the establishment of a robust range-wide "genoscape" to determine the origin of casques from the wild which can aid law enforcement in future (see section 2.2). Equally, several range state government patrols have in the past collected (or continue to collect) HH population data during large-scale mammal census but HHWG does not have access to such datasets, which hinders range-wide analyses including developing an accurate distribution map and global population estimate. This has important conservation implications.

Below we outline recommendations to aid collaboration among stakeholders and the importance of pushing for urgent implementation of CITES decisions on the Helmeted hornbill in range, consumer and transit countries.

- 1) Data access and sharing - through CITES encourage governments to work together and facilitate data sharing with relevant experts such as HHWG where required. Relevant platforms and mechanisms with controlled access may need to be setup as these are species sensitive to poaching activities.
- 2) Government focal points – through CITES encourage more active engagement between governments in range, transit and consumer countries/states and relevant experts (such as HHWG)

by the appointment of a government representative in each concerned state/country with which HHWG can liaise with.

- 3) Concern about increasing trade in more range countries - There are new concerns with the recent seizures and trade in more range countries (such as Thailand and Malaysia) and possible consumer countries (such as Laos and Vietnam). CITES needs to urge range countries to push for implementation of CITES decisions.
- 4) Discussion with consumer and transit countries - It is important that CITES have discussions with consumer and transit country officials (e.g. China and Laos) at high-levels to push for implementation of CITES decisions on controlling/reducing the trade in HH.

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For any further queries, please contact us at: [jessica.lee@wrs.com.sg](mailto:jessica.lee@wrs.com.sg) or [Anuj.Jain@birdlife.org](mailto:Anuj.Jain@birdlife.org)