

Proposal for temporary transfer of the populations of *Varanus bengalensis* and *V. flavescens* of Bangladesh from Appendix I to Appendix II of CITES by the Conference of the parties

1. Introduction

This is a proposal for temporary transfer of the lizard populations of *Varanus bengalensis* and *V. flavescens* of Bangladesh from Appendix I to Appendix II in the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties to facilitate one time disposal of a total number of 101,954 pieces of lizard skin confiscated by the Customs Authority of Bangladesh.

2. Background

Bangladesh is a member of CITES and is committed to the protection of the wild fauna and flora specially all the species included in Appendix-I, Appendix-II and Appendix-III. According to Article II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) "Appendix I shall include all species threatened with extinction which are or may be affected by trade in specimens of these species must be subject to particularly strict regulation in order not to endanger further their survival and must only be authorized in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II shall include: (a) all species which although not necessarily now threatened with extinction may become so unless trade in specimens of such species is subject to strict regulation in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival; and (b) other species which must be subject to regulation in order that trade in specimens of certain specimens referred to in such paragraph (a) of this paragraph may be brought under effective control. Appendix III shall include all species which any Party identified as being subject to regulation within its jurisdiction for the purpose of preventing or restricting exploitation, and as needing the cooperation of other parties in

the control of trade. The parties shall not allow trade in specimens of species included in Appendices I, II and III except in accordance with the provisions of the present Convention."

Bangladesh strictly follows the above provisions of CITES as a member country and no trade is allowed in the specimens included in the Appendices I, II and III.

However, a very "exceptional circumstance" was created when the Customs Authority of Bangladesh confiscated a total quantity of 101,954 pieces of lizard skin. Resolution Conference 3.14 makes recommendations on the disposal of confiscated or otherwise accumulated specimen of Appendix I species. Broadly it has been recommended that the parties consider the feasibility of a system of international exchanges of confiscated specimens for scientific/educational and for enforcement/identification purposes, either by direct contacts or alternatively through the Secretariat.

The government of Bangladesh informed the secretariat as early as 1 December, 1993 vide its Memo No. MOEF SEC-3/MOEF-14/91/834 and again vide its Memo No. MOEF SEC-3/MOEF-14/91/ 967 dated 28 December, 1993 regarding the problems being faced in the disposal of the above quantity of lizard skin.

In this respect, reference is made to recommendation Conference 2.15 which provides that "while confiscated specimens of Appendix I species should not be returned to commercial utilization in any form, physical destruction of the specimens should only be considered as a last resort after exhaustion of other options".

The parties are requested to appreciate that Bangladesh is proposing "commercial utilization" of this quantity only as an alternative to "physical destruction". This is a one time alternative and shall not be repeated in the interest of protection of the species included in Appendix -I.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the present proposal are to ensure :

- a) utilization of the confiscated pieces of the lizard skin by other member countries of the CITES for authorized utilization for scientific/educational and for enforcement/identification purposes on payment of a fixed price to the Government of Bangladesh.
- b) that disposal is limited only to the extent of the pieces that have been confiscated.
- c) that all the Parties to the Conference are informed regarding the strict measures followed by the Government of Bangladesh in preventing trade in species included in Appendix-I.
- d) that the disposal of species included in Appendix-I is done strictly in accordance with the provisions of CITES.
- e) that commercial disposal is limited to very exceptional circumstances and the Government of Bangladesh can utilize the funds obtained from such authorized disposal to the cause of improvement and protection of this and other species included in the Appendices -I, II and III.

4. Methodology of Disposal

The first step towards disposal is transfer of the populations of *Varanus bengalensis* and *V. flavescens* of Bangladesh from Appendix I to Appendix II of CITES by the Conference of the parties. Once the transfer is kindly considered and approved the government of Bangladesh would seek the help of the Secretariat and also other member countries to have the information regarding their respective demands for the confiscated and above mentioned quantity of the lizard skin after which arrangements will be made to ship the required quantities to respective member countries/parties. This will be done under arrangements strictly supervised by the concerned government agency.

It is mentioned that the funds received in the process will be utilized for protection and improvement of flora and fauna in general and the species in particular.

5. Consequences if the transfer is not favourably considered

If the current proposal for the stipulated transfer is not favourably considered then the only alternative left to the Government of Bangladesh will be "physical destruction of the specimens". It should be appreciated that such destruction will not help the cause of protection of the flora and fauna in Bangladesh or the species in particular. It will only cause damage to this rare specimen which can be utilized to the maximum benefit of other member countries for bonafide use and to the ultimate cause of protection and improvement of the species in Bangladesh and in other member countries.

6. Condition

The present proposal is made subject to the condition that the proposed transfer of the populations of *Varanus bengalensis* and *V. flavescens* of Bangladesh from Appendix I to Appendix II of CITES will be a temporary one and valid only for a total number of 101,954 pieces of lizard skin confiscated by the Customs Authority of Bangladesh.

The Parties to the Conference are therefore fervently requested to favourably consider the proposal for temporary transfer of the populations of *Varanus bengalensis* and *V. flavescens* of Bangladesh from Appendix I to Appendix II of CITES.

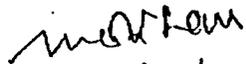
STANDARD REPORTING FORMAT FOR INVENTORY OF SPECIMENS

INVENTORY OF APPENDIX I SPECIMENS AVAILABLE FOR EXCHANGE/LOAN/DONATION

COUNTRY : BANGLADESH
DATE : 03/04/1994.

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE : MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FOREST, GOVT. OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

SPECIES	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	ORIGIN	DONATION/ EXCHANGE/LOAN	REMARKS
<p>Varanus bengalensis V. flavescens.</p>	<p>Skin seized by the Law enforcing agency: (The Custom Authority).</p>	<p>1,01,954 pieces</p>	<p>Bangladesh</p>	<p>Scientific/educational/enforcement/identification and other authorised commercial purposes.</p>	<p>Proposed disposal will help avoiding physical destruction of the confiscated specimens and help augment Govt. revenue for improvement and protection of the species.</p>


 Dr. Md. Omar Faruque Khan
 Deputy Secretary (Admin)
 Ministry of Environment and Forest
 Govt. of Bangladesh

5) STANDARD REPORTING FORMAT FOR APPENDIX I SPECIMEN RECIPIENTS
RECIPIENTS FOR CONFISCATED OR OTHER ACCUMULATED APPENDIX I SPECIMENS

COUNTRY : BANGLADESH

Name/title	Ministry of Environment & Forest, Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
Address for correspondence	M/o Environment & Forest Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Secretariat Building, Dhaka.
Type of specimens	LIVE/PARTS AND DERIVATIVES/LIZARD SKINS
General scope of activities	Confiscated contraband lizard skin totaling 1,01,954 pieces.
Particular specializations	Varanus bengalensis and V. flavescens
Use of specimens	Scientific/educational/enforcement/identification and other authorised commercial use.
Particular species	Varanus bengalensis and V. flavescens
Remarks	<p>Destruction of the confiscated specimens will not act as deterrent to illegal poaching. However the Govt. is taking all steps to ensure that such illegal killing of the specimen is prevented effectively.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">  ডঃ মোঃ ওমর ফারুক খান উপ-সচিব (প্রশাসন) পরিবেশ ও বন বিভাগ পদ্মশালার বাংলাদেশ সরকার </p> <p style="text-align: right;"> Dr. Md. Omar Faruque Khan Deputy Secretary (Admin) Ministry of Environment and Forest Govt. of Bangladesh. </p>

