

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



Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
The Hague (Netherlands), 3-15 June 2007

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation issues

TIBETAN ANTELOPE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat and is intended also to serve as the Standing Committee's report on this subject at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Background

2. At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) (Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope), in which it gives the following instructions.

*DIRECTS:*

- b) the Standing Committee to undertake a regular review of the enforcement measures taken by the Parties in eliminating the illicit trade in Tibetan antelope products on the basis of the Secretariat's report, and to report the results at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Measures taken by Parties

3. The subject of Tibetan antelope was considered by the Standing Committee at its 53rd and 54th meetings (Geneva, June – July 2005 and October 2006), where documents SC53 Doc. 21 and SC54 Doc. 28 were presented by the Secretariat.
4. During the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat, whilst welcoming enforcement action taken by the authorities in Thailand against persons trading shawls apparently made from the wool of Tibetan antelope, expressed its concern regarding reports that Thailand's domestic legislation might not be adequate to deal with such cases.
5. The Standing Committee agreed that Thailand should prepare a report for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on its enforcement of the Convention, particularly with regard to its progress in adopting new legislation, and in relation to the illicit trade in Tibetan antelope. The Committee recommended that the Conference of the Parties review the report and decide whether additional measures, including non-compliance measures, were necessary. At the time of writing (December 2006), no report had been received by the Secretariat.
6. During the same meeting, the Standing Committee noted news regarding a committee that had been established in India to review the manufacture of Tibetan wool products in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. One issue that the latter committee had examined was whether the captive-breeding of Tibetan antelope for commercial purposes should be considered. The Secretariat advised the

Standing Committee that India's committee had determined that captive-breeding should not be considered.

#### Population numbers of Tibetan antelope

7. China advised the Standing Committee at its 54th meeting that recent surveys indicated that population numbers of Tibetan antelope across China were estimated to have increased to 200,000.

#### Other related issues and activities

8. Historically, enforcement officers have been able to identify shawls made from Tibetan antelope wool (known as 'shahtoosh') by their extremely fine texture. Shahtoosh shawls have historically been so markedly different from others and of such high-quality that experienced officers could usually distinguish them from other similar products by simply handling them.
9. However, several law enforcement agencies have recently noted shawls appearing on the market that are made from goat wool but manufactured to a quality very similar to that of shahtoosh. So similar that experienced officers have mistakenly initially identified them as shahtoosh. It has also been noted that shawls are available that contain a mixture of shahtoosh and other fine wools, such as pashmina. Whilst enforcement officers have always sought confirmation of identification by forensic science staff following seizures, these latest discoveries may make officers reluctant to seize products.
10. Several laboratories and forensic science facilities around the world have the necessary experience and skills to identify the wool of Tibetan antelope, either by morphological examination or DNA profiling and the Secretariat is willing to provide advice on this subject to any law enforcement agency that requires it.
11. It is clear, from the seizures that are regularly conducted and the poaching of the species in China, that illicit trade in Tibetan antelope continues to be a problem for the Convention. China continues to give a high priority to anti-poaching efforts. Such efforts must be matched by consumer States but experience suggests that shahtoosh shawls can be found wherever there is a demand for luxury fashionable clothing. The Secretariat is grateful to the Interpol Wildlife Working Group for continuing to make combating such trade a priority in its activities.

#### Conclusion

12. The above, together with documents SC53 Doc. 21 and SC54 Doc. 28, summarizes the work conducted in relation to Tibetan antelope. The Secretariat will provide an oral report at CoP14 on any further developments.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY THAILAND  
FOR THE 14TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

In accordance with the decision of the 54th Standing Committee meeting, below is the report submitted by Thailand for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It is noted that the information and activities mentioned are mainly from the 2005 fiscal year (October 1, 2005 – September 31, 2006), except when indicated otherwise.

1. Legislation

- a) In order to fully meet the requirements of CITES by using two principle laws, WARPA and Plant Act (No. 2) B.E.2535, Thailand has made efforts to improve its national legislation for CITES implementation. The WARPA amended in 1992 was then intended to comply with CITES. Though this WARPA is fully implemented, supported legislations such as the Custom Act B.E. 2469 (1926), the Commercial Registration Act, B.E. 2499 (1956), and the Animal Epidemics Act B.E. 2499 (1956), and Export and Import of Goods Act B.E. 2522(1979) are also applied to CITES implementation.
- b) Despite WARPA legislation is fully implemented, with other laws mentioned above, the previous government initiated the policy to update laws all over the country. Because of this opportunity, in the last couple of years the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DoNP) proposed to improve WARPA as one of the natural resources laws to protect Thailand's natural resources. This revised legislation aims to modernize and re-categorize the articles to be better in implementing not only for domestic wildlife management, but for compliance with international agreements as well. The new revision has also provided significant roles of people participation in helping the government sector to protect Thailand's wildlife habitats and species, i.e., the committee at local levels. This new revision will provide significant mechanisms in managing and researching Thailand wildlife resources. As of December 2006, the new revision was at the secretariat office of the Prime Minister office. The revised legislation is still there since the political change in Thailand on September 19, 2006. This new revision may need to wait until the new elected-government comes to office to make a decision. However, it should be further noted that the timelines described for Cabinet consideration and Parliament ruling from the up coming government can only be approximate. The approvals depend on other pending, unrelated legislation, and day to day business of Cabinet and Parliament.

2. Law Enforcement Activities

To comply with the Articles VIII and XIV of the Convention, as well as recommended in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13), Thailand by 3 Management Authorities, DoNP, Department of Agriculture, and Fisheries Department, has made significant progress in implementing CITES. Principle Laws such as Wild Reservation and Protection Act B.E. 2535 (1992) or WARPA and Plant Act (No. 2) B.E.2535 are implemented. Support Acts such as the Custom Act B.E. 2469 (1926), Pant Act (No. 2) B.E.2535, the Commercial Registration Act, B.E. 2499 (1956), the Animal Epidemics Act B.E. 2499 (1956), and Export and Import of Goods Act B.E. 2522(1979) are also applied to CITES implementation. Ministerial regulations have been applied; checking points are set up along the border with neighbouring countries, and at international sea and air ports. With efforts from these 3 Authorities, together with their partners from the Thai police, customs and relevant governmental organizations, as well as the support from Non-Governmental Organizations, the following activities were implemented.

2.1 CITES activities at the national level

- a) Thailand cracks down on illegal trade in CITES and endangered species. According to statistics from October 1, 2005 to September 31, 2006, DoNP, with cooperation from governmental counterparts (i.e., police, customs) and related non-governmental organization (i.e., TRAFFIC), intercepted 36 cases with confiscating 48 endangered species (3,241

animals) and parts or derivatives of 28 endangered species (734 animals). During 2005-2006, The Department of Agriculture confiscated 9 cases, with 7,181 plants/species (Orchid, Cycas, Cactus and Succulents combined) and Fisheries Department confiscated 39 cases. In 2006, The Customs Department seized 11 cases (1,623 individuals). This statistics do not include the cases operated by the Thai Police.

- b) In order to build capacity and strengthen cooperation on CITES enforcement by expanding networks among CITES authorities and related parties, the CITES Management Authorities has organized several trainings, seminars, and meetings at national level as follows:
- 3 CITES Management Authorities meetings on March 7, 2006, at DoNP
  - The Seminar on Law Enforcement on Thailand and CITES Wild fauna and Flora Species, February 19-21, 2006, Khao Yai National Park, Thailand (Funded by WildAid)
  - The Thai national network committee on ASEAN Wildlife Network Enforcement Network meeting on May 17, 2006, at Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE)
  - Laws and CITES Training on June 22-24, 2006, at Khao Yai Training Center, Khao Yai National Park
  - Introduction to CITES/Controlling Illegal Wildlife Trade Training Workshop on August 9 to 11, 2006, at International Laws Enforcement Academy (ILEA), Bangkok, funded by TRAFFIC
  - CITES Species Identification Training on August 21-23, 2006, at Chaum Training Center, Petchaburi Province
  - MIKE Training, August 8-12 and September 5-9, 2006 at MIKE sites, western Thailand
  - MIKE IT Training, July 17-21, 2006, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand
  - MIKE GIS Training, December 18-22, Forestry Lab, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- c) Network:
- To support the ASEAN Wildlife Law Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN), Thailand designated DoNP as the focal point of the network. The National Wildlife Law Network Committee was set up by MoNRE executive no.316/2548, dated August 29, 2005. The network consists of 22 organizations such as DoNP, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries Department, Thai Police, Thai Police, Custom Department, Air and Sea Port Authorities, Thai Airways International, Forestry Department, Department of Live Stock Development, Public Relations Department, Tourism Authority of Thailand.
  - As the lead country on the objective 2 of the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora (2005-2010) to promote networking among relevant law enforcement authorities in ASEAN countries to curb illegal trade in wild fauna and flora, Thailand set up the office of Programme Coordination Unit of ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network located at DoNP. This office will be the centre for information exchange and coordination of enforcement work in the region.
  - To improve communication by networking among related agencies, Thailand, by DoNP with support from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Department, organized National Interagency Training Workshop at ILEA as mentioned above. Participants attending the workshop were from various governmental (i.e., customs, police) and non-governmental organizations (i.e., TRAFFIC, WCS), including private sectors (i.e., Fed-ex) to learn about CITES. This Training Workshop provided the opportunity to improve communications among CITES and non-CITES agencies. Many cases on CITES recently intercepted in Thailand were the results from this network.
- d) To build up public awareness on CITES, especially among sellers, DoNP, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries Department, and Thai police organized a seminar on CITES issues at Chatuchak market in Bangkok on August 4, 2006. DoNP also set up the wildlife campaign project in December 2006. This project aims to build awareness on wildlife illegal trade. It will be conducted domestically (both local issues targets through mass media and printed

matters, i.e., signs, brochures, leaflets. Domestic airports, local markets, and hotels will be targeted for domestic public relations.

## 2.2 Activities at the international level

Many actions have been undertaken to promote regional or sub-regional coordination and cooperation in enforcement and implementation of CITES. These are listed below:

- a) To implement CITES, the repatriation of orangutans was conducted under ASEAN-WEN. Several meetings between the representatives from Thailand and Indonesia were conducted.
- b) Many cases of communication between 3 CITES MA of Thailand and MA of CITES members, among the countries in the network, or between the networks, have been contacted, e.g., validate the permits, passing information on illegal cases.
- c) In order to enhance the cooperation on the conservation and trade with neighbouring countries, a possibility of exchange between officials working in the field of CITES was discussed, i.e., between Thailand and Lao, Thailand and Cambodia. Further discussion is needed to get funding support. These mutual visits are expected to start soon when funding is available.
- d) To strengthen the cooperation at the regional level, Thailand organized several international trainings, seminars, and meetings at national level as the following:
  - ASEAN Regional Law Enforcement Network, 17-21 October 2005, Khao Yai National Park, Thailand
  - The Special Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for the Implementation of CITES held on November 31 and 1 December 1, 2005, Bangkok
  - The repatriation of the orangutan meeting, on April 21-22, 2006, at Rama Gardens Hotel, Bangkok
  - International Executive Seminar on Implementing the ASEAN-WEN, May 22-25, 2006, Bangkok, Thailand.
- e) To improve communications, building capacity, and expand the network, Thailand sent CITES staff to attend international workshops, meetings, trainings and seminars as the following:
  - The second Mekong sub-regional CITES implementation and enforcement workshop, July 4-7, 2006, Kunming, Yunnan, China
  - CITES and Livelihoods Workshop, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, September 5-7, Cape Town, South Africa
  - The 54th Standing Committee meeting, on October 2-6, 2006, Geneva, Switzerland
  - The 3<sup>rd</sup> Australia Environmental Law Enforcement and Regulators Network (AELERT) annual meeting, November 22-24, 2006, Sydney, Australia
  - Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking (CAWT), November 20-21, London, England
  - CITES Law Enforcement Seminar: Learning from Each Other, November 21-23, 2006, Hong Kong
  - The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Experts Group on CITES, November 28-29, 2006, Manila, Philippines.

## 3. Illicit Trade in Tibetan Antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*)

- a) To protect Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*), which is the Appendix-I species, Thailand has made great efforts to combat with illegal trades on this species, especially its parts and derivative or Shahtoosh. On July 17, the staff from the CITES office in cooperation with the Thai police exercised this laws to the shatoosh case by seizing shatoosh shawls from a seller, which declared the goods as pashmina. Also, with the technical support from US fisheries and Wildlife, funding support from UDA Forest Service, and coordinating support from interested party (WildAid), the staff from the US lab was brought to Thailand during the first week of December 2006, to help identify the questionable shawl at the Veterinary Medicine lab of Mahidol University. One-day workshop on Shahtoosh identification was also organized on December 6, 2006. Sixty participants from CITES Management and Scientific Authority of

Thailand, Thai police from Natural Resources and Environment Crime Division, Customs, and other interested parties were attending the workshop. The case is now at the attorney office.

- b) With good cooperation between DoNP, as focal point of the network, the Thai police from Natural Resources and Environment Crime Division and the Customs, as well as the initiative on ASEAN-WEN, Thailand will continue through its effort to combat illegal commercial trade in Tibetan antelope products or specimens as recommended in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13).