

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

TIBETAN ANTELOPE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat and serves as the report of the Standing Committee to the Conference of the Parties.
2. As required in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) (*Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope*), the Standing Committee reviewed enforcement measures taken by Parties to eliminate illicit trade in Tibetan antelope products at its 57th and 58th meetings (Geneva, 14- 18 July 2008 and 6-10 July 2009). Documents SC57 Doc. 32 and SC58 Doc. 35 refer.
3. Trade in products made from the wool of the Tibetan antelope continues in several parts of the world, although there have been significant seizures in several cities. The Secretariat has noted that, in recent years, such products have increasingly been seen on sale in high-quality shopping malls in the Middle East. It is important, therefore, that Parties with hot climates do not regard themselves as being unlikely to have trade in these products, simply because the wool is usually processed into articles of warm clothing.
4. Reports from China in recent years suggest that populations of Tibetan antelope appear to be increasing, apparently as a result of successful anti-poaching work, but there is no room for complacency with regard to this species and the impact that illegal trade has upon it.
5. The Interpol Wildlife Crime Working Group has agreed to organize training for relevant countries to help combat illegal trade in products of Tibetan antelope and the Group has prepared a provisional course programme and has identified trainers. However, it has not been able to attract funding to convene such a course and potential donors are encouraged to support such an activity. It is suggested that any government or organization that may be in a position to help should contact the CITES Secretariat in the first instance.
6. Since illegal trade in specimens of Tibetan antelope first came to notice, well over a decade ago, the efforts of the law enforcement community have tended to focus on anti-poaching work and on retail outlets. There has, however, been little attention directed towards the wholesale part of the trade or, importantly, manufacturers. The Secretariat has noted in the past that much, if not almost all, such processing and manufacturing occur in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in India. It is aware that the courts of this State and the Government of India have examined this trade on several occasions. Courts have confirmed that the processing of Tibetan antelope wool is illegal, unless State authorities have licensed such activities. The Secretariat understands that no such licences have been granted.
7. The Secretariat is also not aware of any enforcement action having been taken against manufacturers or any prosecutions having been conducted against persons or company engaged in this aspect of the trade.
8. In its previous reports to the Conference of the Parties, the Secretariat has recommended that a greater focus be placed upon the illegal manufacture that occurs in Jammu and Kashmir. However, such recommendations have consistently been withdrawn by the Secretariat, in the expectation that the national authorities would take action.

9. The Secretariat believes the time has come to find ways to support the Government of India in reducing, and ultimately eliminating, manufacture of products of Tibetan antelope.

Recommendation

10. The Secretariat suggests that it undertake a mission, partly technical and partly political, to liaise with the central authorities of the Government of India and the authorities of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to study ways in which the international community can support efforts to halt this trade. Such a mission could, for example, gather intelligence to assist countries in intercepting shipments of raw and manufactured products as they enter and leave Jammu and Kashmir. Since the Secretariat has already conducted a technical mission to examine the poaching of the Tibetan antelope in China, this would seem a logical next step.
11. If the Conference of the Parties agrees with this suggestion, the Secretariat recommends that it adopt the draft decisions in the Annex to this document.

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Regarding illegal trade in specimens of the Tibetan antelope

Directed to the Secretariat

15.XX The Secretariat shall seek external funding to undertake a technical and political mission to India, to liaise with central government authorities and authorities of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, with a view to providing support in reducing, and ultimately eliminating, trade in specimens of the Tibetan antelope. The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee on the outcome of the mission.

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 15.XX The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the Secretariat and also consider:
- a) endorsing any relevant recommendation that could be implemented prior to the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; or
 - b) requesting the Secretariat to prepare a report for consideration at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.