

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



Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September - 5 October 2016

Species specific matters

Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

1. This document was prepared by the Secretariat and has been submitted by the Secretariat and the Standing Committee.

Introduction

2. In Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16), on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*, the Conference of the Parties instructs the Secretariat to:

report to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties on the status of Asian big cats in the wild, their conservation, and trade controls in place in Parties, using information provided by the range States on measures taken to comply with this Resolution and related relevant Decisions and any relevant additional information provided by relevant countries.

3. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 16.68 to 16.70 on *Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)*, as follows:

Directed to the Parties, especially Appendix-I Asian big cat range States

16.68 *All Parties, particularly Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, are encouraged to:*

- a) *support the activities to be conducted in compliance with Decision 16.70, paragraph c), to enable the Secretariat to prepare a report with findings and recommendations, including reporting on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) (Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species), at the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee; and*
- b) *provide information on incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in all Asian big cat species, including their parts and derivatives, which will enable the compilation of a report for the law enforcement community, in compliance with Decision 16.70, paragraph d).*

Directed to the Standing Committee

16.69 *The Standing Committee shall review the conservation of and trade in Appendix-I Asian big cat species at its 65th and 66th meetings, and determine any actions deemed necessary to combat illegal trade in Asian big cats.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

Directs to the Secretariat

16.70 *The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funds, in cooperation with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime and, as appropriate, other experts and organizations:*

- a) *arrange national seminars in Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, involving all relevant enforcement agencies, to promote a multi-disciplinary approach that will facilitate improved coordination and cooperation in the detection, investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime offences;*
- b) *develop a leaflet containing simple illustrations and guidance, to increase awareness of illegal trade in Asian big cats and the endangered status of the species amongst front-line law enforcement staff and border control staff;*
- c) *in consultation with Appendix-I Asian big cat range and consumer States, conduct a review of implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) in relation to all Asian big cats and prepare a report providing its findings and recommendations for the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee; and*
- d) *gather information on incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in all Asian big cats since the beginning of 2010, undertake an analysis of the information, and prepare a report for the law enforcement community to be circulated in a restricted fashion to relevant enforcement agencies and range States.*

4. At its 14th meeting (CoP14, the Hague, 2007), the Conference adopted Decision 14.69 on *Asian big cats*, which remains in effect, as follows:

Directed to Parties

14.69 *Parties with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale shall implement measures to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers; tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives.*

5. As directed by the Conference of the Parties in Decision 16.69, the Standing Committee reviewed the conservation of and trade in Appendix-I Asian big cat species at its 65th and 66th meetings (SC65, Geneva, July 2014; SC66, Geneva, January 2016), and agreed a number of recommendations. The Committee also agreed on a number of draft decisions for consideration by the Conference of the Parties. (See paragraph 12 below.)

Review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16)
[Decisions 16.68, paragraph a), and 16.70, paragraph c]

6. On 27 August 2013, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2013/037, inviting Parties, in particular Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, in accordance with the provisions of Decision 16.68, paragraph a), to report on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16). The Secretariat also prepared a questionnaire to assist Parties in compiling their reports, and to provide a standard approach, which was made available as an Annex to the Notification. In response to the Notification, reports were received from China, Pakistan, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Viet Nam. The European Commission, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, submitted a compilation of data on seizures of tiger products derived from the EU-TWIX database, in Excel spreadsheet format, together with a short analysis of those data.

7. In support of the implementation of Decision 16.70, paragraph c), and through generous funding support from the European Union, the Secretariat hired a consultant to conduct a review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) in relation to all Asian big cats. The Secretariat provided to the consultant the reports received from Parties, and the compilation on seizures of tiger products received from the European Commission, for the purposes of the review. At the request of the Secretariat, the consultant engaged directly with the CITES Management Authorities of Appendix-I Asian big cat range States that had not provided a report, and invited them to provide reports containing the information requested in the questionnaire prepared by the Secretariat. In response, the consultant received reports from Cambodia, Malaysia and Nepal, which were subsequently forwarded to the Secretariat. The

consultant reviewed the reports received, consulted with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), other experts and organizations, and prepared a report. This was made available to the Standing Committee at SC65 as Annex 1 to document SC65 Doc 38, in English only. The executive summary of the report was made available in English, French and Spanish.

8. The Secretariat summarized the key findings of the review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) in document SC65 Doc.38, in paragraph 6) i) to xv), which indicated that:
 - a significant number of Asian big cat seizures had occurred since 2010, with 62 animals seized in the 10-year period from 2000 to 2009, compared to 61 animals seized in the three year period from 2010 to 2012;
 - 74 percent of the tiger specimens that were confiscated in South-East Asia were confiscated in three countries – the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam, which raised concerns about the source of tigers in illegal trade, considering the presence of tiger breeding facilities in these countries and the fact that they have small numbers of wild tigers;
 - significant illegal wildlife markets are alleged to exist in Myanmar, near its borders with China and Thailand;
 - seven border towns in China, India and Nepal are reported to be primary sources of illegal trade in Asian big cats; and
 - out of 28 Asian big cat range States assessed under the CITES National Legislation Project, more than half still require legislative improvements, and only 11 of these States are in Category 1 under the CITES National Legislation Project.
9. The Standing Committee, at SC65, adopted a number of recommendations on Asian big cats and requested the Secretariat to communicate them in a Notification to the Parties. A consolidated version of the Committee’s recommendations were subsequently made available to Parties in Notification to the Parties No. 2015/006, of 30 January 2015.
10. Also at SC65, the Committee established an intersessional Working Group on Asian Big Cats, with China as its Chair and with the following membership: India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Viet Nam, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Asiatic, Born Free Foundation, Environmental Investigation Agency, Elephant Action League, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Panthera, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wildlife Protection Society of India and WWF. The mandate of the Working Group was to identify outstanding issues of concern, assess implementation of recommendations adopted at SC65, and of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) and related Decisions, and to make recommendations for further action at SC66.
11. As part of the implementation of its mandate, the Working Group, with the assistance of the Secretariat prepared a questionnaire in relation to SC65 recommendations f) to n). The questionnaire was made available to Parties as Annex 1 to Notification to the Parties No. 2015/006, and Parties were requested to report on their implementation of these recommendations, preferably using the questionnaire to facilitate a standardized approach to reporting. The Secretariat received reports from China, Greece, India, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Slovakia, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam. These reports were subsequently submitted to the Chair of the Working Group on Asian big cats for review by the Working Group in accordance with its mandate.
12. Despite several rounds of discussion, there remained matters over which the intersessional Working Group on Asian Big Cats, despite its best efforts, was unable to find agreement and, at SC66, the Standing Committee agreed to reconvene the Working Group on Asian big cats in-session. Following further in-session deliberations, the Working Group agreed and presented at SC66 a number of recommendations and draft decisions for consideration at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Committee adopted a set of recommendations, and agreed to submit to the present meeting the draft decisions 17.A to 17.K, as presented in Annex 1 to the present document, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties.

Incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in all Asian big cats
[Decision 16.68 paragraph b) and Decision 16.70 paragraph d)]

13. Operation Protection of Asian Wildlife Species II (Operation PAWS II), a transnational intelligence-led operation initiated by INTERPOL, was implemented between April and May 2015, and targeted wildlife crime and criminals across Asia. Seventeen Parties (Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russian

Federation, Singapore, Thailand, the United States of America and Viet Nam), took part in the Operation. In light of Operation PAWS II, the Secretariat worked closely with INTERPOL on the implementation of Decision 16.68, paragraph b), and Decision 16.70, paragraph d). On 16 January 2015, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2015/002, inviting all Parties to provide information on incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in all Asian big cat species, including their parts and derivatives, using INTERPOL's Ecomessage form, or alternatively an Excel spreadsheet that was made available to Parties in an Annex to the Notification. The Secretariat requested Parties to submit completed Ecomessage forms or Excel spreadsheets through their INTERPOL National Central Bureaus (NCBs) to the INTERPOL Environmental Security Sub-Directorate in Lyon, France.

14. In response to the Notification, INTERPOL received reports from Armenia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Latvia, Malta, Slovakia, Thailand and the European Union. It should however be mentioned that only two Asian big cat range States responded to the Notification, and that five of the Parties that responded reported that no incidents involving illegal Asian big cat specimens had occurred within their territory since 2010. In the light of the limited number of responses received, the preparation of a report for the law-enforcement community as anticipated in Decision 16.70, paragraph d), was not possible. INTERPOL did however share the information received with law-enforcement agencies of relevant Parties as appropriate, and included it in Operation PAWS II.
15. A summary of Operation PAWS II is presented in document SC66 Doc. 44.1, and the full Operation PAWS II report was made available, in English only, as Annex 3 to that document. Operation PAWS II is an excellent example of a coordinated law enforcement effort with the common objective of identifying, disrupting and dismantling the organized criminal groups behind wildlife trafficking.

The Secretariat believes that Operation PAWS II to a large extent addressed Decision 16.68, paragraph b), and Decision 16.70, paragraph d). The activities further undertaken through the Strategic Planning Workshop on Tiger Crime in Singapore, as described in paragraph 19 of the present document and in document SC66 Doc. Inf.10, complemented what had been done as part of Operation PAWS II. The Secretariat believes that what was anticipated by Decision 16.68, paragraph b), and Decision 16.70, paragraph d), has been achieved, that these Decisions have been implemented, and that it can be deleted.

Improved coordination and cooperation [Decision 16.70, paragraph a)]

16. The Secretariat has implemented Decision 16.70, paragraph a), as part of its ongoing activities during relevant events, and through the work of its partners in ICCWC. The Secretariat has taken the opportunity to participate in regional meetings related to Asian big cats, to draw attention to the threat that wildlife crime poses to Asian big cats, and to promote a multi-disciplinary approach that will facilitate improved coordination and cooperation in the detection, investigation and prosecution of wildlife crimes, as outlined in paragraphs 17 to 20 of document SC65 Doc. 38, and paragraphs 7 to 9 of document SC66 Doc. 44.1. The Secretariat wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the funding support provided by Australia, China including Hong Kong SAR, and the European Union, which enabled it to participate in these events.
17. Given that Asian big cats include seven species distributed in 31 range States, the Secretariat at SC65 reported that it would focus its efforts in the context of Decision 16.70, paragraph a), on China, India, Nepal, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, being all the Parties identified as key countries affected by illegal trade in Asian big cat specimens in the report on implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16), described in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the present document.
18. At the request of the Secretariat, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) included a session on Asian big cats in the Anti-Smuggling Training Courses for border officers it hosted in Lao Cai, Lao Cai Province, Viet Nam, from 17 to 21 November 2014, and in Mong Cai, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam, from 24 to 28 November 2014. During these sessions, the following topics were presented to participants: poaching and illegal trade in Asian big cats; *modus operandi*; key areas affected by illegal trade in Asian big cat specimens; the need for intelligence-led investigations; cooperation at national and international levels; questioning of wildlife smugglers; controlled deliveries; the CITES Virtual College; and the CITES species database.
19. The Secretariat, through generous funding support from the European Union, provided co-funding to INTERPOL to support the convening of a Strategic Planning Workshop on Tiger Crime in Singapore, from 19 to 20 November 2015, as part of the INTERPOL Project Predator Tiger Crime Initiative. The purpose of the workshop was fully aligned with Decision 16.70, paragraph a), and promoted multi-disciplinary law

enforcement approaches that will facilitate improved coordination and cooperation in the detection, investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime, in particular illegal trade in tigers. The Parties identified as key countries affected by illegal trade in Asian big cat specimens in the report on implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16), described in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the present document, were invited to the workshop. It was attended by 23 senior law enforcement officials from the following 10 tiger range States: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam, and by representatives from the CITES Secretariat, the New Global Tiger Initiative Council, TRAFFIC, Panthera, the Environmental Investigation Agency, the Wildlife Protection Society of India, the Global Tiger Forum and Freeland Foundation.

20. The activities conducted during Operation PAWS II, described in paragraphs 13 to 15 of the present document, also contributed to the implementation of Decision 16.70, paragraph a). The Secretariat believes that this Decision has been implemented and that it can be deleted.

Leaflet to increase awareness of illegal trade in Asian big cats [Decision 16.70, paragraph b)]

21. At SC66, the Secretariat reported that it had signed an agreement with the Environmental Investigation Agency, to develop and produce capacity-building material to increase awareness of illegal trade in Asian big cats and the endangered status of the species among front-line law enforcement and border control staff. The material will include information on population status of Asian big cats, a photograph and description of each species, physical characteristics, common end uses of Asian big cat parts and derivatives, simple advice and guidelines for combating illegal trade in Asian big cat specimens and references to useful sources of information such as mobile apps for species identification. The material will be in the form of durable double sided, matt laminated metal-ring binders, and will be produced in Chinese and English. It is expected to be ready by August 2016, and will be distributed by the Secretariat to key countries, drawing upon the support of its ICCWC partners and other relevant agencies as appropriate. The Secretariat will provide a further update on this work at CoP17, and considers that Decision 16.70, paragraph b), has been implemented and that it can be deleted.

Intensive breeding operations of tigers on a commercial scale [Decision 14.69]

22. Since its adoption at CoP14, the implementation of Decision 14.69 and the issue of restricting both internal and international trade in Asian big cat specimens has generated considerable debate, as explained in detail in document SC66 Doc. 44.1, paragraphs 26 to 35.
23. Trafficking in Asian big cat specimens continues to be detected, and there is a need to strengthen enforcement efforts to combat it, including preventing specimens from Asian big cat captive-breeding facilities from entering illegal international trade. At CoP15, the Secretariat reported that intelligence suggested that tigers, or their parts and derivatives, were increasingly entering illegal commercial trade from captive-breeding facilities. The findings of the review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16), as presented at SC65 and highlighted in document SC65 Doc. 38, further supported what was reported at CoP15. The Secretariat in document CoP15 Doc. 43.1 reported that captive breeding of tigers was occurring in several range States, and that many captive-breeding facilities appeared to be owned and operated in a manner that would not seem to align with the goals expressed in Decision 14.69. Further to this, information provided by some Working Group members during the deliberations of the SC65 Working Group on Asian Big Cats, suggested that there were large numbers of tigers in captive-breeding facilities in some countries. The maintenance of such large numbers of animals would result in significant expenses for running these facilities, and it was unclear how this would be financially viable if it were being undertaken only for the purpose of conserving wild tigers. This may indicate that not all Parties are implementing Decision 14.69.
24. Information received continues to suggest that tiger specimens are entering illegal commercial trade from captive-breeding facilities and that the issue is of a long-term, rather than short-term nature. The Secretariat therefore believes that it would be appropriate to include the text of Decision 14.69 in Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16). However, Decision 14.69 aims to address domestic trade issues and provides no clarity on how it should be interpreted and reconciled with Article VII, paragraph 4, of the Convention. In its document prepared for SC66, the Secretariat observed that, in both the SC65 Working Group on Asian Big Cats and the Committee itself, opinions remained deeply divided on the implementation of Decision 14.69. This has resulted in a lack of clarity about the best way forward, which would benefit from further deliberation.
25. It should also be noted that there are some differences in the language used in Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) and Decision 14.69, as follows:

Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) urges:

- b) *all Parties seeking to improve their legislation prohibiting international commercial trade in specimens of tiger and other Asian big cat species, and products labelled as, or claiming to contain, their parts and derivatives, to adopt such legislation, to include penalties adequate to deter illegal trade and to consider introducing national measures to facilitate implementation of CITES, such as voluntarily prohibiting internal trade in such parts, derivatives and products, as provided for in Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP16);*
- g) *those Parties and non-Parties on whose territories tigers and other Asian big cat species are bred in captivity to ensure that adequate management practices and controls are in place to prevent parts and derivatives from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities;*

Decision 14.69 states that:

14.69 Parties with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale shall implement measures to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers; tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives.

- 26. The Secretariat believes that the differences in approach detailed above need to be reconciled to provide clarity about the Convention's approach to breeding tigers in captivity. Under agenda item 32 on *Implementation of the Convention relating to captive-bred and ranched specimens*, the Standing Committee is proposing to the Conference of the Parties that a decision be adopted to review ambiguities and inconsistencies in the application of Article VII, paragraphs 4 and 5, and associated Resolutions. The Secretariat suggests that the question of Decision 14.69, be considered in that review.
- 27. The Secretariat believes that some amendments to the draft decisions agreed by the Standing Committee could make their intent clearer. The Secretariat has therefore prepared revised versions of draft decisions 17.A to 17.K agreed by the Standing Committee at SC66. These draft decisions are presented in Annex 1 to the present document. The Annex also includes draft decision 17.L proposed by the Secretariat, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties.
- 28. Draft decisions 17.G, H and K will have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat, and are subject to the provision of external funds. Supervision of the work will require some time from the Secretariat, but should be a core part of the Secretariat's work and accommodated within its regular work programme. The recommended draft decisions 17.D, E, and F will have workload implications for the Standing Committee, which could be accommodated within the Committee's regular work. A working group might be needed.

Recommendations

- 29. The Conference of the Parties is invited to agree to the deletion of Decisions 16.68 to 16.70, as they have been implemented, and to adopt the draft decisions agreed by the Standing Committee at SC66, and draft decision 17.L proposed by the Secretariat, as presented in Annex 1 to the present document.

Draft decisions on Asian big cats

(changes proposed by the Secretariat to the versions agreed by the Standing Committee at its 66th meeting are shown in strikethrough [deleted text] or underlined [proposed new text])

The Conference of the Parties is invited to adopt the draft decisions as follows:

Directed to the Parties

- 17.A All Parties identified as being of concern in Decision 17.H are invited to welcome a mission from the Secretariat to visit facilities keeping tigers in captivity ~~such facilities~~.

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

- 17.B Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide financial and technical support to Parties requesting additional capacity and resources to ~~effectively~~ implement Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) effectively. Parties are also encouraged to implement the relevant recommendations ~~attempting to address the issue of resources~~ from relevant international forums and tools, including but not limited to the Zero Poaching Symposium outcomes and Zero Poaching toolkit and the relevant Global Tiger Initiative/Global Tiger Forum GTI/GTF processes addressing resources that are needed to combat poaching, trafficking and illegal trade.

Directed to all Parties with Asian big cat captive facilities

- 17.C All Parties in whose territory there are ~~with Asian big cat captive facilities~~ keeping Asian big cats in captivity are requested to:
- review national management practices and controls that are in place for ~~Asian big cat captive~~ such facilities, to ensure that these management practices and controls are adequate to prevent Asian big cat specimens from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities;
 - ensure strict application of all management practices and controls implemented to regulate the activities of facilities that keep Asian big cats in captivity ~~captive facilities~~, including with regard to the disposal of specimens from Asian big cats that die in captivity; and
 - report to the Secretariat on progress with regard to the implementation of this Decision.

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 17.D The Standing Committee shall review the report and recommendations of the Secretariat concerning the implementation of Decisions 17.C 17.G, 17.H and 17.K ~~at its 69th and 70th meetings~~ and determine whether any further time-bound, country specific actions are necessary to ensure implementation of these Decisions ~~Decision 17.H~~.

~~Directed to the Standing Committee~~

- ~~17.E The Standing Committee shall review the report and recommendations of the Secretariat concerning the implementation of Decision 17.I at its 69th and 70th meeting and determine whether any further time-bound, country specific actions are necessary to ensure implementation of Decision 17.I.~~

Directed to the Standing Committee

~~17.F~~ The Standing Committee shall review the report and recommendations of the Secretariat concerning the implementation of Decision 17.C at its 69th and 70th meeting and determine whether any further specific time-bound actions are necessary to ensure implementation of Decision 17.C.

Directed to the Secretariat

17.G Subject to external funds, the Secretariat shall:

- a) in consultation with range and consumer States, and in cooperation with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and, as appropriate, other experts and organizations, continue the review of implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) and associated Decisions and prepare a report ~~providing its findings and recommendations for the 69th and 70th meeting of the Standing Committee~~, in consideration of:
 - i) legislative and regulatory measures;
 - ii) national law enforcement;
 - iii) demand reduction, education and awareness;
 - iv) prevention of illegal trade in parts and derivatives from facilities for keeping Asian big cats in captivity ~~captive facilities~~; and
 - v) management of national and privately-held stocks of parts and derivatives.;
- ~~b) report to the 69th and 70th meeting of the Standing Committee on progress with regard to the implementation of this Decision and, on the basis of the report, formulate recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.~~

Directed to the Secretariat

17.H Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) conduct a review of the number of facilities keeping tigers in captivity ~~Asian big cat captive facilities~~ in the territories of Parties and the number of tigers ~~Asian big cats~~ kept in these facilities;
- b) liaise with ICWC and other partners, as appropriate, to review legal and illegal trade in tigers ~~Asian big cats~~ from or through such facilities, identifying those which may be of concern; and
- c) undertake a mission to those Parties in whose territories there are ~~with~~ facilities of concern with the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the operations and activities undertaken by them.

Directed to the Secretariat

~~17.I~~ The Secretariat shall report on the implementation of the Decisions 17.H to the Standing Committee, with recommendations as necessary.

~~**Directed to the Secretariat**~~

~~17.J~~ The Secretariat shall report at the 69th and 70th meeting of the Standing Committee on progress with regard to the implementation of Decision 17.C.

Directed to the Secretariat

17.K Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) ~~work with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) partner organizations, in particular INTERPOL, to further build upon the work already conducted through initiatives such as Operation PAWS II, by supporting key Parties affected by trafficking in Asian big cat specimens, to initiate, plan and carry out joint intelligence-driven national and transnational investigations, to disrupt and dismantle the criminal groups involved in trafficking in Asian big cat specimens.~~
- b) ~~report at the 69th and 70th meetings of the Standing Committee on progress with regard to the implementation of this Decision.~~

17.L The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee on progress with regard to the implementation of Decisions 17.C 17.G, 17.H and 17.K, and on the basis of the report, formulate recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.