

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

TIBETAN ANTELOPE (*PANTHOLOPS HODGSONII*):
ENFORCEMENT MEASURES

1. This document is submitted by the Standing Committee.*
2. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 16.93 and 16.94 on "*Tibetan antelope* (*Pantholops hodgsonii*)", as follows:

Directed to the Parties

16.93 *All Parties should immediately bring every seizure of illegal Tibetan antelope wool and its products made within its territory to the attention of authorities in countries of origin, transit and destination, as applicable, and to the attention of the Secretariat. Information on the seizure should be accompanied by available associated information, to enable follow-up investigations to take place. The progress of follow-up investigations should also be reported to the Secretariat.*

Directed to the Secretariat

16.94 *The Secretariat shall report information on seizures made and on the progress of investigations referred to in Decision 16.93 at the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee.*

3. As required by Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope*, paragraph b), under 'DIRECTS', the Standing Committee at its 65th and 66th meetings (SC65, Geneva, July 2014; SC66, Geneva, January 2016) reviewed the enforcement measures taken by Parties to eliminate illegal trade in Tibetan antelope products [see documents [SC65 Doc. 41 \(Rev.1\)](#) and [SC66 Doc. 56](#)].
4. To facilitate the reporting of the Secretariat to the Standing Committee, it issued Notifications to the Parties [No. 2013/060](#) of 18 December 2013 and [No. 2015/042](#) of 30 July 2015, inviting Parties to report on any seizures of illegally traded Tibetan antelope wool and products made and on the progress of investigations referred to in Decision 16.93.
5. At SC65, the Secretariat reported to the Committee that the CITES Management Authority of China had informed the Secretariat in August 2013 that it had conducted field studies in Qinghai and Tibet on the poaching of and illegal trade in Tibetan antelope, together with representatives of the Chinese Customs authorities and the forest police. The Management Authority of China reported to the Secretariat that the results of these field studies indicated that no poaching or smuggling of Tibetan antelope had occurred in that area in the previous year, and that the wild population of Tibetan antelope appeared to have increased since the 1990s.

* *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.*

6. At SC65, the Secretariat also informed the Committee that Switzerland had reported that trade in shawls containing shahtoosh fibres presented a problem in Europe, but that the nature of this trade had changed in a significant way from what had historically been detected. Switzerland reported that the shahtoosh shawls seized recently came in different colours, with and without embroidery, and in sizes different from the more common measurement of about 100cm x 200cm seen in the past. In addition, the Management Authority of Switzerland highlighted that these shawls contained a high percentage of cashmere fibres along with shahtoosh fibres, and that this was reflected in the price at which they were offered.
7. At SC66, the Secretariat informed the Committee that Switzerland had continued to detect shahtoosh shawls of modern design and reduced purity, which could change the consumer base by making shawls available to a wider range of consumers at lower prices. The Committee was further informed that information provided by Switzerland suggested that such shawls were being imported by other European countries, and that India was the primary country of origin of the seized shawls. The fact that three large seizures had been made at stores in Switzerland gave reason for concern. It was highlighted that Switzerland had shared information regarding the illegal trade in shahtoosh shawls with other INTERPOL member States at an INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group meeting held in Singapore in November 2015, with the aim of strengthening enforcement cooperation between range, transit and destination countries. Switzerland invited Parties affected by illegal trade in shahtoosh shawls to liaise with its Management Authority for support, in particular with regard to identification methods and exchange of information and knowledge about this topic.
8. The Standing Committee at SC66 requested India, as the primary country of origin of illegal shahtoosh shawls, to report to the Secretariat by 1 March 2016 on the results of any follow-up investigations that had been conducted, based on information received from Switzerland. The Committee further requested Germany, India and Italy to review their implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13), taking into consideration the trends newly identified by Switzerland.
9. At the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), it was agreed that the possible deletion of paragraph b) under DIRECTS in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) should be reconsidered by the Standing Committee. In the light of the reports provided at SC65 and SC66, the Committee recommends that paragraph b), under 'DIRECTS', of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) be maintained. The Committee further recommends that Decision 16.93 be included in the Resolution.

Recommendations

10. The Standing Committee recommends that the Conference of the Parties:
 - a) note this document;
 - b) maintain paragraph b), under 'DIRECTS', of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13); and
 - c) include Decision 16.93 in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13).

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopts the recommendations of the Standing Committee in paragraph 10 of the present document. Regarding recommendation c) in paragraph 10, it should be noted that this matter is also addressed in Annex 2 to document CoP17 Doc. 35.1 on *Review of reporting requirements*, and, as indicated in that document, the Secretariat proposes that the text of Decision 16.93 be included in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) under URGES, as subparagraph c).
- B. As explained in paragraph 8 of the present document, the Standing Committee requested India to report to the Secretariat by 1 March 2016 on the results of any follow-up investigations conducted on the basis of information received from Switzerland. At the time of writing (April 2016), the Secretariat had not yet received the requested report from India. Given that India is the primary country of origin of illegal shahtoosh shawls currently being detected, the Secretariat proposes the following draft decision for consideration by the Conference of the Parties:

Directed to India and other Parties concerned by the illegal trade in specimens of Tibetan antelope

17.AA. India, is invited to:

- a) review its implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) on *Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope*, taking into consideration the new trends in the illegal trade in shahtoosh shawls identified and presented at SC65 and SC66; to initiate or enhance investigations to determine the source of illegally traded Tibetan antelope specimens; and to initiate collaboration with Parties concerned by the illegal trade in such specimens or where relevant expertise exists, particularly Switzerland; and
- b) report to the Standing Committee at its 69th meeting on activities conducted to implement this Decision, and the outcomes of its enforcement actions.

17.BB All Parties concerned by the illegal trade in specimens of Tibetan antelope are encouraged to draw upon the offer of support from the CITES Management Authority of Switzerland, in particular with regard to identification methods and exchange of information and knowledge about this topic.

- C. Since SC66, the Secretariat has received additional information concerning illegal trade in shahtoosh shawls from Germany and Switzerland. Germany reported that, following a check of luggage at the German-Swiss border, a number of shahtoosh shawls were seized from a German national by Swiss authorities. Swiss authorities immediately informed their counterparts in Germany, who initiated a follow-up investigation. A house search was conducted in Germany, but no further shawls were found. The case in Germany has been finalized and the offender was ordered to pay a fine.
- D. Switzerland has reported that, since 2013, it has intensified its inspections, and that this has resulted in a rise in the number of confiscations of shahtoosh shawls. It further reported that border officials at key entry points have been trained in the identification of shahtoosh fibres and shawls, and that this has contributed to the increase in seizures. The following data on seizures of shahtoosh shawls were provided by Switzerland:

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016 (until 20 April)
Number of shawls	22	29	201	10
Number of cases	11	9	31	7

- E. As reported by the Standing Committee in the present document, Switzerland shared information regarding the illegal trade in shahtoosh at the INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group (WCWG) meeting in Singapore in November 2015. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a WCWG intersessional project that will bring together experts, as well as enforcement officers, from countries identified as affected by this illegal trade, to share information, knowledge and intelligence, and to build a network in order to better combat this illegal trade in the future.
- F. The tasks allocated to the Secretariat in the proposal to include the text of Decision 16.93 in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13) can be accommodated within the regular work programme of the Secretariat. The Secretariat believes that the work allocated to the Standing Committee in draft decision 17.AA b) can be accommodated within the regular work programme of the Committee.
- G. As paragraph 10 of the present document recommends the inclusion of the text of Decision 16.93 in Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP13), and as Decision 16.94 has been implemented, the Secretariat recommends that Decisions 16.93 and 16.94 be deleted.