



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2008/059

Geneva, 8 October 2008

CONCERNING:

Tiger-breeding operations

1. At its 14th meeting (CoP14, The Hague, 2007), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 14.69 as follows:

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.

2. This matter was raised at the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, 2008), at which time the Committee called for relevant Parties to submit reports on the subject, which could be reviewed at its 58th meeting. The Secretariat was asked to distribute a Notification to the Parties to provide guidance in determining: to which Parties the Decision applied; how such Parties might report; and the issues to be covered in such reports. The Standing Committee convened a working group to assist the Secretariat in drafting its Notification to the Parties. The working group consisted of China, India, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the European Union), the United States of America, IUCN, Species Management Specialists, WWF (on behalf of the International Tiger Coalition) and the Secretariat. The Secretariat has drawn upon input from working group members in preparing this Notification. It should not, however, be seen as reflecting a consensus on the part of the group.
3. The annex to this Notification contains information and observations that Parties may find of assistance in determining their response, if any, to Decision 14.69.
4. Parties that have tiger-breeding operations and have any doubts as to whether the Decision applies to them, are encouraged to submit a report describing such operations for consideration by the Standing Committee. This will enable the Committee to exclude from its review any non-relevant operations.
5. The Secretariat requests that the Parties concerned submit reports by 28 February 2009, so that these may be published on the CITES website and distributed to Standing Committee members.

Matters relating to Decision 14.69

In determining whether Decision 14.69 is applicable to them, Parties are invited to consider the following guidance in relation to the terms used in the Decision:

- “trade”, in the opinion of the Secretariat, may be regarded for the purposes of this Decision as referring to both domestic and international trade*;
- “intensive operations” may be regarded as operations focused exclusively or primarily on the frequent production of tigers;
- “commercial scale” may be regarded as a level of production that enables a breeding operation, or is intended to enable it, to derive a substantial proportion of its revenue from the production of tigers, including, but not limited to, sale of parts and derivatives; and
- “a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers” may be regarded as a level determined solely by the objective of contributing to the long-term conservation of the species in the wild, having regard to the need to preserve the genetic diversity of existing subspecies and populations.

Parties seeking to implement Decision 14.69 may find the IUCN Guidelines for the Placement of Confiscated Animals (English only), prepared by the IUCN/SSC Re-introduction Specialist Group, of use. These are available at the following URL:

<http://www.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2002-004.pdf>

Such Parties are also encouraged to take the following issues into account during implementation and reporting:

- a) the establishment of a national individual animal registration process, incorporating a marking system using, for example, microchips or DNA profiling;
- b) the segregation of sexes to prevent further breeding;
- c) the development of a strategic plan, incorporating deadlines, for the phasing-out of intensive breeding operations on a commercial scale or their conversion to operations devoted solely to the conservation of tigers; and
- d) the development of a policy with regard to what will happen to tigers currently in intensive breeding operations.

* It should be noted that, although the word ‘trade’ is defined in Article I, paragraph (c), of the Convention as meaning “export, re-export, import and introduction from the sea”, the opinion of the Secretariat presented in this Notification reflects its understanding of the intention of the Parties when Decision 14.69 was adopted at CoP14.