



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2023/127

Geneva, 21 November 2023

CONCERNING:

APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XIII IN THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Recommendation to suspend trade for commercial purposes
with the Lao People's Democratic Republic
in specimens of all CITES-listed species and other recommendations

1. At its 77th meeting (SC77, Geneva, November 2023), pursuant to Article XIII of the Convention, the Standing Committee agreed that Parties suspend trade for commercial purposes with the Lao People's Democratic Republic in specimens of all CITES-listed species until the Lao People's Democratic Republic has substantially achieved the recommendations set out in the Annex to this Notification.
2. The recommendations concern actions regarding national legislation for the implementation of CITES; training of national CITES Authorities; law enforcement; monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade; and trade in live Asian elephants.
3. The Committee requested the Lao People's Democratic Republic to submit a report on the implementation of the above recommendations to the Secretariat 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee.
4. Parties are requested to inform their enforcement and customs authorities of this recommendation to suspend trade and exercise due diligence to avoid the inadvertent acceptance of specimens of species subject to such a recommendation. Parties are reminded that the complete list of Parties subject to a recommendation to suspend trade is available on the CITES website under [Documents/Trade suspensions](#).
5. This Notification replaces Notification to the Parties No. 2022/030 of 12 May 2022.

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

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SC77 RECOMMENDATIONS
[SEE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SC77 SUM. 6 (REV. 1)]

The Committee recommended that Parties suspend trade with the Lao People's Democratic Republic in specimens of all CITES-listed species for commercial purposes until the Lao People's Democratic Republic has substantially achieved the following recommendations:

Regarding national legislation for the implementation of CITES

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- a) revise and enact the Decree for the implementation of CITES;
- b) finalize the ongoing revision of the Wildlife and Aquatic Law to close the gaps in the CITES national legislation for the implementation of the Convention and to ensure that it meets the CITES minimum requirements as set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for implementation of the Convention* and can be placed in Category 1 under the CITES National Legislation Project;

Regarding CITES Authorities

- c) The Lao People's Democratic Republic should continue to address the need for strengthening capacity and training of staff of the CITES Management and Scientific Authority of the Lao People's Democratic Republic with the support of the CITES Secretariat and take measures to improve the collaboration between national CITES authorities *inter alia* by developing a standard operating procedure for the two authorities; finalizing the development of the national CITES permit database; and organizing regular training for the staff of the CITES Scientific Authority;

Regarding law enforcement

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- d) investigate and prosecute cases involving organized or transboundary illegal trade activities, such as those identified by various international partners; and provide to the Secretariat the results (including arrests) of any investigations conducted by competent national authorities and the results of any legal proceedings against alleged perpetrators, in the annual illegal trade report format;
- e) continue to work with the law enforcement agencies from China, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, including the context of the Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other relevant networks to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices with the objective of improving the mechanisms for justice and police cooperation on the issues of trade and transiting of illegally acquired wildlife and illegal wildlife tourism; and
- f) report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Wildlife and Forest Crime Toolkit of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), and request support from ICWC to conduct a follow-up implementation of the ICWC indicator framework for wildlife and forest crime, to monitor performance over time and to identify areas for improvement.

Regarding monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade

Based on reporting from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the findings and observations contained in document SC77 Doc. 41.2 on *Asian big cats in captivity*, the Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- g) complete the full audit of the tigers kept in captivity, including the analyses of the collection of DNA samples and photos to assist with identification of individual specimens;
- h) identify any pure specimens of tigers referable to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage (also known as *Panthera tigris corbetti*) and encourage facilities to engage in coordinated conservation breeding of such animals, if identified;
- i) take measures to limit the number of tigers to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers by:
 - i) restricting the breeding of tigers in captivity (sterilizing, separating male and female specimens), except for specimens of tigers referable to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage (also known as *Panthera tigris corbetti*);
 - ii) not authorizing any further import of tiger live specimens, except for specimens of tigers referable to the mainland Southeast Asian lineage (also known as *Panthera tigris corbetti*) for conservation breeding purposes; and
 - iii) prohibiting the establishment of any new tiger facilities;
- j) implement stringent regulations for tiger husbandry standards to improve care and discourage expansion of captive-breeding facilities;
- k) develop standard operating procedures for inspections and disposal of dead tiger specimens (including destruction of carcasses after verification of the dead individual) and train officials to undertake inspections and monitor the disposal of carcasses;
- l) consider and implement relevant [outcomes of the Big Cat Task Force Meeting](#) with specific reference to section 2: *Strengthen regulation of facilities breeding big cats in captivity to prevent and detect any illegal trade from such facilities and deploy strengthened enforcement measures*;
- m) take measures to reduce the demand for tiger parts and derivatives through the implementation of campaigns and strategies taking into consideration the guidance in [Resolution Conf. 17.4 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* and the outcomes in section 3 of the [Big Cat Task Force outcomes document](#) (see document SC77 Doc. 41.2);
- n) establish an appropriate advisory committee or mechanism with involvement of the CITES Secretariat and other relevant organizations and partners to provide advice on the transformation of commercial tiger farms; and
- o) inspect the tiger captive-breeding facility that the Secretariat could not visit and report to the Secretariat.

Regarding trade in live Asian elephants

The Lao People's Democratic Republic should:

- p) take measures to ensure that no live Asian elephants are exported from the Lao People's Democratic Republic until the Lao People's Democratic Republic is able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretariat that specimens to be traded with source code C comply with the definition of captive-bred specimens set out in Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*; and
- q) take substantive steps to implement Decision 18.226, in particular by developing strategies to manage captive Asian elephant populations, by ensuring that trade is conducted in compliance with Article III for Asian elephants of wild origin and by strengthening its system for registration and marking of Asian elephants held in captivity in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The Committee noted that the Secretariat is investigating the issue of legal acquisition of founder stock for captive-breeding facilities for *Macaca fascicularis* in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and that it would report back to the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting and to the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

The Committee requested the Lao People's Democratic Republic not to issue export permits for *Dalbergia* spp. until it develops a non-detriment finding indicating that it would be sustainable to resume trade and submits a corresponding export quota.

The Committee requested the Lao People's Democratic Republic to submit a report on the implementation of the above recommendations to the Secretariat 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (5 November 2024) for the Secretariat to take into account in its report on the application of Article XIII in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the Standing Committee and its report under paragraph 2 a) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties.