

Progress Made by China in Implementation of Res. Conf.12.5

Submitted by CITES Management Authority of China

The following progresses have been made by China in implementation of Res. Conf.12.5 in 2007,

1. Take effective measures to strengthen the protection of Asian big cats.

- 1.1 Closely monitor the e-commerce in endangered species and explore the ways to manage the online wildlife auction and enforce the legislation. In recent years, the relevant departments work with NGOs such as IFAW and TRAFFIC to monitor the illegal online auction of endangered species on a regular basis and urge the internet auction houses to well manage those activities. When some of the CITES specimens common in trade is being sold on internet, it will be deleted automatic by the internet auction houses, others may be deleted manually by the internet auction houses when they are advised by the relevant departments or NGOs if those specimens are not common in trade. Once a large deal of CITES specimens is auctioned on internet, the seller will be investigated by the enforcement agencies with the assistance of the internet auction houses. At the beginning of 2007, 40 officials and experts from the relevant management and enforcement authorities as well as the major internet auction houses were invited by the CITES Management Authority and IFAW to attend a workshop to discuss the control of e-commerce in wildlife. Many issues were addressed and some conclusions were made at the workshop. Such activity was widely reported by many Chinese mediums.
- 1.2 Label the live specimens of Asian big cats kept in captivity to prevent the illegal live specimens from entering the legal breeding operations. Since the end of 2006, CITES Management Authority of China has been requested by the State Forestry Administration to work with other agencies to label all of those live specimens of Asian big cats raised in captivity with microchips. More than 2,000 live tigers and leopards have been labeled in China until 31 December 2007.
- 1.3 Enhance the control of trade in furs of big cat. The State Forestry Administration and the State Ethnic Affairs Committee jointly issued an notification on 29 September 2007 where it asked the relevant provincial government agencies to inventory, verify and register the furs and their products made from Asian big cats, label the legally obtained furs and their products, carry out campaign not to buy illegal big cat specimens, and strengthen the multi-agencies cooperation in wildlife enforcement.

It should be emphasized that this is an important policy taken by China after it promulgated its Wildlife Conservation Law in 1988 and prohibited its trade in tiger bone in 1993, which will make new contribution to the global tiger conservation.

2. Pay high attention to the wildlife enforcement to detect and combat the illegal trade in Asian big cats

It is always a priority to the Chinese forestry, police, Customs and other authorities to detect and combat the illicit trade in Asian big cats. As the CITES management authority, one of its responsibility is to coordinate and assist the relevant enforcement agencies to do their job better. By several years' efforts, we are happy to see that the illegal trade in Asian big cats has been well controlled and the open sale or display of the specimens of Asian big cats has been almost eliminated in China.

Since 2005, several seminars aimed at controlling of the illegal trade in endangered species in Tibet and its neighboring provinces have been held by the CITES Management Authority of China and other enforcement agencies. Those seminars have played an important role in raising the CITES awareness of the front-line enforcement officers, publicizing the challenges faced by the Asian big cats and promoting the local wildlife enforcement. As a result of those efforts, the illegal trade in Asian big cats in west China has decreased significantly in recent years.

According to incomplete statistic, the Chinese enforcement agencies detected 15 Asian big cats related cases. Among of them, the Chinese Customs made 8 seizures and confiscated 7 tiger skins, 1 tiger skeleton, 10.7 kg tiger bone, 25 leopard skins, 33.5 kg leopard bone and 6 bottles wine made from tiger bone; the Chinese forest police made 7 seizures and confiscated 2 tiger skins, 2 leopard skins, 3 clouded leopard skins, 1 clouded leopard skeleton, 27 snow leopard skins, 3 snow leopard skulls and 2 snow leopard skeletons.

3. Enhance the communication with its neighboring countries to promote cooperation in CITES implementation and enforcement

China devotes herself to the international cooperation in CITES implementation and enforcement by strengthening the communications with its neighboring countries. In 2007, the CITES Management Authority of China organized two regional workshops, *Himalayan CITES Workshop* and *Northeast Asia CITES Workshop*, to address the conservation and control of trade in CITES flagship species particular the tigers, bear, musk deer, Tibetan antelope and falcons, with the CITES, Customs, police colleagues from India, Mongolia, Nepal and Russia as well as the relevant NGOs. Being a major trading partner, China was invited to attend the 2nd ASEAN-WEN Meeting held in Indonesia as an observer. In turn, an ASEAN-WEN delegation consisted by the wildlife enforcement officials from Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand was invited to China for communication. We are glad to see that the communication between China and other countries as well as the regional wildlife enforcement cooperation has been greatly improved.

In addition to above activities, it should be mentioned that all of the details of the wildlife smuggling cases detected in China in 2007 are already submitted to the CITES Secretariat, Interpol General Secretariat, ETIS program and the relevant countries.

4. Carry out education programs to raise the CITES awareness

China always lists the education on conservation of tigers as a priority. In 2007, many education programs were carried out. For examples, the importance of tiger conservation was widely publicized by the Chinese media, most of the wildlife seizures were openly reported, and a great deal of posters and brochures aims at eliminating the illegal trade in the specimens of Asian big cats were distributed to the targeted people at the border region and Tibetan people inhabited areas by the CITES Management Authority of China and its partners such as CI, WWF, TRAFFIC and IFAW. It is hard to see the openly dressed or displayed garments made from Asian big cats in China at present.

More education programs will be undertaken at the border checkpoints when the 2008 Olympic Games is being held.

5. Assess the situation faced by Asian big cats to explore the conservation strategy

The primary goal of banning the trade in tiger bone in China in 1993 is to protect the global wild tiger. While China is in the process of perfecting its wildlife legislation and management system and enhancing its enforcement capability, the conservation of tiger is always on its top list. By the scientific and objective spirit and broad public involvement,

China will continuously assess the tiger conservation strategy, explore the new policy and measure beneficial to the global wild tiger conservation and take further actions based on its scientific conclusions in an effort to promote the resumption and development of the global wild tiger population.