

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

TIBETAN ANTELOPE - INDIA

The attached letter has been submitted by the CITES Management Authority of India, in response to the Secretariat's comments in relation to Tibetan antelope in document CoP15 Doc. 46.*

* *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.*



Prakriti Srivastava
Joint Director (Wildlife)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS
(WILDLIFE DIVISION)

Paryavaran Bhavan,
CGO Complex
Lodi Road,
New Delhi - 110 003

F.No. 4-24/2009-WL-I

Telefax: 91-11-24361795

E-mail : jd-wl@nic.in

Dated : 29-12-2009

To Mr. Jonathan Barzdo, Chief Management Authority & Conference Support, CITES.

Subject: Shahtoosh trade – a threat for Tibetan Antelope “*Panthelops hogdsoni*”-reg.

Kindly refer to the CoP15 DoC46 on "Species Trade and Conservation of Tibetan Antelope". In this regard, I am directed to inform about the enforcement actions taken by the Indian Government as well State Government of Jammu & Kashmir regarding Shahtoosh Trade and Tibetan Antelope.

Legal Status of Tibetan Antelope.

Tibetan antelope is fully protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act of India 1972, as it is included in Schedule-I of the Act and thereby according it the highest degree of protection. The Act prohibits the killing and trade of this animal and its derivatives. Similarly State Government of Jammu & Kashmir has also included this species in Schedule-I of State Wildlife (Protection) Act providing highest protection and banning the trade in Shahtoosh wool etc. India also invokes the provisions of CITES and Export-Import Policy to prevent illegal trade in Tibetan Antelope & its products.

Measures taken to protect the Tibetan Antelope.

1. Government of Jammu & Kashmir has taken several measures to protect the Tibetan antelope, which *inter alia* include the following:
 - i) Two areas, which form the principal habitats of Tibetan Antelope, have been declared as Protected Areas in 1987 and are managed suitably.
 - a. Korakaram Wildlife Sanctuary having total area of 5000 sq.kms.
 - b. Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary having an area of 4000 sq.kms.
2. Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in 2003 gave direction to the State Government to invite declaration from dealers and traders in Shahtoosh to declare their stocks. Accordingly, the Forest and Wildlife Department of Jammu & Kashmir gave wide publicity for strict compliance among the dealers and traders. Pursuant to this, 305 declarations comprising 955 shawls and 112.5 kg of shahtoosh wool were received.
3. Enforcement action taken in the country: Strict enforcement action is taken against illegal trade in products of Tibetan Antelope. This can be seen from the fact that, as many as 198 shawls have been seized in 15 cases by different enforcement agencies in the country from 2007 till date of which 132 shawls were found to contain shahtoosh. Strict follow up action is taken in this regard.

In view of the above, it is clear that all possible measures to accord maximum protection to Tibetan Antelope and banning the trade in shahtoosh wool have been taken by Government of India and State Government of Jammu & Kashmir. Further, there are no reports to indicate that the conservation status of Tibetan Antelope has worsened in India. Hence, under this background, India do not agree to the suggestion of the CITES Secretariat to undertake a mission to India on conservation of Tibetan Antelope.

(Prakriti Srivastava)
Joint Director (WL)