



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2018/061

Geneva, 13 June 2018

CONCERNING:

JAPAN

Tightened regulations on ivory transactions

1. This Notification is being published at the request of Japan.
2. The Government of Japan wishes to inform CITES Parties that, on June 1, 2018, the amended Law for the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora came into effect. This law regulates domestic transactions of the species listed in CITES Appendix I, including ivory. The enforcement of this law and other related initiatives will further tighten Japan's regulations on ivory transactions within its own borders, which are already on par with those of other major countries. The Government of Japan will further contribute to the conservation of elephants while strictly implementing trade restrictions on ivory under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) through the above-mentioned measures.
3. Tightened Regulations on Ivory Transactions within its own Borders
 - a) With the enforcement of the newly amended law, business operators handling ivory products are now subject to registration requirements with the government, in order to engage in the business. This represents a change from just having to file a notification previously. Under the amended law, the following obligations are imposed on the registered business operators:
 - i) All whole ivory tusks are subject to registration requirements. A registration card must be attached on whole ivory tusks that are put up for sale.
 - ii) A traceability information form must be prepared for every cut piece and every worked product of ivory that weighs over 1kg and exceeds 20cm. The form must be attached on every cut piece and every worked product of ivory that is put up for sale.
 - iii) A record must be prepared for every transaction of cut piece and worked products of ivory, indicating its source, buyer, weight, characteristics, and so on, and must be kept for five years.
 - iv) Relevant information including a registration number and the name of a business operator, and the expiration date of the registration must be indicated for cut piece and worked products of ivory that are put on display for sale as well as on their advertisements.
 - b) An operator in breach of these obligations is liable to a maximum fine of up to JPY 100 million (about USD 910,000) and/or a maximum prison sentence of up to five years, while the registration for business operations of such an operator will be nullified.

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- c) As stipulated by the law from before the recent amendment, the ivory items that can be sold legally in Japan are limited to the following:
- i) Whole ivory tusks, cut pieces of ivory and worked ivory products that had pre-existed in Japan ahead of the adoption of CITES trade ban (in 1980¹ for Asian elephants and 1990 for African elephant).
 - ii) Whole ivory tusks, cut pieces of ivory and worked ivory products which were imported to Japan with pre-convention certificates issued by exporting countries under CITES.
 - iii) Whole ivory tusks which were imported to Japan in 1999 and 2009, as exceptions approved under CITES.

4. Improved Monitoring and Tightened Control over Ivory Transactions

In response to some reported cases of foreign visitors and other buyers illegally taking out ivory products from Japan, the Government of Japan has been taking the following measures to thoroughly enforce the regulations:

- a) Increasing the number of officials of the Ministry of the Environment, in charge of monitoring and control on transactions of endangered species of wild fauna and flora, including ivory, from 22 to 26.
- b) Requiring business operators that handle ivory products to explain to buyers (including foreign visitors) legal procedures needed to export those products.
- c) Tightening border controls through more effective cooperation with the Chinese customs authority and CITES management authority.

5. For further information, please refer to the following web page:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/ic/ge/page22e_000846.html or contact the Ministry of the Environment of Japan at shizen_yasei@env.go.jp.

¹ Japan joined CITES in 1980.