

China Calls for Wildlife Protection

The People's Republic of China has issued a document calling on local governments to strengthen wildlife protection in response to increased poaching carried out during 1990, especially involving Taiwanese traders along the coast of Fujian province. This decision follows an investigation by TRAFFIC into wildlife smuggling across the Taiwan Strait (see page 29).

Jointly issued on 31 December 1990 by the Ministry of Forestry, the Ministry of Public Security, the Supreme People's Court, Protectorate and the State Industrial and Commercial Administration Bureau, the document urges local governments to strengthen wildlife protection efforts, paying special attention to cases which have occurred since the enactment of the *Wildlife Protection Law* in March 1989.

In late January, an inspection tour by government officials was instigated in Guangdong Province with the aim of examining the implementation of the State Council notification. A total of 59 restaurants, 24 free markets and ten ports were inspected, along with several private businesses. The inspectors found that the killing and selling of rare animals had increased in the Province.

The government of Yunnan Province also held emergency meetings to discuss how best to implement the State Council notification.

China Daily, 31 December 1990/14 February 1991

Asian Bonytongue Exports from Indonesia

Investigations in Japan have raised doubts with regard to the implementation of Indonesia's export quota for Asian Bonytongue *Scleropages formosus* (CITES Appendix I). A quota of 1250 specimens was agreed for 1990 under CITES Resolution Conf. 7.14.

During May to November 1990, three shipments totaling 800 specimens were imported to Japan under Indonesian export permits. A further 450 specimens were confiscated during this period as they were allegedly covered by false export documents; the fish have been placed in public aquaria serving as rescue centres. TRAFFIC Japan has received information indicating that an additional two permits were issued by Indonesia covering exports of another 450 specimens to Japan, but these shipments are not believed to have arrived in Japan.

The Indonesian CITES Management Authority has been asked for details of all export permits issued for this species in 1990, but no reply has been received.

TRAFFIC Japan

Namibia Dehorns Rhinos

6007

The Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism in Namibia, in conjunction with Save the Rhino Trust, has dehorned an undisclosed number of Black Rhino *Diceros bicornis* as part of a comprehensive strategy to ensure the survival of the species in Damaraland.

This was the second dehorning operation in the area following the success of the 1989 dehorning programme. Other measures to protect the species include anti-poaching patrols and the translocation of threatened animals to safer areas.

According to Blythe Loutit of Save the Rhino Trust, animals dehorned in the 1989 operation do not appear to have been adversely affected by the removal of their horns. Two calves have been born to dehorned rhinos and mating between dehorned rhinos has been observed on two occasions. In addition, a calf which was dehorned is progressing well.

Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism, Republic of Namibia, 11 April 1991

Elephant Poaching Increases in Cameroon

Between September and December 1990, poachers killed 27 elephants in Korup National Park, Cameroon. In the preceding 12 months, only three elephants died at the hands of poachers and the Korup population had been considered relatively safe.

Researcher James Powell, of Wildlife Conservation International, believes that with the price of ivory dropping precipitously as a result of the international ban, local chiefs in Cameroon and in neighbouring Nigeria are again able to afford to buy tusks for traditional ceremonial purposes. Enforcement of hunting regulations in Korup and measures to control incursions from Nigeria are urgently needed.

Wildlife Conservation International, March/April 1991

Musk Compound in Tobacco

In Cinnaminson, New Jersey, USA, a private company, DNA Plant Technology, has been awarded a patent for a new variety of tobacco that produces large amounts of sclareol. This scarce chemical is the main source of musk fragrance, other than that produced naturally by the male musk deer *Moschus*.

Environment News Service 1991