

ASIA WILDLIFE TRADE BULLETIN

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South African delegates visit Viet Nam to address illegal rhino horn trade



South African officials visited Viet Nam to discuss ways to tackle the crisis that saw one rhino poached every 26 hours in South Africa during 2010 © Michel Gunther / WWF-Canon

Five representatives from South Africa visited Viet Nam in October 2010 to discuss ways to address the growing illegal trade in rhinoceros horn between the two countries.

The delegation represented key government departments involved in monitoring and enforcement in the rhino trade in South Africa.

They met with Vietnamese counterparts in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City to learn more about national policies and how cases of illegal horn trade are dealt with in Viet Nam.

The aim of the trip, facilitated by TRAFFIC, was to increase collaborative law enforcement between the two nations in order to stop the illegal rhino horn trade.

Viet Nam has been increasingly implicated as a main driver of the illegal rhino horn trade in Asia,

and a major trade route has emerged connecting illegally killed rhinos in South Africa with consumers in Viet Nam.

“It’s vitally important to scale up Africa’s law enforcement efforts and link with Asia in the fight to save the world’s rhinos”, said Tom Milliken, Regional Director for TRAFFIC in East and Southern Africa.

“We’ll only win this war if both sides align against the criminal syndicates behind this trade.”

While Asian rhinoceros have likely been extirpated in Viet Nam, in part due to poaching for their horns, there are still important wild populations of rhinoceroses in Africa, especially South Africa where about 90% of all rhinos are found.

Some ownership of horns from trophy hunting is allowed, under strict regulations, but it is illegal to trade the horns commercially. However, the lack of a system to register and track privately-owned horns could be allowing horns to enter trade illegally.

South Africa had lost 333 rhinos to poaching by the end of 2010, one rhino every 26 hours, the worst conservation crisis over the last two decades and there has been no respite in 2011, with more than 80 animals killed by early April.

Throughout parts of Asia, rhino horn is believed to cure a range of ailments, with some claims that it can cure cancer, despite there being no supporting medical evidence. In Viet Nam, rhino horns (including fake horns) are being sold through traditional medicine stores, hospitals, and online sites.

The South Africa visit was hosted by the Viet Nam CITES Management Authority, with support from TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network. CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is the primary international agreement regulating the trade in wildlife.

The visit was made possible through the financial support of WWF-Germany, WWF African Rhino Programme and the US Government, who made a commitment to support such an initiative at the 2010 Conference of the Parties to CITES.

For further information please contact: Sarah Morgan, Communications Officer, TRAFFIC Greater Mekong Programme. E-mail: smorgan@traffic.netnam.vn

Notorious wildlife smuggler Wong jailed for an extra four-and-a-half years

Wildlife smuggler Anson Wong, sentenced to six months in jail in September 2010, saw his prison term raised to five years by a Malaysian High Court.

Wong was arrested on the night of 26th August 2010 at Kuala Lumpur International Airport after Malaysia Airlines security staff noticed his broken bag on a conveyor belt and discovered 95 Boa Constrictors, two Rhinoceros Vipers and a Mata-Mata Turtle packed inside.

The sentence change followed an appeal by the Attorney-General’s Chambers over the earlier sentence.



Convicted wildlife smuggler Anson Wong leaving court handcuffed to a police officer, after hearing his sentence had been increased from six months to five years

In his judgement, Justice Mohtarudin Baki of the Shah Alam High Court said that the Sessions Court judge, who initially sentenced Wong, had not taken into account the large number of snakes in Wong's possession in his ruling.

Had the snakes escaped, the safety of the airport staff and passengers would have been in jeopardy, Justice Mohtarudin Baki said.

He added that the accused had been motivated by profit and was willing to smuggle with no concern for the safety of those around him and had no regard for the law. In reaching his decision, Justice Mohtarudin also took into account public interest in the case, noting that it should always prevail.

The earlier sentence and RM190 000 (USD61 500) in fines was overruled and the fine returned as this was Wong's first offence in the country.

Wong's defence council Datuk Seri Muhammad Shafee Abdullah immediately announced his intention to appeal the sentence. Wong is currently still in jail awaiting his appeal hearing.

Wong first came to public attention in 2000 when he pleaded guilty to having trafficked a menagerie of endangered species into the US, and was sentenced to 71 months' jail and fined USD60 000.

"The message to wildlife smugglers in Malaysia is loud and clear: carry on as you are and you will be spending years of your life behind bars," said TRAFFIC Southeast Asia senior programme officer Kanitha Krishnasamy.

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia Regional Director, William Schaedla also expressed optimism over the sentence.

"This is a great start. We hope Malaysia's new 'get-tough' stance will continue with investigations and convictions of other large-scale wildlife smugglers still operating in the country.

"We also hope other nations in Southeast Asia take notice of today's watershed ruling. For far too long, countries in this region have allowed their reputations to be tarnished and their natural treasures to be taken by thieves."

"This bold sentence shows they can address wildlife crime when the will is there."

For further information please contact: Elizabeth John, Senior Communications Officer, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia. Email: jlizzjohn@yahoo.com

World leaders aim for deal to save the Tiger



World leaders backed plans to try and double the number of wild Tigers by 2022 © Vivek R. Sinha/WWF-Canon

Leaders from Tiger range countries have endorsed a Global Tiger Recovery Programme (GTRP) that aims to ensure a doubling of the world's wild Tiger population by 2022.

Currently the estimated number of wild Tigers is around 3 200 animals, down from 100 000 a Century ago.

This was the first time such a high level meeting took place to save a single species, one that is under threat from ever-diminishing habitats but also faces an even more imminent threat—that of poaching and trafficking of its parts.

Demand for the parts is fuelling the poaching of Tigers, especially from the wild populations in South-East Asia and India.

Steven Broad, Executive Director of TRAFFIC, addressed the Tiger Forum during an agenda item on illegal trade. He focused on the results of a recent TRAFFIC investigation, which found that parts of at least 1 069 Tigers had been illegally trafficked over a decade in 11 of the Tiger range countries.

Key to the GTRP's success in addressing illegal tiger trade will be the effectiveness of enforcement efforts by the Tiger range countries, as well as close regional and international co-operation on these efforts. The Tiger Forum highlighted strengthened regional law enforcement activities to combat illegal tiger trade through bilateral and multilateral arrangements, including the ASEAN-WEN (ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network), SAWEN (South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network) and bilateral protocols between key Tiger range countries.

The cost of implementing the GTRP is an estimated USD350 million. Several governments and organizations have already announced commitments of significant sums towards Tiger conservation at the Forum, including:

WWF's Director Jim Leape said his organization aims to mobilize USD85 million over the next five years. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) has committed USD50 million over the next decade, while the US Government will allocate an additional USD9.2 million to tiger conservation to combat illegal

poaching and trafficking, the German Government will allocate an additional USD 17.2 million for tiger landscape conservation in Russia, Thailand, Laos, and Viet Nam and the World Bank USD100 million in a loan package to three tiger range countries. Actor Leonardo DiCaprio also announced a USD1 million donation to support WWF's efforts to protect wild Tigers.

An international conference reviewing implementation of GTRP was held in the last week of March in New Delhi, India.

High-level government representatives from Tiger range countries presented their national priority actions for implementation of the GTRP in 2011, with international partners outlining their support to assist these actions.

Partners include the World Bank's Global Tiger Initiative, the Global Tiger Forum, and CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) plus key NGOs including TRAFFIC and WWF.

John Scanlon, Secretary-General of CITES, also announced the formal creation of a new consortium to fight wildlife smuggling. The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCCWC, pronounced 'eye-quick') comprises five member organizations: CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), INTERPOL, UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), the World Bank and WCO (World Customs Organization).

Scanlon said the goal of ICCWC was "to introduce a new era to wildlife law enforcement by drawing upon the complementary skills of the Consortium."

For further information please contact: Richard Thomas, TRAFFIC Communications Co-ordinator. E-mail: richard.thomas@traffic.org

South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN) formally launched at Paro



(l to r): Mr S.P. Yadav, Joint-Director National Tiger Conservation Authority and Head of the India Delegation; Lyonpo (Dr) Pema Gyamtsho, Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan; Mr Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India © TRAFFIC

The South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network was formally launched at an inter-governmental meeting hosted by the Royal Government of Bhutan in January 2011, thereby opening a new chapter in regional co-operation in South Asia for strengthening wildlife law enforcement. It was agreed to base the SAWEN Secretariat in Nepal.

Illegal wildlife trade is a form of trans-national organized crime that threatens many iconic species across the world. South Asia, home to a diverse network of natural ecosystems and varied biodiversity, is especially vulnerable to such threats. Apart from key species such as tigers, elephants and rhinos, there are a variety of medicinal plants, timber, marine species, birds and reptiles that are threatened by illegal exploitation and trafficking.

To counter such threats, the eight countries of South Asia have come together to establish an organized and co-ordinated body—the South Asia

Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN).

“SAWEN will help Bhutan to link up with authorities and officials across the region to share good practices and resources to co-operate and co-ordinate actions to apprehend poachers and traffickers,” said Lyonpo (Dr) Pema Gyamtsho, Honourable Minister for Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan, at the opening of the expert group’s meeting.

Relevant focal persons and experts from the governments of member countries, inter-governmental organizations, including the CITES Secretariat and INTERPOL, and non-governmental organizations including WWF and TRAFFIC participated in the two day meeting. The critical points decided by the Experts Group during the meeting were:

- An agreed action-oriented work plan for joint activities, some of which will begin immediately and will continue to develop further as the network gathers strength;
- Establishing a SAWEN Secretariat, to be hosted by the Government of Nepal;
- An agreed governance and operational structure for SAWEN;
- The need for strategic collaboration on communications and fundraising.

“CITES is delighted to see SAWEN come into being and we look forward to supporting the Network,” said John Sellar, Chief of Enforcement, CITES Secretariat. “The member countries have today demonstrated their commitment to bringing to justice those criminals who are robbing this part of the world of its precious natural resources.”

The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Royal Government of Bhutan with technical support from TRAFFIC and WWF Bhutan. TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, has been providing technical support for the SAWEN process since its inception and acknowledges the generous funding support of the US Department of State.

“With the formal operation of SAWEN beginning henceforth, the countries of the region have now reached a milestone in their efforts to counter the spectre of illegal wildlife trade,” said Samir Sinha, TRAFFIC’s programme head in India. “This is an essential piece of a collective effort to conserve a region of outstanding biological richness and diversity.”

For further information please contact: Samir Sinha, Head, TRAFFIC–India. E-mail: ssinha@wwfindia.net

TRAFFIC features at key biodiversity meeting in Japan

TRAFFIC was actively involved in a key meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD CoP10) that took place in October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, helping contribute to the negotiations, particularly to the decisions on sustainable use of biodiversity, and to the agreement for a successful new roadmap to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC).



Just ahead of the meeting’s opening, TRAFFIC had released a report analysing the status of Japan’s trade in wild animal and plant species entitled *The State of Wildlife Trade in Japan*.

The report analyses Japan’s wildlife trade in the light of national and international regulations, providing critical

insights into the nature of Japan’s impact on global biodiversity. It provides, among other things, explanations

of the current trends in topical issues such as Atlantic Bluefin Tuna and the often-illegal trade in reptiles as pets, while highlighting the importance of sustainable use of medicinal plants, an issue closely related to the goals of the CBD.

A key outcome of the Nagoya meeting was the finalizing of the “Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization”: in short, the “Nagoya ABS Protocol”. This aims to ensure countries harbouring great natural diversity of wildlife will receive adequate benefits in return for providing access to these resources and was opened for formal signing by Parties to the CBD in February 2011 at a special event to mark the beginning of International Year of Forests.

For further information please contact: Akiko Ishihara, TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan. Email: traffic@trafficj.org

Rare birds and other wildlife seized at Jakarta Airport during busy month

A string of seizures at Jakarta’s Soekarno-Hatta International Airport in January 2011 has turned up an array of illegally acquired wildlife including a pair of one of the world’s rarest birds, the Bali Myna.

With fewer than 50 mature individuals estimated to now survive in the wild, the seizure of a pair of Bali Mynas in the luggage of a Singaporean man was a significant find.

The Bali Myna *Leucopsar rothschildi* is listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and all commercial trade in this species is prohibited as it is also listed in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



A pair of Bali Mynas—one of the world's rarest birds—were found in the luggage of a Singaporean man at Jakarta airport
© Bill Majoros

Endemic to the island of Bali and once common across the north-west of the island, this myna's wild population has plummeted due to illegal poaching for the cagebird trade.

The seizure was made at Jakarta airport by Quarantine and Airport Security officers on 31st January. They also found four Slow Lorises *Nycticebus spp.* and eight Pig-nosed Turtles *Carettochelys insculpta* hidden in the suspect's bag when it was x-rayed. Slow lorises are listed in Appendix I of CITES, while Pig-nosed Turtles are in Appendix II. All the species seized are protected under Indonesian law.

The suspect was released on bail while the case was further investigated, and he faces a maximum three years in jail and a maximum fine of 150 million rupiah if found to have wilfully violated Indonesian law.

On 13th January, a passenger bound for Saudi Arabia was detained in Soekarno-Hatta Airport's Terminal Two when officers discovered two Hill Mynas *Gracula religiosa* (Appendix II) and other birds concealed in his luggage. The suspect had purchased the birds in the Pramuka Bird Market. The species is protected under Indonesian law.

On 7th January, the same Quarantine Office also foiled an attempt to smuggle an Orang Utan *Pongo spp.* skull and Helmeted Hornbill *Rhinoplax vigil* casks to the Netherlands. Both species are listed in CITES Appendix I.

On 1st January, Quarantine officers and Forestry Police found 14 birds including six Black-throated Laughingthrushes *Garrulax chinensis* hidden in 12 boxes in the luggage of a passenger bound for Bahrain.

"The number of recent seizures in the Soekarno-Hatta Airport illustrates the role Jakarta plays as a major hub in the illicit global wildlife trade," said Chris R. Shepherd, Deputy Regional Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia.

"The authorities are to be congratulated for intercepting these smuggling attempts. It is efforts such as these that are needed in order to ensure unscrupulous smugglers do not continue their trade from Indonesia's capital".

"We hope these activities are viewed as serious crimes, and the culprits are sufficiently penalized so as to deter further such activities".

For further information please contact: Richard Thomas, TRAFFIC Communications Co-ordinator. E-mail: richard.thomas@traffic.org

TRAFFIC hosts online fisheries seminar in Japan

In February 2011, TRAFFIC hosted a seminar in Tokyo entitled "Towards traceability and sustainable use of marine resources: international trends and activities in Japan". In a first for the organization, the seminar was broadcast live online.

The seminar aimed to encourage people to think about where the fish on their dinner plate had come from and whether it was legally sourced or not.



Bluefin Tuna market, Tokyo, Japan © Michel Gunther / WWF-Canon

“Here in Japan, there is growing awareness of the problems caused by IUU [illegal, unreported and unregulated] fishing of salmon, tuna, sharks and other marines resources, and consumers are increasingly demanding greater traceability in the source of the fish they eat, to ensure it comes from legal and sustainable sources,” said Soyo Takahashi, Fisheries Officer with TRAFFIC Japan.

“This seminar provides an opportunity for those interested in this issue to hear how the experts are ensuring greater transparency in the fisheries supply chain.”

Speakers included Mr Melcom Pohl Block, Namibian Ministry of Fisheries Marine Resources on “Namibia and the challenge of sustainable fisheries”; Mr Richard Parsons from the UK Government’s Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on “The EU’s IUU fisheries regulations and enforcement, with particular reference to the UK”; Mr Nakamura Nobuyuki, Senior Managing Director of an eel retailing company on “Traceability and eel farming: Production and public certification”; plus TRAFFIC’s Ms Joyce Wu and Ms Soyo Takahashi and Ms Aiko Yamauchi of WWF Japan.

For further information please contact: Akiko Ishihara, TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan, traffic@trafficj.org

Trade alliance formulated in China



The Qinling Changchun Winery has purchased sustainably collected southern Schisandra fruits to make wine since 2008 © TRAFFIC East Asia

TCM traders from across China and beyond sampled traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) plant products in Beijing, where they met in February 2011 with collectors of such plants from the Yangtze River area.

A sustainable TCM products trade alliance between local producers and traders home and broad for the sustainable production of wild medicinal plant species was established through the inaugural trade alliance meeting.

The conference held by TRAFFIC, WWF and the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (WFCMS) helped establish links between producer associations in mountainous villages and national and international traditional Chinese medicine traders.

Around 15 representatives from TCM manufacturers in the Netherlands, Russia, USA, Korea and Brazil as well as China and 15 representatives from three producers associations in three pilot study sites helped establish the foundations for the trade alliance.

The meeting was the latest development in a collaborative WWF China, IUCN and TRAFFIC China project on 'Sustainable Management of Traditional Medicinal Plants in High-biodiversity Landscapes of Upper Yangtze Ecoregion' through the European Union's China Biodiversity Programme (ECBP), funded by the European Union Development Programme (EUDP).

Mountain landscapes in the upper Yangtze River basin are internationally recognized for their biodiversity values and listed as the top priority area for biodiversity conservation in China.

An estimated 75% of commercially harvested Chinese medicinal plant species are found in the region, but many are endangered due to overharvesting.

In order to mitigate the degradation of populations of TCM species and improve local plant harvesters' livelihoods, in 2007 WWF, IUCN and TRAFFIC launched the project within the ECBP in China.

Local producers in villages in Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi Provinces were introduced to the concept and skills needed for sustainable harvesting of wild TCM plants.

Guidelines for the certification of wild-collected products were also introduced and producers helped with marketing of their sustainably harvested medicinal plant species.



Schisandra wine
© TRAFFIC
East Asia

In Ningshan County, Shaanxi Province, the Qinling Changchun Winery has purchased sustainably collected southern Schisandra fruits to make wine since 2008.

"We now have more a stable supply of Schisandra by supplementing our existing supplies with sustainably wild-harvested fruit," said Mr. Wang, Manager of the winery, who addressed the meeting in Beijing.

"Once the winery gets into full production capacity, hundreds of additional jobs will be made available to local villagers."

Thanks to the joint work of these conservation organizations, six producers associations have been established in the villages of the three Provinces, representing about 970 local families and 3322 villagers, who need wild plant collection as an important source of income.

"Three years after TRAFFIC/WWF and our partners introduced standards of sustainable management of wild medicinal plants to producers in the Yangtze region, our work is beginning to bear fruit," said Professor Xu Hongfa, Director of TRAFFIC's programme in China.

For further information please contact: Li Chenyang, Communications Officer, China programme of TRAFFIC East Asia. Email: chyli@wwfchina.org

Too little done to address trade threat to Asia's tortoises and freshwater turtles

Seventy experts who gathered in Singapore in March 2011 for a Conservation of Asian Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles Workshop to evaluate the current status of such species in Asia found the vast majority are nearing extinction in the wild, and very little has been done to address the problem.

The meeting reported that illegal and unsustainable trade was the greatest threat to the survival of this highly



Malaysian Giant Turtle *Orlitia borneensis*, one of the largest freshwater turtles in the world is found only in Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo and Sumatra, and listed as Critically Endangered © Mark Auliya / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

threatened group of species and that laws and conventions in place to protect the animals were simply not being enforced.

Tortoises and freshwater turtles are among the world's most threatened groups of animals. Perhaps nowhere is the situation more critical than in Asia. In a recently released report, *Turtles in Trouble: the World's Top 25 Most Endangered Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles*, from the Turtle Conservation Coalition, 68 percent of those that made the list were native to Asia.

Seventy-two of Asia's 86 species of tortoises and freshwater turtles were assessed at the Singapore meeting, which was hosted by Wildlife Reserves Singapore Group and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), in collaboration with the Turtle Survival Alliance, Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, San Diego Zoo Global and the IUCN SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group.

The Malaysian Giant Turtle *Orlitia borneensis*, one of the largest freshwater turtles in the world and found only in Peninsular Malaysia, Borneo and Sumatra, is now listed as Critically Endangered due to illegal collection and export for its meat. The Burmese Star Tortoise

Geochelone platynota, endemic to Myanmar, is thought to be possibly extinct in the wild due to relentless poaching for the international pet trade.

Alarm bells were first sounded for Asia's freshwater tortoises and turtles following a meeting of experts in 1999, held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, alerting the world to what was dubbed the Asian Turtle Crisis.

Asia's tortoises and freshwater turtles were being harvested in massive quantities to supply the demand for meat and use in traditional medicines, mostly in East Asia. These species are also in demand as pets. Much of the trade is carried out illegally.

Of Asia's 86 species, close to 70 species (approximately 80%) are considered threatened. This is a dramatic increase since these species were assessed in 1999—a 90% increase in the number of Critically Endangered species alone.

"Trade is the single greatest threat to tortoises and freshwater turtles – a species group that has been around since the days of the dinosaurs. Their future is now in the hands of policy makers, enforcement agencies and conservation bodies. To date, efforts to protect these species have been far from adequate. If effort and motivation to save these species is not greatly increased, we are going to lose many of these species," said Chris R. Shepherd, Deputy Regional Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and member of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group.

Shepherd urged authorities to make full use of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) under which many of Asia's freshwater turtle and tortoise species are protected.

"The last ten years has shown that while it is possible to save these species from extinction, the threat of trade is still present and ever-growing," said Colin Poole, Director, WCS Regional Hub.

“Of particular concern is the increasing impact of the pet trade on a number of tortoise species and the growth of the demand for dried carapace from softshell turtles sourced primarily in South Asia.”

For further information please contact: Richard Thomas, TRAFFIC Communications Co-ordinator. E-mail: richard.thomas@traffic.org

Raising awareness to combat illegal wildlife trade in Asia

The TRAFFIC network continues to focus on capacity building with government wildlife law enforcement agencies across Asia, facilitating a series of training workshops in the region over the past six months.



China

In October 2010, TRAFFIC supported a workshop on CITES Enforcement held in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China.

A total of 36 representatives from China's CITES Management Authority (MA), the Forest Police Bureau of the State Forestry Administration, the Anti-Smuggling Bureau of the General Customs and the Supreme People's Court attended.

The workshop reviewed enforcement action on endangered species carried out by different departments in 2010, as well as exchanging information about how to find smuggling routes, identify wildlife products and how to discover concealed goods.

TRAFFIC shared its findings of investigations into illegal trade of endangered species and their products

in China, focused on Asian Big Cats in Tibetan Areas (including Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai, Gansu, Yunnan and Sichuan provinces) during the past year.

Mr Wan Ziming, Director of the Enforcement and Training Division of the CITES MA, said TRAFFIC's information could substantially support local enforcement efforts.

In November 2010, the CITES MA and TRAFFIC jointly conducted two workshops on ivory trade management and the use of ETIS (Elephant Trade Information System) in Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province and Wuyisha city, Fujian Province in.

More than 60 participants from the CITES MA, Forestry Department Customs, Post Office, the Anti-Smuggling Bureau, the Entry and Exit Inspection Service, Wildlife Conservation Department, Forest Public Security Bureau and Wildlife Identification Centre attended.

TRAFFIC briefed the meeting about the latest developments in international illegal wildlife trade and highlighted the ETIS system and its application.

The workshops helped enforcement staff to identify ivory products, increased their knowledge and understanding of policies and laws dealing with illegal ivory trade, and helped focus their efforts on how to locate illicit ivory amongst the huge volume of postal packages they process.

For further information please contact: Li Chenyang, Communications Officer, China programme of TRAFFIC East Asia. Email: chyli@wwfchina.org



Thailand

In December 2010, Customs Authorities in Thailand teamed up with TRAFFIC Southeast Asia to raise awareness among Customs Officers based at airports and other



Training materials for a Thai enforcement officers' workshop on the Elephant Trade Information System © Panjit Tansom / TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

key checkpoints about ways to tackle the illegal ivory trade.

Workshop participants were taught how to differentiate real from fake ivory, about the importance of co-ordinating with other government agencies in reporting ivory seizures to ETIS, which TRAFFIC manages on behalf of Parties to CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), and about implementation of the Convention itself.

"In order to suppress the illegal ivory trade completely, the Royal Thai Customs is conscious that good co-operation both internationally and domestically is the most effective way to uncover any illegal shipments among the 5 000 shipments transiting the airport each day. Teaming up with TRAFFIC will help bring us up-to-date on the latest ways to ensure criminals don't avoid detection. Further, this workshop will benefit all Customs officers at the operational level to offer them support and to exchange work experiences too," said Mr Tanat Suvattanametakul, Director of Suvarnabhumi Airport Cargo Clearance Customs Bureau.

For further information please contact: Elizabeth John, Senior Communications Officer, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia. Email: jlizzjohn@yahoo.com



India

Two law enforcement training workshops were held in Mumbai in January and in Kolkata in March 2011 respectively, aimed to bring enforcement officers up-to-date with the latest tools and techniques available to fight illicit wildlife trade and also to give them an overview of organized global wildlife crime.

TRAFFIC India, in collaboration with the UK Government's Defra (Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), the National Academy for Customs, Wildlife Institute of India, WWF-India and West Bengal Forest Department trained the enforcement officers from Customs, the Forest Department, and CID personnel officials.

During the workshops, a wildlife forensic sample collection kit developed jointly by Wildlife Institute of India and TRAFFIC was distributed to participants. The customized kit will enable field staff to collect samples for forensic analysis. Other resource materials provided to participants included CDs on various themes plus books and posters relating to wildlife law and enforcement issues. Participants also viewed TRAFFIC-India's "Don't Buy Trouble" film, which educates viewers about the legal consequences of indulging in illegal wildlife trade.

For further information please contact: Mr Samir Sinha, Head, TRAFFIC India. Email: ssinha@wwfindia.net



Viet Nam

In February 2011, law enforcement officers in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, were trained on how to identify



threatened reptile species and familiarize themselves with international wildlife protection policies in an effort to combat illegal wildlife trade in the ASEAN region.

The three-day course equipped key staff working in land and airports in southern Viet Nam with basic knowledge of the wildlife trade in South-East Asia, international regulations governing the trade such as CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), and relevant national laws. Participants were also trained to identify threatened reptile species that are commonly traded during an interactive session at Saigon Zoo.

The training course was conducted by the Viet Nam CITES Management Authority, Biodiversity Conservation Agency and Natural Museum with support from TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, and ASEAN-WEN.

For further information please contact: Sarah Morgan, Communications Officer, E-mail: smorgan@traffic.netnam.vn

TRAFFIC East Asia - Regional Office

Room 2001, Double Building,
22 Stanley Street
Central, Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2 530 0587
Fax: (852) 2 530 0864
Email: trafficea@biznetvigator.com
Sean Lam, Regional Admin and Finance Manager

TRAFFIC East Asia - China

c/o WWF China Programme Office
Room 2616, Wen Hua Gong,
(Laodong Renmin Wenhua Gong
Dongmen)
Beijing Working People's Cultural Palace
Beijing 100006, People's Republic of China
Tel: (86) 10 6511 6211 (6213)
Fax: (86) 10 6511 6261
Email: teachina@wwfchina.org
Xu Hongfa, Head of China Programme

TRAFFIC East Asia - Japan

6th Fl. Nihonseimei Akabanebashi
Bldg.
3-1-14, Shiba, Minato-ku
105-0014 Tokyo, Japan
Tel: (81) 3 3769 1716
Fax: (81) 3 3769 1304
Email: traffic@trafficj.org
Akiko Ishihara, Senior Representative

TRAFFIC East Asia - Taipei

PO Box 7-476,
Taipei 106, Taiwan
Tel: (886) 2 2362 9787
Fax: (886) 2 2362 9799
Email: treatai@msl.hinet.net
Joyce Wu, Programme Officer

TRAFFIC Europe - Russia

c/o WWF Russia
Nikoloyamskaya str.19, Building 3
109240 Moscow Russia
Tel: (7) 495 727 0939
Fax: (7) 495 727 09 38
Email: avaisman@wwf.ru
Alexey Vaisman, Senior Programme Officer

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia - Regional office

Unit 3-2 1st floor
Jalan SS 23/11
Taman SEA, 47400 Petaling Jaya,
Selangor,
Malaysia
Tel: (603) 7880 3940
Fax: (603) 7882 0171
Email: tsea@po.jaring.my
Bill Schaedla, Regional Director

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia - Greater Mekong

Villa 44/4 Van Bao
Ba Dinh District, Ha Noi
Viet Nam
Tel: (84) 4 3726 1575
Fax: (84) 4 3726 4665
Email: traffic-gmp@traffic.netnam.vn
Nguyen Dao Ngoc Van, Senior Projects Officer

TRAFFIC India

WWF India Secretariat
172-B, Lodi Estate, N. Delhi 110003,
India
Tel: (91) 11 4150 4786
Fax: (91) 11 4351 6200
Email: ssinha@wwfindia.net
Samir Sinha, Head

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