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Search for a cure in Africa gets increasingly difficult

by Nina Marshall, Senior Programme Officer, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa

The East and Southern Africa region has a long tradition of using wild animals and plants for medicine. Thousands of species have been documented in local health care systems by ethnobotanical, anthropological and zoological researchers. Few scientists, however, have studied the availability of these species or the quantities in which they are used.

With increasing evidence of habitat loss, rising human populations and frequent reports of medicinal species becoming scarce, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa recently carried out a survey to identify plant and animal species in need of conservation and management action in the region.

The survey in 17 countries identified more than 100 species of plants and 29 animal species as becoming scarce or difficult to obtain by vendors of traditional medicine and traditional medical practitioners.

Some of these species are known to be endangered, such as the African Wild Ass *Equus africanus* which occurs in arid areas of Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia, and the Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas*, popular for treating a wide



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Green turtle *Chelonia mydas*

range of ailments from asthma to epilepsy. Plant species such as *Aloe polyphylla* and *Warburgia salutaris* from southern Africa are experiencing serious population declines and are considered to be threatened species.

Scarcity in particular countries is also reported for some species thought to be widespread and common, such as the Baobab tree *Adansonia digitata* in Eritrea and Sudan. This is a great concern because cases of local depletion may eventually become more serious if remedial action is not taken.

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Use of traditional medicine in East and Southern Africa is widespread. As a medical system, it is affordable, accessible, and culturally acceptable. In the past, colonial regimes legislated against use of traditional medicine and prohibited or restricted the activities of traditional medical healers, largely in an effort to extirpate traditional belief systems in favour of Christianity. While some of these laws are still in place, many countries have repealed this legislation in recognition of the cultural and medical value of traditional medicinal practices.

Popularity of traditional medicine in the region is undeniable, but at the same time other reasons support its prevalence. The cost of conventional medicine is beyond the reach of many, and is often unavailable. The ratio of Western doctors to patients in some countries is extreme, for example in Malawi there is one Western doctor for every 50 000 people, and in Tanzania the figure is 1:30 000. Western clinics are also absent from remote areas, and may provide only rudimentary medical care such as inoculation services.

Within this context, the use of traditional medicine is very important in meeting health care needs of millions of people in the region.

However, a wide variety of plants and animals are used in preparation of these medicines, and some species are clearly under pressure. In addition, TRAFFIC found that in most cases, plants and animals are harvested from the wild and few efforts are under way to propagate or breed the species in most demand.

The use of plants is more common than animals in African traditional medicine, but animals are used and range from larger mammals such as African Elephant *Loxodonta africana*, Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis*, and Dugong *Dugong dugon* to the Leopard *Panthera pardus*, African Civet *Civettictus civetta* and the Four-toed Hedgehog *Erinaceus frontalis*. Reptiles, birds, amphibians, fish and variety of invertebrates are also used.

High demand for medicinal species is evident in urban areas where people and healers can no longer collect the medicines they need themselves, as natural habitat to support wildlife no longer exists.

Increasingly commercialized trade is also apparent, with traditional medical practitioners relying on commercial collectors to supply the needed ingredients. Unfortunately, many of these collectors and vendors of medicinal plants and animals have little interest in the long-term sustainability of the industry and are only involved to make a profit to meet daily economic needs.

This looming crisis affects not only the conservation status of hundreds of plants and animals, but also the health of many. Action must be taken on a number of levels and both the health and natural resources sectors must be involved in searching for sustainable strategies to address declines.

Above all, TRAFFIC recommends conservation, management and awareness

actions, and also regulation and further research in some cases. Efforts need to be cross-sectoral and encourage needed co-operation and collaboration between government health ministries, practitioners of traditional medicine, natural resource managers and a variety of others.

Reduction in use is not necessarily a realistic answer. Demand for traditional medicine is increasing and hence strategies to increase supply are very important. The success will depend upon government and private action to propagate, breed and sustainably harvest plant and animal species.

TRAFFIC's efforts to prompt such action involves bringing together representatives from various sectors and industries that do not traditionally collaborate, as innovation and creativity are essential in developing strategies and definitive actions to address the conservation and health issues.

The first activity was a workshop held in December 1998 in Nairobi with participants from diverse backgrounds, such as commercial game management, economics, traditional medicine practice, commercial herbal medicine production, biodiversity and conservation. The workshop recommendations will be available later this year.

Searching for a Cure: Conservation of Medicinal Wildlife Resources in East and Southern Africa. September 1998. Copies available from TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-Kenya, PO Box 68200, Nairobi, Kenya or TRAFFIC International, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, UK.

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TRAFFIC hosts workshop on indicators for rhinoceroses

In December, TRAFFIC International hosted a workshop in the UK to help finalize indicators for evaluating the success of conservation initiatives for the world's remaining rhinoceroses.

The workshop, hosted on behalf of the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), was attended by technical experts from TRAFFIC and IUCN, including members of the SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups. A representative of the Secretariat also participated in the workshop.

The results of the workshop will be presented to the CITES Secretariat to assist in preparation of a report to the CITES Standing Committee.

All five rhinoceros species have been listed in Appendix I of the Convention since 1977. However, despite this listing, introduction of trade bans in consumer countries and protective actions by countries with rhinoceroses, serious declines continued.



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Black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*

The threats to rhinoceroses include demand for their horn in traditional East Asian medicine and for making dagger handles in the Middle East. A loss of habitat has also contributed to the decline, particularly for Asian species of rhinoceros.

In 1994, the CITES Parties adopted a resolution (Resolution Conf. 9.14) calling for the Standing Committee to pursue actions to reduce illegal trade, including to ensure that all activities are evaluated and that standardized indicators of success be developed to measure changes in illegal hunting and the status of populations.

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The SSC African Rhino Specialist Group first began work on this issue in 1996. The December workshop aimed to broaden discussion to include the expertise of the SSC Asian Rhino Specialist Group and TRAFFIC.

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TRAFFIC/WWF Tiger poster wins award

A TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan and WWF Japan Tiger poster won the Finalist Award at the New York Festivals in September 1998.

The poster, titled *Last 5000*, is part of a Year of the Tiger Campaign by the two offices. It was designed by Seiji Hirota of the Hirota Design Office on a volunteer basis.

The New York Festivals is an international awards competition held annually in the USA. Entries are judged by a Board of Distinguished Judges and Advisors from various sectors in the field of communications.

The Year of the Tiger Campaign of TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan and WWF Japan aims to inform the public how only 5000 Tigers may remain in the wild and how the public could help.

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TRAFFIC International fills Programme Director post

Stephen Nash began as Programme Director at TRAFFIC International on 1 December 1998.

Nash's principal responsibilities are to lead planning and implementation of the TRAFFIC Network's conservation programme; ensure programme links with partner organizations; and to deputise for the Executive Director.

Nash has extensive experience working with TRAFFIC and wildlife trade matters generally. Most recently, he worked as an expert consultant on a national legislation project at the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). He also served as Acting Enforcement Officer at the Secretariat in 1995.

In TRAFFIC, Nash served as Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia in Malaysia during its first two years (1991-1993) and as Assistant Director at TRAFFIC International in 1994.

Since then, he has undertaken a number of consultancy projects for the Network, including participating in the 1997 audits of ivory stocks in African countries, preparing and conducting CITES training workshops in Taiwan and Zimbabwe for government officials and editing or writing a variety of technical reports.

Prior to his position at TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Nash was Programme Co-ordinator for the WWF Irian Jaya Conservation Programme in Indonesia from 1988-1991.

Nash's experience in project design and execution, policy formulation and supervision of staff as well as his experience with CITES provide him with a solid base from which to lead the Network's future programme planning and implementation.

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A matter of attitude

by Maija Sirola, Communications Assistant, TRAFFIC International

Studies offer insight into illegal medicine trade

Despite trade bans and other measures taken at national and international levels, the illegal trade in parts of Tiger, rhinoceros and other endangered species continues. One common feature of this continuing trade is traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), which utilises a wide range of plants and animals.

Loss of habitat and human-animal conflict have played a critical role in these species' decline, but demand for their parts in TCM plays an important role as well. TRAFFIC surveys have repeatedly found TCM products that claim to contain endangered species on sale around the globe, most recently in North America.

Two new TRAFFIC reports provide the first ever in-depth analysis of what attitudes might lie behind the continuing illicit trade in Hong Kong and the USA. The reports, released in Hong Kong in November 1998 and in the USA in January 1999, present results of separate studies. Both studies were carried out as telephone surveys of people selected using statistical sampling methods. In total, 1157 Hong Kong Chinese and 635 Chinese Americans participated in the surveys.

The results differ markedly in some areas because of differences in the questionnaires.

However, major findings in both studies indicate that TCM consumers have little knowledge of the ingredients in the medicines they use and

little interest in finding out. Further, the studies found that many consumers in both Hong Kong and the USA are not aware of the connection between the use of TCM containing endangered species and the decline in those species.

Hong Kong attitudes

In Hong Kong, 35 per cent of the polled respondents had used TCM at least once and about 7 per cent of adults polled were regular TCM users who take



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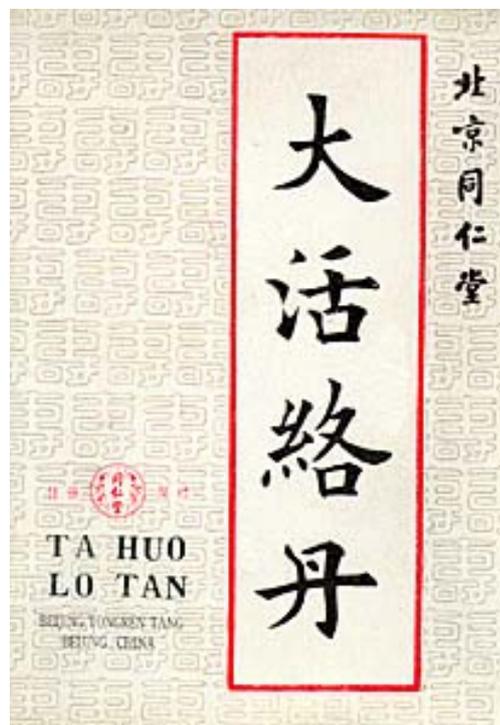
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TCM once a month or more.

About three-fifths of the adults polled expressed concern about endangered species. The survey also found that 77 per cent of these respondents believe people should stop using some medicines in order to save endangered species. TCM users expressed more support for conservation than non-TCM users and three-quarters of users supported laws to prohibit the use of endangered animals in TCM.

Still, more than half of the TCM users said they would not ask about the ingredients of the medicines they consume, relying instead on the judgement and advice of doctors, pharmacists and others. TCM practitioners and shop assistants, followed by family members were cited as the most influential in determining whether or not a consumer would use medicines containing wild animal ingredients.

The survey found that women are most likely to be TCM users, but men and older users are more likely to have consumed rhinoceros horn or Tiger bone products. The most cited reasons for the continued usage of medicines containing wild animals was belief in the medicine's efficacy, followed by family and friends' recommendations.



US attitudes

Unlike Hong Kong Chinese, the majority of the Chinese Americans polled said that they used TCM on a regular basis and most (79 per cent) had tried TCM at least once. The survey found that most TCM users are likely to be born outside the USA, have lived in the USA for the past 10-20 years and be under 40 years old.

The respondents regarded TCM as effective medicine and an important part of Chinese culture and tradition. Respondents also reported that TCM has fewer side effects and generally gives a gentler, more complete cure for ailments than western medicine does. However, despite extensive experience with TCM, 71 per cent said they do not know much about specific ingredients in the medicines they consume.

The findings also indicated that many respondents view attempts to stop the use of endangered species in Chinese medicine as western prejudice and only a few considered Chinese medicine to be a significant threat to endangered animals.

When using TCM, US respondents reported that they rely first upon the advice of family members, then practitioners and shop assistants—the same influential groups as found in Hong Kong but in different order.

Recommendations

The findings indicate that Chinese communities, whether in Hong Kong or the USA, have similar attitudes and needs that may lead to the continuing illicit trade. Both reports recommend that the findings be used by governments and conservation organizations to develop activities and initiatives to raise consumer awareness.

There is also a need to influence the influential: TCM practitioners and shop assistants and family members. The reports recommend targeted awareness initiatives, particularly for members of TCM communities.

In addition, both reports encourage the use of sustainable alternatives to medicines containing the parts of threatened species.

In Hong Kong in particular, the government should, as a matter of priority, formulate a system to regulate the TCM industry. In the USA, a national law enforcement strategy to address the issue of illegal trade in endangered species medicines is needed.

TCM facts

- ▶ Traditional Chinese medicine has been used for perhaps 5000 years.
- ▶ TCM is used throughout Asia and by Asian communities worldwide.
- ▶ TCM uses more than 1000 plant and animal species.
- ▶ More than 85 per cent of traditional Chinese medicines are plant-based.
- ▶ The use of TCM is increasing in all parts of the world.

[Attitudes of Hong Kong Chinese Towards Wildlife Conservation and the Use of Wildlife as Medicine and Food.](#) 1998. Available from TRAFFIC East Asia, Room 2001, Double Building, 22 Stanley Street, Central, Hong Kong.

[A World Apart? Attitudes Toward Traditional Chinese Medicine and Endangered Species in Hong Kong and the United States.](#) 1998. Available from TRAFFIC North America, 1250 24th Street NW, Washington DC, 20037, USA.

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A matter of attitude

by Maija Sirola, Communications Assistant, TRAFFIC International

Tiger facts & figures

The Tiger is endangered. There may have been as many as 100 000 Tigers at the beginning of this century, but today only 5000-7500 are believed to be left in the wild. Three subspecies of Tiger have already become extinct.



© David Lawson/WWF-UK

Siberian Tigers *Panthera tigris altaica*

Threats: Habitat

fragmentation and loss, human-animal conflict and over-hunting of the Tiger's prey species pose a significant risk to the Tiger. Demand for Tiger parts, particularly for medicinal use, also poses an immediate risk to the Tiger's long-term survival.

Medicinal use: Tiger parts are used in many traditional East Asian medicine disciplines. In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), nearly every part of the Tiger has had a medicinal use over the past 1000 years. However, Tiger bone - particularly the humerus or upper front leg bone -- is the only part remaining in the modern TCM materia medica and is most often prescribed to treat rheumatism. Tiger bone is ground into powder before being made into pills, plasters and other decoctions. It is also cut into segments and soaked in wine.

Medicinal trade: Throughout most of East Asia, the traditional centre for world demand, trade in Tiger bone and its derivatives is now illegal. However, a stubborn residual demand remains in East Asia and other parts of the world. TRAFFIC has documented the availability of traditional Chinese medicines claiming to contain Tiger bone in Australia, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, the UK, USA and elsewhere.

Trade in other parts: There also exists a commercial demand for non-medicinal parts of the Tiger, such as the skin, teeth and claws.

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Legal status: Virtually all of the 14 countries with Tigers have laws in place to protect the Tiger but the level of enforcement and therefore protection varies from country to country. In addition, all subspecies of Tiger and their derivatives have been banned from international trade since 1987 under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

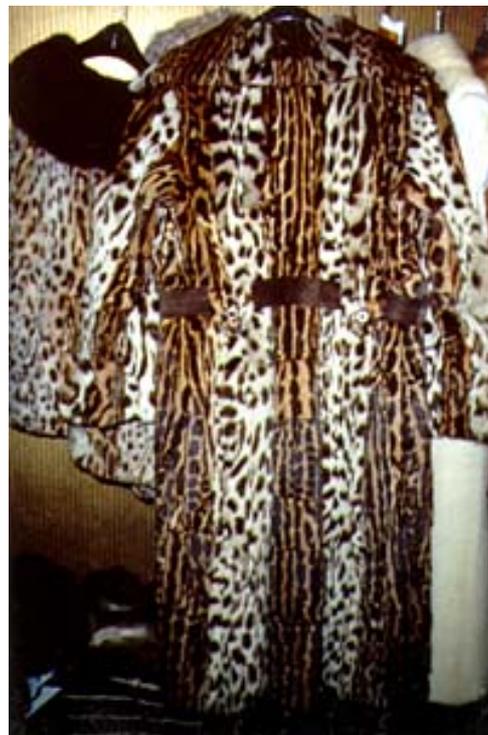
The challenge

Europe encompasses many diverse countries, cultures and languages. While Western and Central Europe are characterized by an increasingly affluent human population, some emerging republics of the former Soviet Union harbour some of the world's poorest people. Europe is also one of the largest and most diverse markets for wildlife and wildlife products.

The 15 Member States of the European Union (EU) consume huge volumes of both wildlife and wildlife products from around the world, such as live parrots, tortoises, plant bulbs, medicinal plants, caviar and reptile skins. Timber and many other forest products and a variety of fisheries products are also traded extensively.

This market involves thousands of plant and animal species and changes frequently in response to fashion, value, the availability of species, trade regulation and other factors.

In comparison, the region also has centres of biodiversity, with many species in demand. East European countries, Russia and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) often act as suppliers. They provide the EU and world market with a variety of wildlife and wildlife products, such as medicinal plants, fish, tortoises, Tiger, bear and Saiga Antelope products, timber and hunting trophies. In much of Russia and in some central Asian countries, an uncontrolled trade has threatened native wildlife. Central and eastern European countries also import many species, some from dubious sources.



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An Ocelot fur coat on sale in Athens, Greece during TRAFFIC surveys in 1998.

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The EU has adopted some of the most comprehensive wildlife trade legislation in existence to implement the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

However, Europe also includes a number of countries that have not joined CITES, notably Ireland, most CIS countries and the new independent republics of former Yugoslavia.

In addition, implementation of the Convention's many provisions varies, ranging from comprehensive in some of the wealthier nations to virtually non-existent in some of the economies in transition elsewhere.



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The Belgian Bird Market in Brussels.

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Our role

TRAFFIC Europe is part of the worldwide TRAFFIC Network, which has offices in 20 countries.

TRAFFIC aims to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals does not exceed sustainable levels, and is in accordance with national laws and international treaties.

The Network provides accurate and objective data and technical expertise to law enforcement and Customs officials, governments, specialists and others as a basis for effective policies and programmes for wild species in trade.

TRAFFIC has four areas of focus: medicinal wildlife trade; trade in timber and other wood products; fisheries products in trade; and promoting the effectiveness of CITES and other wildlife trade controls.

In addition, TRAFFIC Europe has identified regional priorities, such as the European trade in live reptiles and amphibians and the wild bulb trade in Europe.

TRAFFIC Europe is active across the continent, with an area of responsibility including more than 50 countries.

The TRAFFIC Europe regional office is based in Brussels, Belgium, while national offices are based in Paris, France; Frankfurt, Germany; Rome, Italy; Zeist, The Netherlands and Moscow, Russia.

These pages highlight how TRAFFIC Europe operates as well as some recent achievements and ongoing initiatives.

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Assisting CITES implementation in the EU

The EU includes 15 countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK). Early in the next century up to 10 additional countries may join, which would create a single market of at least 500 million people.

The EU also represents one of the world's largest markets for wild plants and animals, including many regulated in international trade under CITES. It is an important consuming market and decision-making centre, the policies of which influence world trade patterns.

TRAFFIC Europe is active in shaping and supporting EU policies that benefit conservation and wise use of wild species in international trade. TRAFFIC played a key role in the drafting and adoption of new EU wildlife trade legislation that entered into force on 1 June 1997 (Council Regulation (EC) No. 338/97 on the Protection of Species of Wild Fauna and Flora By Regulating Trade Therein). Committed to ensuring the success of this legislation, TRAFFIC Europe, WWF and the European Commission conducted an information campaign in 1997 and 1998 to inform travellers, traders and law enforcement officials about the Regulation, which requires that Member States strictly implement its provisions and adopt set penalties for violations. TRAFFIC staff also help develop and refine EU policies on which species can be imported.

Technical assistance and scientific information is provided to enforcement bodies throughout the EU, as well as to CITES Scientific and Management Authorities in the 15 Member States that periodically meet to review and fine-tune the Regulation.



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Staff investigations in Italy, Greece and the Dutch Antilles have helped lead to important results. In Italy, sweeping reforms of the regulatory system have transformed the country into a model for others.

While legislation is only a first step, some EU countries have yet to take it.

TRAFFIC's probes in Greece helped encourage the country to join CITES in 1993, but in 1998 Greece still had yet to adopt effective legislation to implement the provisions of CITES. Enforcement, too, is critical. Surveys by TRAFFIC, most recently in August 1998, have found wildlife products that are banned or strictly regulated in international trade readily available in Athens.

In 1998, the CITES Standing Committee -- the enforcement arm of the Convention -- recommended that all CITES Parties refrain from trading in CITES-listed species with Greece until the country adopts the needed legislation, a need which the Greek Government is now addressing.

The EU's own evaluation of its wildlife trade legislation, scheduled for late 1999, will provide further details on implementation by Member States.

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Facing the challenges in Russia and the CIS

The growing, uncontrolled trade in wild plants and animal species prompted TRAFFIC Europe to open an office in Moscow in April 1995. Today, the staff there monitor a very active trade in their country and in the adjacent countries of the CIS, which include 12 former Soviet republics.

Russia and other CIS countries contain some of the most pristine areas and rare wildlife species on earth. Their close proximity to China and other east Asian countries also means that their indigenous wildlife used in traditional East Asian medicine, such as Tigers, bears, musk deer and ginseng, are highly sought after.

TRAFFIC has conducted in-depth studies on a variety of wildlife in trade, including wild sheep and goats, musk deer, Saiga Antelope, birds of prey, medicinal plants, timber and reptiles.

Investigations have been undertaken on the wildlife trade situation in Russia and the Central Asia republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

These studies, published in 1998, highlighted a number of challenges. For example, TRAFFIC found that once the enforcement net at the border was surpassed, even smuggled CITES-listed species could be traded freely.



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Results: TRAFFIC Europe studies indicate an increasing number of smugglers from Turkey, Iran and other Middle East countries are targeting Russia's birds of prey, such as Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* pictured here. Other birds of prey actively sought and sold include White-tailed Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*.

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TRAFFIC Europe is working to address this shortcoming that seriously undermines Russia's ability to regulate trade in exotic species and implement CITES. In 1998, TRAFFIC and WWF facilitated adoption of legislation by the Moscow Duma to regulate this type of trade in Moscow and efforts are now under way to expand this legislation to other parts of the country.

TRAFFIC also assists authorities in trade control activities and training.

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

The medicinal trade in wildlife

A number of European wildlife species and their products are used and traded in large volumes for medicinal purposes, such as musk deer pods, Saiga Antelope horns and velvet deer antlers. However, the bulk of the harvest and trade in native European species for medicine involves plants.

The trade in medicinal plants is of particular concern as an increasing number of people throughout Europe are turning to plant-based medicines and herbal remedies. In some parts of Europe, there is also still widespread traditional usage of many plant species.

Europe is one of the world's largest consumers of medicinal and aromatic plants and plant parts, with annual imports of at least 120 000 tonnes. A number of native European medicinal plants are also traded in large volumes.

New field studies are now under way on Asian Ginseng and other ginseng species, with a particular focus on the populations in the Russian Far East and adjacent areas.

In 1997 and 1998, TRAFFIC Europe staff supervised research into collection, use and international trade of medicinal plants in Albania, France, Hungary, Italy and Spain. They also collaborated with other institutions in Bulgaria, Germany, Turkey and the UK to gather information.

The findings, published in the 1998 *Species in Danger* report *Europe's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Their Use, Trade and Conservation* indicate a critical need for action, with at least 150 European species at risk in one or



Deadly healing?

The flowers, roots and whole plant of Mountain Tobacco *Arnica montana* are used as an aid to healing wounds. Populations of this plant are declining in many European countries.

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several nations from over-collection in the wild. The number is likely higher.

The findings became an important base for *The First International Symposium on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants in Trade in Europe*.

The June 1998 symposium, which was organised by TRAFFIC Europe in collaboration with WWF, the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group and the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew, brought together more than 120 specialists, government and industry representatives and conservationists.

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier Reptiles become ever-more fashionable

Europe's trade in live animals as pets involves tens of millions of reptiles, mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and invertebrates. The trade in reptiles in particular is booming.

The EU alone imports more than 500 species every year. The trade includes snakes, turtles, tortoises, chameleons, geckos, monitor lizards and even crocodiles. Europe is also a vast market for reptile products such as skins and leather.

Live reptiles are imported from around the globe, including many countries in East and Southern Africa, Madagascar, Indonesia, Suriname and countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea. Species from CIS countries are increasingly seen throughout Europe as well.

While the demand for live reptiles is on the rise, so, too, is smuggling. Many reptile species are protected by laws in their country of origin and a large number of the imported reptiles are regulated in trade under CITES or EU legislation.

Recent TRAFFIC Europe research indicates that both legal and illegal traders are increasingly organized. Whereas the former can help increase transparency in the trade, an increasingly organized illicit trade must be closely monitored.

TRAFFIC Europe's work on live reptiles aims to ensure the trade does not threaten the survival of species and to support Customs, Police and other enforcement authorities in Europe to stop illegal trade.



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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier

Bear assessment

Brown Bear populations are threatened in western Europe, largely as a result of habitat fragmentation. However, in many central European countries and in Russia, populations of Brown Bear are robust and even increasing in some areas.

All eight of the world's bear species are listed in the CITES Appendices. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES expressed deep concern that illegal trade in bear parts could threaten the conservation status of the world's bear populations. The Parties adopted a resolution calling for better enforcement of existing CITES provisions on trade in bears.

The resolution calls for all CITES Parties to step up their efforts to curtail illegal trade in bear parts and for countries that are home to Brown Bears to allocate sufficient resources to prevent bear poaching.

TRAFFIC Europe is working with CITES authorities and bear experts throughout Europe to assess the level of implementation of this resolution.

In CIS countries in particular, TRAFFIC is striving to obtain up-to-date information on any national laws, trophy hunting, poaching, medicinal trade trends and other developments since the resolution's adoption at the Parties' tenth meeting in June 1997.

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Europe: a vast wildlife consumer and supplier Fisheries

The sustainability of fisheries is an area of growing concern in Europe. Many fisheries are in crisis with already over-exploited stocks. European fleets also operate in all the world's major fishing waters.

TRAFFIC Europe has taken a lead on helping to ensure sustainability of the catch and trade in sharks as well as sturgeons from the Caspian Sea.

The fishing fleets of every European country catch sharks, but most remain largely unmonitored and unmanaged. In Europe, sharks are used primarily as food, but their fins, liver and other parts are also used.

TRAFFIC has conducted in-depth studies of fisheries and trade in 13 European countries. The Piked or Spiny Dogfish *Squalus acanthias* was by far the most important in terms of commercial landings. The status of this shark has been adversely affected by overfishing, particularly in France, Norway, Ireland and the UK. In recent years, demand for the meat of this shark has been met by imports from the USA, where the status of Piked Dogfish is now of concern.

TRAFFIC staff remain active on the shark front, advising decision makers, liaising with specialists and giving presentations. TRAFFIC staff in Italy recently published the results of their research and helped create an educational exhibit on shark fisheries in trade at the Genoa Aquarium.



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TRAFFIC remains committed to encouraging the wise management of shark fisheries and trade in Europe and works with partners in the IUCN/SSC Shark Specialist Group and others to this end.

Sturgeon conservation is a priority. TRAFFIC's research and activities on the trade in sturgeon products has helped prompt national, regional and international action.

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Its research on sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and international caviar trade helped ensure the adoption of CITES trade controls for all sturgeons and their products in international trade, which took effect in mid-1998.

World populations of sturgeon may have declined by up to 70 per cent. Today, up to 90 per cent of the world's caviar supply comes from only four sturgeon species in the Caspian Sea.



TRAFFIC Europe now serves as a focal point for information and action. Staff work with governments, the caviar industry and consumers and specialists to ensure the effective implementation of the new controls under CITES and, most importantly, the long-term survival of sturgeons.

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Recent Publications

Wildlife Trade in Russia and Central Asia

1998 201pp

Reference Guide, European Community Wildlife Trade Regulations

European Commission/TRAFFIC Europe/WWF 1998

Europe's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants: Their Use, Trade and Conservation

Dagmar Lange June 1998 77pp

Indagine Sul Commercio Degli Elasmobranchi: La Situazione in Italia

Alberto Laurenti e Massimiliano Rocco April 1998 61pp

Shark Fisheries and Trade in Europe

Elizabeth H. Fleming and Philippe A. Papageorgiou 1997 78pp

Sturgeons of the Caspian Sea and the International Trade in Caviar

T. De Meulenaer and C. Raymakers October 1996 71pp

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TRAFFIC creates more links with Taiwan TCM community

An estimated 5000 people attended Taiwan's first national Exhibition and Conference on Chinese Medicine held in Taipei in September. TRAFFIC East Asia was the only conservation body invited to participate in the event, which was organized by the Taiwan Department of Health's Committee on Chinese Medicine and Pharmacy and co-sponsored by the Chinese Medicine Commercial Association.



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The aims of the conference included publicising and supporting traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) culture; promoting modernization and scientific development of TCM; and introducing the regulation of TCM derived from protected wildlife species.

In his speech, Taiwan Vice President Chan Lien said that the development of TCM in Taiwan is undergoing a big change. He announced the government is going to create TCM departments in 14 teaching hospitals and also provide approximately US\$30 million to help hospitals establish evaluation systems for TCM's effectiveness. Performance of the TCM doctors in these teaching hospitals will also be evaluated as part of hospitals' accreditation, he said.

The exhibition included a wide range of exhibits, including a popular exhibit by TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei. This exhibit focused upon TCM and wildlife conservation in order to help the TCM community understand international conservation trends related to traditional medicine, the concept of sustainable use and the regulation of medicinal products that are derived from protected wildlife species.

The display introduced a recent decision by Taiwan's Board of Foreign Trade to regulate the import and export of plants regulated in international trade under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). It also included information about the regulation of

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trade in medicinal animal species through the Taiwan Wildlife Conservation Law.

At the display, more than 200 people asked to be put on a mailing list so that they could receive further information, marking an important step forward between TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei and the wider TCM community in Taiwan.

-- *Joyce Wu and Rita Chang, TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei*

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UK adopts a partnership approach to wildlife crime

by Stephanie Pendry, UK Enforcement Assistance Officer, TRAFFIC International

TRAFFIC is participating in an important partnership to combat wildlife crime in the UK. The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) is a permanent national committee that provides a forum for both discussion and action on practical enforcement initiatives.



PARTNERSHIP FOR ACTION AGAINST
wildlife crime

PAW was created in 1995 following a legislative review and is composed of the UK CITES Management Authority, the Home Office, the UK Police Forces, H.M Customs and Excise, TRAFFIC International and other non-governmental bodies involved in wildlife law enforcement issues.

It is closely involved in the review, co-ordination and collaboration of all issues relating to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in the UK.

PAW is co-ordinated by a Wildlife Law Enforcement Steering Group of government agencies and meets three times yearly.

PAW has undertaken or produced a variety of activities and a large number of materials. For example, *a Guide for Wildlife Law Enforcement in the UK* was published, providing information pertinent to every aspect of the law, policy, practical advice, contacts, resources and many other issues. Other materials have included a directory of forensic experts and a kit for taking samples for DNA analysis from live birds and derivatives. Revised national legislation to implement the new EU regulation on wildlife trade also took place under the auspices of this group.

TRAFFIC has been an active member of PAW since its inception, particularly on two of its working groups. TRAFFIC International co-ordinates the work

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of the DNA and Other Forensic Techniques Working Group and is a member of the Working Group for Data Exchange and Management.

The DNA Working Group monitors developments in forensic techniques, aiming to identify and incorporate new technologies into investigation of wildlife crime. Research now under way includes the development of a DNA test from feather tissue instead of blood as well as methods to identify Tiger bone in manufactured medicines. The group is also examining the use of forensic techniques to determine the age of ivory.

The Working Group for Data Exchange and Management is focusing on the most effective means by which to share information between different organizations about wildlife offences. Formal protocols and safeguards are being developed in response to the recently introduced Data Protection Act in the country. In addition, a directory of organizations that can help with the issues relating to wildlife offences is under development.

PAW has created a forum and mechanism for a comprehensive, structured and co-ordinated approach to improving both laws and enforcement in the UK. Its achievements include useful products for law enforcement officers and changes in legislation. The process has led to more effective enforcement, with a marked increase in seizures and prosecutions for illegal trade as well.

On the issue of prosecution, one of the most recent related products is *By Hook or by Crook – a Reference Manual on Illegal Wildlife Trade and Prosecutions in the UK*. This book, developed primarily for the judiciary and Police and Customs officials in the UK, was written by Jane Holden of TRAFFIC Oceania and released in December 1998.

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Plans set for training workshops in China

TRAFFIC East Asia, together with the WWF China Programme and the CITES Management Authority of China, will host training workshops in China for the wildlife law enforcement officials in 1999. The workshops are funded by WWF Germany.

The aims of the training workshops are to assist China in building capacity among enforcement staff to enhance understanding and implementation of national and international wildlife trade controls. Particular attention will also be given to assisting staff to gain a greater understanding of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. China is one of the 144 member countries of CITES.

TRAFFIC has hosted or participated in similar workshops throughout East Asia and elsewhere.

The workshops are designed to foster relationships between agencies working on issues related to wildlife in trade and to further an international and domestic information network for sharing of wildlife trade information.

China shares borders with 16 countries or territories. Wildlife products found in illegal trade range from Tiger bone, bear bile and cat skins in North East China to orchids, turtles, ivory and live animals in South West China. Medicinal plants protected in China, such as Panax ginseng, also find their way into markets around China. Greater co-operation and sharing of wildlife trade information and expertise from the various regions within and around China is therefore vital in the ever-complex task of trying to reduce illicit or unsustainable trade.

Manuals to aid the implementation of CITES and China's domestic legislation and regulations will be provided to supplement the training. Manuals in Chinese to help officials identify some of the main wildlife species and their derivatives in China's cross-border trade will also be provided.

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Succulent plants face lean future in South Africa

Hundreds of succulent plant species are facing an uncertain future due to poor management by authorities and the demands of plant collectors from around the world, according to the findings of a new study by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa.

The findings, published in the report *South Africa's Trade in Southern African Succulent Plants* identify 128 succulent plant species as susceptible to the destructive effects of habitat degradation and the activities of plant collectors. The latter include hobbyists and traditional medical practitioners.

The species range from the Lesotho endemic *Aloe polyphylla* that is used medicinally but also threatened by construction of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project to the South African species *Gibbaeum esterhuyseniae*, which was considered extinct in the wild until about three years ago when it was rediscovered.

"The fact that illegal trade and habitat destruction are endangering succulent plant populations is undeniable," said David Newton, South Africa National Representative for TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa and co-author of the new report. "Improved government conservation management, enhanced enforcement efforts and encouragement of artificial propagation of rare species, especially of those used for medicinal and horticultural purposes, are essential for these species."

The study found that South African conservation authorities have inadequately recorded the legal and illegal trade, with even succulent plant species covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) receiving little attention.

Succulent plants are in demand from a variety of sectors, including horticultural companies, hobbyists and commercial collectors and for use in traditional and western medicines. In South Africa, succulent plants are also impacted by habitat destruction caused by the lack of adequate Environmental Impact Assessment procedures prior to major construction activities. The new report also highlights negligence of government botanical gardens and some private plant traders in adhering to provincial conservation ordinances.

The report, launched in November 1998, recommends a variety of steps to

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improve government management procedures, the establishment of effective Environmental Impact Assessment procedures, resolving the problem of smuggling through the postal system and conservation of species through encouraging artificial propagation.

South Africa's Trade in Southern African Succulent Plants. 1998. Available from TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa-South Africa, c/o Endangered Wildlife Trust, Private Bag XII, Parkview 2122, South Africa.

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- Ion Fund
- IUCN-The World Conservation Union
- IUCN Mozambique Country Office
- IUCN Species Survival Commission
- IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group
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