

# TRAFFIC DISPATCHES

Number 17 July 2001

## Reviews on whale meat trade controls in Japan, South Korea and Norway released

On 23 July 2001, coinciding with the opening of the 53rd meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) held in London, TRAFFIC released three reports based on its continued efforts to review whale meat trade controls in Japan, South Korea and Norway. These reports provide the latest TRAFFIC information available on trade controls in the respective countries.

The studies noted the significant progress made by Norway and Japan in implementing domestic management systems to regulate trade in whale products, and especially in the establishment of DNA registers of whales legally caught in their waters.

The three studies titled “*Monitoring progress in Norway’s development of a DNA register for its domestic management system for whale meat*” (July 2001), “*A Survey of the Commercial Trade in Whale Meat Products in Japan*” (June 2000) and “*A Survey of Whale Meat Markets Along South Korea’s Coast*” (June 2000) were funded by WWF.

In late 1999, with the co-operation of the relevant government authorities, TRAFFIC commenced a study aimed to gain understanding of the trade control measures introduced in Norway and verify the accuracy of the DNA register system employed. DNA samples are reported to be taken by government inspectors from each specimen as soon as whales are caught, and a specialised laboratory has been commissioned to analyse samples and produce a DNA fingerprint for each individual whale. Norway has established a DNA register of all minke whales legally caught for the 1997 season onwards.

During its review, TRAFFIC secured DNA profiles from a selection of samples on the Norwegian market and in June 2000 presented the results to the Norwegian government for matching with the register. However, this matching remains unresolved over a year later and TRAFFIC is awaiting further information from the Norwegian authorities.



Caroline Raymakers / TRAFFIC Europe

Whale meat on sale in Norway.

In Japan, samples for genetic analysis are reported to be collected from every specimen of minke whale harvested as part of Japan’s scientific whaling operations in the Antarctic and North Pacific regions. Government notifications also request collection of samples from specimens of baleen whales and Sperm Whales stranded or caught as bycatch in national waters.

TRAFFIC’s review of the measures adopted identified shortcomings in the domestic management system’s ability to distinguish between legal and illegal whale meat in the marketplace as inclusion of samples from frozen stocks, incidental catch and strandings in the register is not yet mandatory.

However, TRAFFIC notes with satisfaction recent revisions to whaling regulations in Japan which now require mandatory reporting of the bycatch of large whales in trap net fisheries (including biological and catch information), provision of DNA samples for analysis, and reporting of DNA results to the government. TRAFFIC fully supports the establishment of a comprehensive DNA register within Japan encompassing not only “by-products”

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# New Federal Wildlife bill sets standards for wildlife protection in Australia

A new wildlife trade law that was passed through both houses of parliament in Canberra, on Friday, 29 June 2001 sets new standards for wildlife protection in Australia.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Wildlife Protection) Bill 2001* integrates the existing Act dealing with wildlife trade\* within the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

The new bill will drastically increase the Federal Government's capacity to enforce wildlife protection laws, making it easier to prosecute illegal importing of endangered

species such as exotic birds, whale bone products and rhino and tiger parts.

Overall effectiveness of the legislation, however, will depend on key points of government support, such as adequate funding and resources, in terms of both expertise and personnel, to implement and enforce the legislation; appropriately strong regulations to be finalised in the drafting process; and the review of the National Exotic Birds Registration Scheme (NEBRS) which will be conducted by TRAFFIC Oceania prior to the legislation coming into force in December 2001.

TRAFFIC Oceania, together with WWF Australia and Humane Society International suggested a number of amendments to the bill which were supported by all political parties.

These included among others requirements to consider recovery plans before giving export permits relating to threatened species, and restricting registered scientific exchanges to non-commercial exchanges.

*For more information, please contact Director Glenn Sant at TRAFFIC Oceania. For contact details, see page 12.*

*\*Wildlife Protection (Regulation of Exports and Imports) Act 1982*



Sophie Chapple

Glenn Sant, Director, TRAFFIC Oceania discusses the Bill with another conservationist outside Australia's Parliament House shortly after the Bill was tabled on 24 May 2001.

## TRAFFIC staff news

### Welcome

Ernie Cooper has started his work as the new TRAFFIC North America Representative in Canada in June 2001. Ernie comes to TRAFFIC after a long career with Environment Canada as a Wildlife Inspector based in Vancouver.

\*

Dr. Fumihito Muto started as the new Regional Fisheries Officer in TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan in April 2001. Dr. Muto has trained in fisheries science at the Hokkaido University. He will be working on regional fisheries issues in Japan, and elsewhere in the region.

\*

Kelly Trentham started her work as the new Office Manager at TRAFFIC International in April 2001.

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Karin Berkhoudt has joined TRAFFIC-Europe Regional Office as the new Programme Officer in May 2001.

Akiko Ishihara from TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan has commenced her maternity leave on 16 July 2001 during which Shoko Kameoka will be working full-time at Japan office.

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### Goodbye

Nina Marshall has left her position as the Assistant Director in TRAFFIC Europe Regional office in May 2001 to take up a new challenge at the Conservation International in Washington as the Grant Director for Africa.

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TRAFFIC is a joint programme of IUCN-The World Conservation Union and WWF, the conservation organization. It aims to help ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.

The TRAFFIC Network works in co-operation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

TRAFFIC Dispatches is published by TRAFFIC International to keep the Network's partners and supporters informed about our activities and accomplishments.



# CITES legislation gets underway in Viet Nam

by Julie Thomson, National Representative, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia-Viet Nam

Like its neighbours, Viet Nam has a long history of trade in wild species. The trade is known to have had localised impacts on abundance of some species but it was not until Viet Nam embarked upon its highly successful policy of economic restructuring in the early 1980s that the trade began affecting wildlife from neighbouring states. This factor, alongside China's dramatic economic growth and historical trade ties between the two countries, have resulted in Viet Nam emerging as a significant player in the wildlife trade at the regional level.

At the international level, Viet Nam acts as a source area especially for reptiles and small to medium sized mammals. Viet Nam is also a nation that consumes wild species, in particular, bears and reptiles in large quantities. It also acts as a transit route to international markets, such as China, for species that are legally and illegally harvested from its neighbouring countries, namely Laos and Cambodia.

Since acceding to CITES in 1994, the Vietnamese government has striven to address illegal wildlife trade but has so far lacked the capacity to effectively implement and enforce the Convention. The findings of the CITES Secretariat from the last phase of the CITES National Legislation project, presented at the 11th Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP11) last year, noted that implementation of CITES legislation in Viet Nam was far from sufficient. To improve the situation, the Parties requested Viet Nam to adopt adequate legislation before 31 October 2001 (under Decision 11.15). In the conclusions, it was noted that should Viet Nam fail to adopt the legislation, it could risk facing sanctions on trade in CITES-listed species.

In response, the Vietnamese government established a CITES Legislation Working Group in September last year and invited TRAFFIC to provide technical assistance to the group. Members of the Working Group represented six

ministries and four scientific institutions of the country.

In early April 2001, draft CITES legislation was completed and the Asia-Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL), IUCN, WWF and TRAFFIC were asked to review it. It is expected that a revised draft will be submitted to the Prime Minister of Viet Nam for ratification before September 2001. After ratification, the legislation will provide for better implementation of CITES by clearly designating Viet Nam's CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, clarifying CITES-listed species and those protected by Viet Nam's

domestic legislation and establishing penalties for violation of the Convention.

The legislation will come just in time to acknowledge the importance of CITES, before the 17th Annual CITES Animals Committee meeting convenes in Ha Noi in July-August 2001 and, even more importantly, before the CITES deadline for adequate legislation to be in place expires in October 2001.

The Rufford Foundation and WWF-US have generously supported TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Viet Nam's work on this issue.

## National tourist awareness campaign on wildlife trade and CITES launched

On 15 June 2001 the Vietnamese government in collaboration with TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Viet Nam launched a national tourist awareness campaign on wildlife trade and CITES.

Over the last several years, Viet Nam has increasingly become a popular destination for foreign tourists. Renowned for its rich cultural and ecological heritage, over two million tourists visited Viet Nam in 2000. This is an increase of nearly 20% from the previous year and further rises are expected as the government makes good of its promise "Viet Nam: Destination for the New

Millennium."

As the number of tourists to Viet Nam has grown, so too have pressures on the nation's wild animal and plant species. Unwittingly, many tourists are buying souvenirs or products derived from threatened wild animals and plants harvested illegally from Viet Nam and its neighbours.

Often these products are sold openly, with no indication that their sale is illegal under Viet Nam's domestic law or that they may require CITES permits for export. For a country that has lost over 60 % of its forest cover in the last fifty years and whose species are quickly disappearing

*continued on page 5...*



Two bill-boards, in English and Vietnamese, will be displayed at Tan Son Nhat International Airport in Ho Chi Minh City in the end of July 2001.

# Eastern Europe has a lion's share of the Eurasian trophy hunting tourism

by Roland Melisch, National Representative, TRAFFIC Europe-Germany

There have been increasing attempts in recent years to integrate trophy hunting as a conservation tool into wildlife management programmes, the goal being the sustainable use of wildlife. During these years, trophy hunting's potential impact on these conservation efforts has been debated. To gain a better understanding of demand for, products from and supply of trophy hunting, TRAFFIC Europe initiated in 1998 a review of the Eurasian trophy hunting market with support from WWF and the European Commission. The study is now nearing completion and will be published in the coming months.

The TRAFFIC Europe Regional report "*The Lion's Share of the Hunt*" by Doris Hofer and other contributors, aims to provide a basic overview of the Eurasian tourist hunting market. The scope of the study extends to 18 countries in Europe (EU countries, Malta, Norway, Switzerland) regarded primarily as demand countries, and 38 countries in Eurasia (covering regions and countries such as Eastern Europe, Russia, Central Asia and the Near East, Himalaya, Mongolia, and China) regarded as supply, or destination, countries.

Within the Eurasian market overview, a survey was co-supported

by the German Hunters Association (DJV) and WWF-Germany in order to better understand German hunters' tourist hunting demand, frequency and preferences.

## Abundant species of Eastern Europe attract many EU hunters

The study shows that a lion's share of the Eurasian tourist hunting market is hunting by EU hunters in Eastern Europe for abundant species. Hunting in Eastern Europe entails low risk in terms of hunting success, organisation, or security, and its cost is comparable to an average holiday. More than half

of the German tourist hunters spend between EUR1250 (US\$1100) and EUR3000 (US\$2600) per expedition. The average price of a foreign hunt is about EUR2000 (US\$1700). For Eurasian destinations the fee is slightly less.

From time to time, about 20 – 30 % of European hunters travel abroad for hunting. They are mainly from Germany, Austria, the Benelux countries, Italy, and Spain. Destination preferences differ from country to country. German and Italian hunters travel to a wide range of European destinations, Spanish tourist hunters prefer North America, and Benelux hunters are much more oriented towards Africa. In general, the majority of tourist hunters visit destinations that are relatively close to home.

The main Eurasian conservation hot-spots like the Caucasus, the Altai and Tien Shan Mountains, and the Russian Far East imply higher costs and long distance travelling and thus attract only a minority of the foreign hunting industry.

## Ungulates and birds the preferred game for many

The game species preferred by German and Spanish hunters abroad are ungulates, mainly Red Deer, Roe Deer, Wild Boar and, to a lesser extent, antelope, gazelle, wild sheep and goats. Some 45% of German tourist hunters have hunted for small game and waterfowl at some point in the past. Almost a fifth of German hunters have hunted for big game carnivores. Italian tourist hunters prefer bird hunting abroad.

A review of print and internet advertisements, catalogues and price lists reveals that at least 29 ungulate and 15 carnivore species are offered in Europe for tourist hunting in the supply countries surveyed during this project. For Eurasian destinations, these indicate a preference by tourist



Edward Mendell / WWF-UK

Most of the CITES-listed trophy items imported from Eurasia to Europe and North America between 1990-96 were Brown Bears *Ursus arctos* (1135). The total number of registered CITES-listed imports during the period was 1924.

Timber  
wolf,  
*Canis  
lupus*



PJ Banks/WWF-UK

hunters for Moose, Roe Deer, Red Deer, Mouflon, and Wild Boar.

An analysis of reported imports of Eurasian taxa listed under CITES from the years 1990 -1996 revealed that 912 trophy items were registered as imports into the European demand countries, as compared to 1012 which were registered as imports into Canada and the US. During this period, for both of these main demand regions (Europe and North America), the largest part of CITES-listed trophy item imports from Eurasia between 1990 and 1996 were formed by Brown Bear *Ursus arctos* (1135), Argali *Ovis ammon* (421), and Wolf *Canis lupus* (178).

#### Minimal economic incentives on national level

While Hungary or Poland can supply 10 000 – 20 000 hunts per year, the Central Asian countries or China currently reach a limit within the hundreds. Even within the main supply countries, the economic contribution of foreign hunting is extremely limited on a national level (e.g. in Hungary: 0.0005% of the GNP).

Based on available data gathered during this study, it can be estimated that European hunters generate around EUR50 million (US\$43million) annually, which remains in the Eurasian supply countries. Information about the use and re-investment of this revenue into wildlife management or conservation is largely unavailable.

#### More co-operation and information sharing needed

This analysis provides the first market overview of its kind for Eurasian trophy-hunted species. It shows that European hunters travelling to the East for foreign hunts are attracted by abundant species and reject destinations that have a "bad image" in terms of hunting success,

security, organisation, or value for money.

Species listed by CITES only attract a small share of European tourist hunters. With the methodology used during this report, it was not possible to assess any illegal activities, such as hunting in excess of local quotas or using illegal methods of hunting.

However, despite sharing a common regulation implementing CITES in the EU, the survey indicated differences in the strictness of handling practices in trophy importing procedures from country to country. A better information sharing system between EU countries is necessary, and would be best addressed at the relevant EU-CITES management group.

The benefits shared between wildlife management systems, local communities, and the foreign trophy hunting demand remain difficult to assess. Whereas on a general level the activities of the Eurasian trophy hunting industry do not seem to have any large impact on a destination country's economy, benefits may well arise on a more regional or local level. Hence, granting financial support to the management of the few threatened species targeted by trophy hunters should be encouraged.

Within the European demand countries, very little information is available explaining revenue systems in Eurasian countries as compared with, for example, destination countries in Southern Africa or North America.

To compile adequate information regarding the conservation benefits involved, more information sharing is needed between hunting associations, the tourist hunting industry, wildlife management decision-makers as well as conservation organisations in both the government and NGO sector.

For more information, please contact TRAFFIC Europe-Germany. For contact details, see page 12.

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due to the demands of a thriving illegal international trade, the additional pressures brought on by foreign tourists may eventually drive some species to the brink of extinction.

In response to this situation, TRAFFIC and the Forest Protection Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development have joined forces to produce and distribute awareness materials for tourists and the general public on wildlife products to avoid purchasing in Viet Nam.

The materials include multi-lingual brochures in Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese and English languages, as well as posters, and billboards encouraging legal and sustainable purchasing habits. Thousands of brochures and hundreds of posters have already been distributed to popular tourist hotels, restaurants, tour operators, and provincial Forest Protection Departments across the country. The billboards will be installed in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City's international airports sometime in late July and early August.

Production of the tourist awareness materials was made possible through a grant to TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Viet Nam by the British Embassy in Ha Noi.

## Toothfish study out in mid-August

A TRAFFIC Network study "*Patagonian Toothfish: Are Conservation and Trade Measures Working?*" on the status of the trade in Patagonian Toothfish *Dissostichus eleginoides* will be released on 14 August, 2001. On the date, a limited number of off-prints of the study will be available. The article is part of the next issue of *TRAFFIC Bulletin Vol.19 No.1*. that will be coming out in early Autumn.

For more information, see [www.traffic.org](http://www.traffic.org) on the day of the release or contact TRAFFIC Oceania. For contact details, see page 12.



# Nature conservation legislation reviewed in South Africa

by Markus Burgener, Programme Officer, TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa – South Africa

The alignment of provincial nature conservation legislation in South Africa has been identified as an area of critical importance in attempts of ensuring effective regulation of the wildlife trade. Currently wildlife trade in the country is regulated in terms of a highly fragmented *potpourri* of provincial Ordinances, Acts, Decrees and Proclamations, which are, in numerous aspects, inconsistent, incomplete, outdated and overly complex. A recent TRAFFIC report is now set to serve as a tool in efforts to update the currently insufficient legislation.



Two separate initiatives, namely the South African CITES Implementation Project (SACIP) and the Law Reform Programme (DLRP) of South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) are currently addressing this unruly situation. The ultimate aim of these initiatives, both managed by DEAT, is the development of national biodiversity conservation legislation. The legislation will include provisions specific to CITES as well as general trade provisions for all species.

A recently published report '*Towards a Sustainable Wildlife Trade: An Analysis of Nature Conservation Legislation in South Africa with Particular Reference to the Wildlife Trade*' by the Institute of Criminology of the University of Cape Town (UCT) in association with TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa - South Africa has been produced to serve as a tool in the development of this legislation. The project was financially supported by the United Nations Foundation.

The report is one of the key outputs of a collaborative research project that was initiated after a workshop convened in 1999 by UCT, brought together a broad group of leading figures in the national conservation field.

The report provides a detailed description of the existing legislative, policy and institutional environment

related to South Africa's wildlife trade. Specific themes that are either being inadequately addressed by legislation or are not being addressed at all are also outlined and discussed.

At the present time there are, for example, a number of inconsistencies in permitting procedures, sanction provisions, legal definitions, and the conservation status of many indigenous species. This confusing legislative structure makes it extremely difficult for conservation authorities already facing budgetary and capacity constraints, to carry out their work effectively and efficiently.

Provincial restructuring in 1994, combined with a failure to repeal nature conservation legislation of the former Independent States and Self-governing Territories, has intensified an already fragmented legal environment.

But problems are not only created through inconsistencies between various Ordinances and Acts. The existing legislation is for the most part outdated and there are, for instance, no provisions dealing with the involvement of communities in regulating wildlife trade or the use of incentives to encourage persons involved in the trade to utilise natural resources in a sustainable manner. Nor does the existing system allow national monitoring and oversight of the extent, and nature, of wildlife trade.

The report provides also a series of recommendations and alignment options mainly to assist provincial and national authorities in amending, developing and drafting the legislation. Key recommendations include among others the following:

- ♦ Biodiversity utilisation, including wildlife trade, can be most effectively and holistically addressed through national legislation. Therefore alignment with both national and provincial laws should take place within national legislation, particularly with respect to definitions, alien organisms, permitting procedures, sanctions, schedule amendment procedures and the inclusion of wildlife welfare provisions.

- ♦ National nature conservation legislation should also incorporate creative tools and strategies in achieving sustainable legal wildlife trade (for instance, through the use of incentives and the involvement of communities in biodiversity management).

- ♦ Legislation of the former homelands should be repealed as these Acts and Ordinances are outdated and create unnecessary implementation problems for conservation authorities.

*For more information and complete recommendations, please contact TESA-South Africa office. For contact details, see page 12. A full copy of the report in PDF format can also be downloaded from TRAFFIC*

# Next steps towards better collaboration in CITES enforcement work in Egypt

by Stephanie Pendry, UK Enforcement Assistance Officer, TRAFFIC International

Egypt is facing a number of wildlife trade challenges, such as trade in ivory, tortoises, *Uromastyx* lizards, snakes and raptors. The Egyptian authorities know of these issues, are making steps to improve the situation in Egypt, and are clearly committed to enforcing CITES. However, Customs awareness of wildlife issues is in general still low, and there are few resources available for CITES law enforcement in the country.

In response to a request from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for assistance in training on CITES enforcement, a workshop was held in Cairo in March 2001. Her Majesty's Customs and Excise CITES Team from the UK and TRAFFIC International provided the training for the workshop that was organised by the UK Embassy in Cairo. The Environment Project Fund of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office UK (FCO) funded the workshop.

One of the main aims of the three-day workshop was to increase co-ordination and collaboration between all pertinent enforcement agencies and government departments. This especially in a situation where the implementation and enforcement of CITES in Egypt falls within the remit of 7 Ministries (Interior, Defence, Tourism, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Environment). The overall responsibility for CITES lies with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation. In addition, there are three CITES

Scientific Authorities in the country for Animals, Plants and Marine species.

A total of 40 participants attended the workshop from all Ministries and government agencies involved in CITES. Training was given on a range of enforcement issues, including permit completion, examination of shipments, profiling and targeting, confiscations, smuggling and identification. A series of exercises such as permit checking and species identification gave the participants the opportunity to put into practice what they were learning.

In the last two years, the Egyptian enforcement agencies have made a concerted effort to improve their CITES role and are still in the early stages of developing their capacity. Much effort is concentrated at Cairo Airport, and the work of the Environment Police based at the Airport (who work closely with Customs) is particularly impressive. As this centre of expertise at the Airport is developed the expertise can be devolved to other border points.

One of the major challenges facing the authorities is the number of different Ministries involved and their respective roles in CITES enforcement. The workshop was the first step on the ladder to achieving a greater level of communication between all parties involved in CITES enforcement and it is hoped that this type of collaboration will continue and grow in the future.

# Compromise agreement on Caspian Sea caviar lauded

Three caviar-producing states have agreed to halt sturgeon fishing in the Caspian Sea for the remainder of the year and have committed themselves to a series of urgent measures aimed at addressing alarm over plummeting sturgeon stocks. Progress on these measures must be made within the next six months if these countries wish to avoid an international ban on caviar exports next year. The agreement was announced on 21 June 2001, at the end of a meeting of the Standing Committee of CITES.

Four Caspian Sea range states - Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan - faced the prospect of a full suspension of their caviar exports if the committee was not satisfied with their response to concerns raised by the CITES Standing Committee earlier in 2001. However, these countries have already reduced their combined export quotas on Caspian species by more than 50 per cent since 1998. Hence, a ban of caviar exports alone might not effectively address critical problems such as rapidly rising domestic trade, poaching and illegal trade.

Instead, TRAFFIC called for countries to undertake specific measures on sturgeon fisheries, including concerted efforts for the establishment of co-ordinated catch and export quotas; trans-border anti-poaching units; a comprehensive assessment and effective control of

*continued on page 9...*

Charles Mackay / Her Majesty's Customs and Excise



Participants identifying animal skins (of jaguar, leopard and rock python) during the ID exercise.



Boris Mashkov

# Multi-language publications to support conservation activities in East Asia

by Marcus Phipps, Deputy Regional Director, TRAFFIC East Asia

The importance of communications as a 'key' to success is a commonly heard refrain and one that TRAFFIC East Asia has taken to heart in working within its region. Much of TRAFFIC's early research in the region pointed to the necessity of communicating with stakeholder groups in their native languages, particularly in the traditional medicine communities.

TRAFFIC East Asia has committed significant resources to doing just that in a region which is both an important consumer and producer of a wide range of wildlife products. TRAFFIC offices in the region produce newsletters in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, maintain Japanese and Chinese-language web-sites\*, and produce a range of reports in relevant languages.

The TRAFFIC Network's authoritative report *Far from a Cure: The Tiger Trade Revisited* (2000) highlighted the need to continue to raise conservation awareness in consuming markets and to build the capacity of wildlife trade monitoring and enforcement officials to discriminate between real and fake Tiger parts and products. With support from WWF-Japan and WWF-UK, TRAFFIC East Asia recently has published a Japanese-language edition of *Far from a Cure*. With additional support from WWF-US, TRAFFIC East Asia is planning to produce the report's executive summary in Korean and Chinese. A Chinese-language guide to identifying Tiger parts in trade is also under development for distribution to enforcement officials in China.

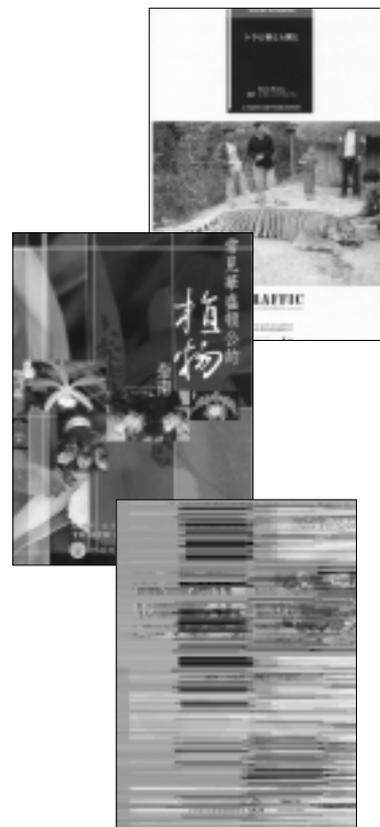
TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei has recently produced a full-colour Chinese-language *Guide to CITES Plants in Trade* (2001). Published with funding from Taiwan's Council of Agriculture and incorporating TRAFFIC research supported primarily by Germany's Federal

Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development, the guide is designed for use by Customs and other enforcement officers. It includes a general introduction to CITES and plants, to terminology used to describe flora specimens and parts, and more detailed descriptions of CITES-listed ornamental and medicinal plants frequently seen in trade. The guide also provides a template for the future development of similar identification materials for use in the East Asian region.

The Chinese language *Proceedings to the First Annual Symposium on Endangered Species Used in Traditional East Asian Medicine: Substitutes for Tiger Bone and Musk* (2001) were published with support from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund. With topics ranging from the status of species in the wild through to forensic authentication of samples and clinical trials for substitutes, these proceedings have proved to be one of TRAFFIC East Asia's most challenging Chinese-language publications to date.

A number of other TRAFFIC East Asia publications are currently in press or distribution including the bilingual report *Musk Deer Farming as a Conservation Tool in China* (Chinese and English) and the *Proceedings to the Third International Symposium on the Trade in Bear Parts* (English).

TRAFFIC East Asia uses a range of approaches in its efforts to support the conservation of wildlife



resources used in the region. These include working to increasing awareness among government and industry of conservation issues pertaining to wildlife in trade; building capacity in government and industry to enforce and implement regulatory measures; promoting policies and management measures to address trade in threatened species; and developing a constructive dialogue between the conservation and other stakeholder communities.

TRAFFIC East Asia's multi-language publications are central to supporting these activities and to supporting overall efforts for biodiversity conservation in East Asia.

*\*For the TRAFFIC Chinese language web site, please see [www.wow.org.tw](http://www.wow.org.tw) and for the TRAFFIC Japanese language web site please see [www.twics.com/~trafficj](http://www.twics.com/~trafficj).*

# Common ground found at the first CITES wider Caribbean hawksbill turtle dialogue meeting

by Adrian Reuter, National Representative, TRAFFIC North America - Mexico

With the participation of 34 range states and territories, the first dialogue meeting on Caribbean Hawksbill turtles took place in Mexico City, 15-17 May, 2001.

This meeting was the result of a proposal brought up and accepted during the 11th CITES CoP to facilitate communication and information exchange between interested parties in areas such as biology, population status, migratory routes and trade.

The dialogue, held in a cordial and friendly atmosphere, was facilitated by the CITES Secretariat and IUCN (with the collaboration of TRAFFIC) and chaired by Diana Ponce Nava, Sub-attorney of the Environmental Enforcement Agency (PROFEPA) in Mexico.

Common topics of concern such as the standardisation of monitoring protocols, conservation impacts of different management programmes and policies and the need to establish a regional strategy and management plan in the wider Caribbean, were addressed and discussed. In order to facilitate the commitment of governments to implement the conservation management recommendations which resulted from this dialogue, a draft Resolution will be proposed for adoption at the next COP in November 2002.

One of the working documents presented during the meeting was TRAFFIC's "*Status of Hawksbill Turtle Trade: A review of the regional wider Caribbean and global trade including domestic and non-shell products*" which contained data on 11 states and territories. It was extracted from wider TRAFFIC report on marine turtles in the Northern Caribbean that was funded by the Rufford Foundation, WWF-US and WWF-Latin America and Caribbean Programme. The presentation and document were well received, and



Hawksbill turtle  
*Eretmochelys imbricata*

there were comments from different parties mentioning its objectivity, and the need to request TRAFFIC's assistance on the development of a region-wide trade study and to work with TRAFFIC in monitoring illegal trade.

Given the considerable and commendable progress achieved in resolving issues of common interest during this meeting, the delegates agreed that further Dialogues should be held and the Government of the United Kingdom offered to host the next meeting in April or May 2002 in one of its Territories in the region.

It is hoped that TRAFFIC's reports and all the issues discussed during the meeting will serve as the basis for future collaborative approaches towards the conservation and management of hawksbill turtles in the region.

*TRAFFIC's working document presented at the meeting was extracted from a TRAFFIC North America report "Swimming Against the Tide: Recent surveys of exploitation, trade and management of marine turtles in the Northern Caribbean" by Elizabeth Fleming. For full copies of the report, please contact TRAFFIC North America. For contact details, see page 12.*

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domestic markets, including strict implementation and enforcement of existing national legislation; full implementation of the Universal Labeling System for the identification of caviar; and independent assessments of sturgeon stocks by international teams of experts from inter-governmental organisations such as the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the IUCN/SSC Sturgeon Specialist Group.

Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan agreed to, within the next six months, conduct a comprehensive survey of sturgeon stocks, set joint catch and export quotas, and assess the illegal trade and enforcement needs, with assistance of international agencies such as the CITES Secretariat, Interpol and World Customs Organization. By June 2002, the countries are also committed to developing a regional fisheries management system, significantly enhance efforts to combat illegal harvesting, regulate domestic trade and implement a caviar labeling system.

TRAFFIC applauds the countries concerned and the CITES Standing Committee for coming to an agreement that will give the nations of the Caspian Sea the opportunity to undertake these crucial initiatives, while ensuring that conservation action is taken immediately.

Turkmenistan, by failing to attend the meeting still risks immediate suspension of the international trade unless it complies with the commitments now made by the other three Caspian Sea range states.

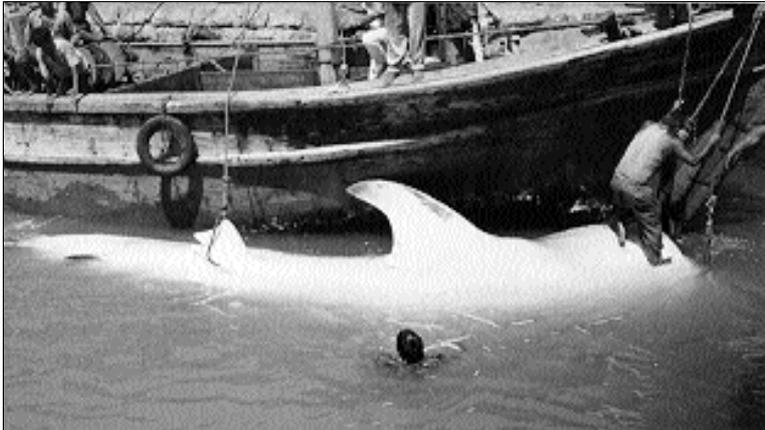
According to CITES Secretariat, Iran, the fifth Caspian Sea state, already has a functioning sturgeon management system, and is not subject to the concerns raised by CITES. It has nevertheless great interest in efforts to improve the regional management of the Caspian Sea fisheries.

*For more information, see TRAFFIC website at [www.traffic.org](http://www.traffic.org).*



# Whale Sharks – the Gentle Giants of the Sea

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Whale shark fishing off the Gujarat coast.

Veraval, a small coastal town in Gujarat, a western state of India, suddenly came into the limelight earlier this year, when a massive trade in Whale Sharks (*Rhinocodon typus*) was revealed showing excessive exploitation of a vulnerable species that could be facing extinction unless urgent measures for better management are introduced.

A TRAFFIC-India report titled *Gentle Giants of the Sea* by Fahmeeda Hanfee was released on 11 April 2001. The study consisted of literature reviews as well as interviews with various fisheries experts, research institutes and local fishermen. The report showed that Whale Sharks that were once considered commercially unimportant, have gradually become the victims of extremely lucrative, targeted fishing.

A preliminary survey of the trade

in shark and shark products had already been carried out by TRAFFIC-India over 1996-1997. This study found that in Gujarat, Whale Shark fishing had gathered considerable prominence in recent times. With very little information on the species as well as on the trade, TRAFFIC-India then initiated a field survey to study the impact of the trade along Gujarat's coastline, which is the longest among Indian states, stretching to some 1,640 km.

The study revealed that Whale Sharks, which occur in the fishing areas off Veraval during March-June, are harvested for its meat, fins, liver, skin and cartilage. Demand for Whale Shark liver seems to have already existed in the 1950s, primarily to extract oil which was then used for waterproofing boats. However, until the beginning of 1990s, the Whale Shark never caught much attention as a profitable catch. By 1992, however,

it was hunted for almost all its parts.

The price of each fish depends on the size and weight and ranges from between INR40,000 (US\$850) to INR150,000 (US\$3200). It was also found that the boom in Whale Shark fishing in India resulted partly from bans imposed elsewhere on Whale Shark fishery (such as in the Philippines and Maldives).

The report urges greater international collaboration in research and information gathering on India's Whale Shark stocks and its basic biology. It also calls for alternative sources of revenue for fishes on the coast of India. For example, 'dive tourism' is considered to have good potential for revenue generation for local fishers as an alternative income to returns from the Whale Shark fishery.

The report concludes that national and international protection needs to be urgently provided and that the Whale Shark be listed in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and CITES Appendix-II.

In a recent development that is welcomed by TRAFFIC and in line with the above recommendation, the Government of India included Whale Sharks in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 on 28 May, 2001. This provides Whale Shark with the highest protection under the national law of India and makes its fishing and trade in its all forms illegal.

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from scientific whaling, but also imported products, incidental catch and strandings, and frozen meat stocks.

Further clarity about the Japanese market should be enabled by the recent revision of the Law Concerning Standardisation and Proper Labeling of Agricultural and Forestry Products to include a labeling requirement that requires the identification of product contents and origin for fresh and processed foods, including whale meat

and whale meat products, requiring the common name of the species as well as its origin be declared on packaging for whale meat and processed whale products.

The information from the studies will inform discussions in IWC and CITES both of which have important and complementary roles to fulfill in whale discussions: IWC is responsible for the management and harvesting of great whales, and CITES is responsible for ensuring that

international trade in whale products does not threaten the conservation status of whale species. The twelfth CoP to CITES will convene in November 2002 and discussions regarding the Great Whales and their trade conservation status, are likely to continue.

*For more information and full copies of the three whale reports, please see the TRAFFIC web site at [www.traffic.org/iwc](http://www.traffic.org/iwc).*

# Programme targets: 20 priority issues set for 2001-2004

TRAFFIC's recently developed Network Programme Strategy defines high-level conservation goals and specific global targets that represent highlights of TRAFFIC's conservation work and typify our work as a worldwide network. It is also a tool to promote more effective collaboration between TRAFFIC's regional programmes around some common concerns, making use of TRAFFIC's greatest strength - its global network. The 20 priority issues confirmed at the TRAFFIC Network meeting held in May 2001 in Hong Kong are:

## TRADE AND THREATENED SPECIES

### Objective:

Wildlife trade does not result in the endangerment of any wild animal and plant species.

### Target issues:

1. Elephants
2. Asian Big Cats
3. Rhinoceroses
4. Tibetan Antelope "Chiru"
5. Musk deer
6. Asian Freshwater Turtles
7. Marine Turtles
8. Sturgeons
9. Sharks
10. Agarwood
11. Mahogany
12. Threatened Orchids

## TRADE AND PRIORITY ECOREGIONS

### Objective:

Wildlife trade does not threaten the integrity of priority ecoregions.

### Target issues:

13. Ecoregion conservation and wildlife trade

## TRADE AND RESOURCE SECURITY

### Objective:

The security of wildlife resources of particular value for food and medicine, and those that support other vital human needs, is not threatened.

### Target issues:

14. Wildlife Meat
15. Marine fisheries
16. Medicinal Plants
17. Timber

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ADDRESS WILDLIFE TRADE PROBLEMS

### Objective:

International agreements and policy approaches preventing negative conservation impacts of wildlife trade and ensuring trade does not exceed sustainable levels are developed and supported.

### Target issues:

18. Informing and Assisting CITES Mechanisms
19. Effective Regulation of the International Wildlife Trade
20. International institutions addressing wildlife trade issues

*For more information about TRAFFIC's Programme, see Dispatches No.15 and for a full list of targets and outputs, please contact TRAFFIC International. For contact details, see page 12.*

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WWF International  
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WWF Japan  
WWF Large Herbivore Initiative for Europe  
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