

► treating liver diseases, including cancer, and described the herbs as having better “anti-cancer invasion” and “anti-cancer metastasis” effects than bear bile, with, for example, up to 80% of cancer cells killed off following application of *huanglian* in comparison to 10–50% with bear bile.

Salman Saaban, the Enforcement Director with the Department of Wildlife and Natural Parks in Peninsular Malaysia, talked to participants about the laws in the country as they relate to the practice of traditional medicine and wildlife that can legally be used for such purposes. He also stressed the importance of strengthening the relationship between enforcement authorities and the TCM industry through open dialogues with practitioners throughout the country as a means to educate and raise awareness on the legality of using and selling wildlife products.

In closing, the president of the FCPMDAM stressed the responsibility that practitioners bear in cherishing and protecting wild resources. He reiterated the importance of supporting the efforts to end the use of illegal and endangered wildlife products in traditional medicine within the Malaysian Chinese traditional medicine community. Importantly, he urged practitioners to correct unfounded and inaccurate claims of the efficacy of wildlife used in traditional medicine and warned against any unlawful activity.

More than half of the participants present signed a declaration of support to use only wildlife permitted under Malaysia’s laws, to use only legally sourced ingredients and to support efforts to reduce the demand for wildlife-based medicinal products involving threatened species. It is hoped this translates into a commitment by practitioners to source and dispense responsibly wild animals and plants used for medicines and to educate their customers about sustainable alternatives, which will help to reduce the tremendous pressure on bears and many other wild animals now in demand as ingredients in traditional medicine preparations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Much gratitude is owed to Hauser Bears for their continuous support and generous funding of TRAFFIC’s work on bears in Malaysia.

Lalita Gomez, Programme Officer, TRAFFIC
E-mail: lalita.gomez@traffic.org

Complementary approaches: the role in tackling illegal wildlife trade

Report by Sabri Zain, Roland Melisch and Anastasiya Timoshyna

Recent decades have seen increasing global attention on the links between species conservation and sustainable management of wild fauna and flora. As far back as 1971, complementary approaches of protection and sustainable use of biodiversity was reflected in the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat—better known as the Ramsar Convention¹—where the term “wise use” was employed. At the momentous Rio Summit in 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)² was forged, with its first objective focused on “conservation” and the second on “sustainable use”. Article 8 of the Convention calls for the respect, preservation and maintenance of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and Article 10 focuses exclusively on sustainable use of biodiversity. The Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable use of Biodiversity (Anon., 2004) adopted by the Parties to the Convention in 2004 provide an additional framework to assist resource managers in ensuring that their use of biodiversity will not lead to a long-term decline.

In 2010, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP10) to the CBD endorsed the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets³. These have been accepted by other Conventions and sectors as a useful global framework to conserve, restore, and use biodiversity sustainably and to enhance its benefits to people. At CoP11 in Hyderabad, India, in 2012, the CBD agreed, for the first time, to 19 recommendations (CBD, 2012) on the harvesting and sustainable use of wild animals for food and non-food purposes, including for medicinal use.

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 66/288 *The Future We Want* (UN General Assembly, 2012) later supported “mainstreaming the consideration of the socio-economic impacts and benefits of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity ... into relevant programmes and policies at all levels” and encouraged investments “which support the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity”.

¹The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands: http://archive.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-texts-convention-on/main/ramsar/1-31-38%5E20671_4000_0_; ²Convention on Biological Diversity: <https://www.cbd.int/convention/text/default.shtml>
³Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/strategic-plan/2011-2020/Aichi-Targets-EN.pdf>

of sustainable wildlife management



BRENT STIRTON / GETTY IMAGES / WWF-UK

A woman and young boy with a pangolin and duiker, hunted for bushmeat, East Province, Cameroon.

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The importance of sustainable management of wild animals and plants is indeed recognized in other international agreements such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), as well as in regional agreements.

More recently, the issue of poaching and illegal wildlife trade in particular has been at the forefront of global attention, at the highest level of government. The London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade in January 2014 saw heads of State, ministers and high-level representatives of 46 countries, including those most heavily impacted by poaching and illegal trade of wildlife, agree to a Declaration (Anon., 2014) committing them to take “decisive and urgent action” to tackle the global illegal wildlife trade. In July 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted its first-ever Resolution on *Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife* (69/314) (UN General Assembly, 2015).

Numerous measures to combat wildlife trafficking have also been adopted by individual countries at the highest levels of government. In 2013, the then President of the United States, Barack Obama, established a Presidential Task Force on wildlife trafficking and adopted a national strategy against wildlife trafficking. That same year, the Premier of the People’s Republic of China, Li Keqiang, vowed to combat elephant poaching and ivory smuggling, culminating in China’s historic announcement in December 2016 of its intention to close down its domestic ivory markets. In December 2015, China and 50 countries of Africa encompassed under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) agreed

on the FOCAC Johannesburg Action Plan (FOCAC, 2015), which not only included curbs on illegal wildlife trade but also encouraged co-operation on sustainable forest management. At the continental level, the African Union developed in 2015 an African Common Strategy on Combating Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora (African Union, 2015) and, in 2016, the European Union adopted its Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking (European Commission, 2016).

These developments are encouraging and necessary, and have resulted in commitments by the international community to step up action against poaching and trafficking, with numerous measures being adopted at the national level by many of the countries concerned.

However, the political and policy dialogue in recent years has focused much of its attention on wildlife crime, with not enough consideration being given to sustainable and legal trade in wild animals and plants, its role in conservation and socio-economic development, and the commitments, measures and tools needed to fulfil that role effectively. Conservation efforts to address wildlife crime also appear to be focused on a small number of “charismatic” animal species, with the far larger scope of animal and plants species involved in legal and sustainable trade largely overlooked. Unfortunately, there is currently little appreciation that for efforts aimed at tackling illegal killing and trade in species to be effective and sustainable in the long term, they need to be complemented by efforts to ensure the sound management of wild species that take into account the socio-economic needs of human populations.

REDUCING OVERHARVESTING AND ILLEGAL TRADE, PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

A complementary and integrated approach is needed to address the biodiversity crisis that significantly reduces illegal and unsustainable use and trade thereof, and promotes sustainable management of wild animals and plants. Such an approach was highlighted in the aforementioned UN General Assembly Resolution on *Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife*, which “strongly encourages Member States to support, including through bilateral co-operation, the development of sustainable and alternative livelihoods for communities affected by illicit trafficking in wildlife and its adverse impacts, with the full engagement of the communities in and adjacent to wildlife habitats as active partners in conservation and sustainable use, enhancing the rights and capacity of the members of such communities to manage and benefit from wildlife.”

The London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade also recognized the importance of supporting “community efforts to advance their rights and capacity to manage and benefit from wildlife”, with one of its four main themes being sustainable livelihoods and economic development. Among the actions it recommends is promoting “the retention of benefits by local communities for the conservation and sustainable management of wildlife.” Following that, more than 70 researchers, community

representatives, government officials, UN agencies and NGOs from five continents met at a symposium on *Beyond enforcement: Communities, governance, incentives and sustainable use in combating wildlife crime*, developing a set of recommendations on engaging communities in combating the illegal wildlife trade (IUCN *et al.*, 2015).

At the continental level, the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora adopted by the African Union in May 2015 (African Union, 2015), outlines various actions related to sustainable wildlife management, including ensuring participatory development and implementation of programmes for local communities on “best practices in conservation and sustainable use of wildlife resources”. One of the objectives of the European Union’s Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking, adopted in June 2016 (European Commission, 2016), is the need for “engagement of rural communities in the management and conservation of wildlife”.

These commitments illustrate that current efforts to reduce the impact of poaching and illegal trade of threatened species, for example by strengthening law enforcement, will also need to be supported by efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of systems that assure sustainable use and responsible trade of wildlife resources (such as through the effective development and implementation of wildlife management plans and quota-setting systems).

Similarly, increasing the direct and indirect risks for poachers and illegal traders, such as through increased deterrent penalties and prosecutions, must go hand-in-hand with increasing the direct and indirect benefits to harvesters, local communities and other stakeholders of sustainable management of and responsible trade in wildlife resources (such as through promotion and investment in sustainable use programmes). Reducing the rewards derived from poaching and illegal trade (for example by reducing consumer demand for illegal wildlife) will need to be complemented by increasing the rewards for responsible trade (such as through consumers preferring and retailers choosing sustainable wildlife goods).

As an illustration, TRAFFIC’s work with the traditional Chinese medicine community not only involves rejecting the use of Tiger or rhinoceros parts, but also includes promoting systems to trace and verify the use of sustainably harvested medicinal plants as alternatives to those ingredients. TRAFFIC is assisting a growing number of herbal product, food and other companies to implement the FairWild Standard to help assure consumers that their products are not only harvested within sustainable levels but also bring tangible economic benefits to the communities that collect these plants.

MEETING WILDLIFE AND HUMAN NEEDS

It is important to recognize that products and services derived from wildlife can provide strong incentives to conserve biodiversity. Sustainable wildlife management can be viewed as a mechanism to promote biodiversity conservation while simultaneously meeting human

needs. Governments, international organizations and civil society must be encouraged to recognize sustainable wildlife management as a valuable tool in tackling the pressure on natural resources.

Overharvesting and poor management and unsustainable use of wildlife resources leads to biodiversity loss, loss of sustainable livelihoods and greatly reduced opportunities for socio-economic development. This, in turn, provides opportunities for poachers and illegal traders to encourage the involvement of local community members in their operations. Government policies, strategies and plans to address illegal wildlife killing and trade must also safeguard sustainable livelihoods and economic development opportunities for communities most impacted by illegal and unsustainable wildlife use. Illegal and unsustainable wildlife use can also be symptomatic of poor governance structures. The loss of wildlife resources due to poor sustainable wildlife management undermines good governance and can lead to corrupt practices. The socio-economic difficulties caused by this loss of sustainable livelihoods and poor governance structures can also undermine rule of law and threaten security. Implementing sound and accountable sustainable wildlife management approaches can help strengthen and improve the underlying governance structures that help support biodiversity conservation and meet the socio-economic needs of the stakeholders concerned.

Rural communities that live in close proximity to wildlife bear the brunt of conflict with wildlife and the detrimental effects of illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade. The livelihoods of these communities are most directly impacted by the loss of biodiversity and unsustainable use. At the same time, the benefits they derive from sustainable wildlife use and resource ownership provide powerful incentives for conservation. Recognizing these impacts and the positive role local communities can play in conservation and sustainable wildlife management, governments are encouraged to strengthen the role and direct participation and engagement of these local communities in the management of wildlife and other natural resources upon which they depend.

MECHANISMS, TOOLS AND APPROACHES

The key to effective sustainable wildlife management is the availability and use of accurate and comprehensive scientific and traditional/local knowledge. In partnership with the relevant experts, international organizations, civil society, indigenous peoples and local communities, governments are encouraged to conduct more research to expand this body of knowledge, including that relating to the full range of human dependency on wildlife and biodiversity, the socio-economic value of species and how best to ensure their sustainable use, a secure conservation status for these species, effective sustainable wildlife management interventions, as well as lessons learned and best practices that can be shared.

A variety of mechanisms, tools and approaches already exist to assist governments and other stakeholders to protect and manage wildlife more effectively, as well as to

ensuring that harvest and use is sustainable. For example, the Non-Detriment Finding process within CITES is a valuable management tool used to ensure that harvest of Appendix II-listed species is maintained at levels that does not have detrimental effects on the population of these species. Certification systems also play an important role, such as the FairWild Standard, which not only promotes sustainability of plant harvests but also protects the rights of collectors, ensuring that harvesting does not threaten species, ecosystems or local communities. In partnership with the relevant international organizations, civil society and other experts, governments are encouraged to use these tools, mechanisms and approaches more effectively, and adaptively improve them or develop new tools and mechanisms to mitigate identified gaps or address new challenges in the management of wildlife.

As noted above, the international community has made numerous commitments towards encouraging sustainable wildlife management, in conjunction with other global efforts at ensuring species conservation and sustainable development. These commitments must now be turned into action on the ground. Governments are encouraged to implement these commitments, including supporting the efforts of source countries to meet their international obligations. The issue of sustainable wildlife management needs to be higher on the global political agenda, including international fora at the highest levels of government (such as the UN General Assembly and High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development); the relevant regional economic integration organizations and other regional structures; and the relevant UN Conventions and other international agreements. Strategic partnerships must be forged with other sectors—such as industry and the economic development community—to seek their support and collaboration in implementing these commitments. More research needs to be done on the direct benefits of sustainable wildlife management to local economies and social development, as well as how

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African Teak *Cylicodiscus gabonensis* tree trunk being marked in Western Ghana. Trees that have been felled are marked to avoid illegal trade as part of the Ghana Forest Trade Network, an important component of the Global Forest Trade Network (GFTN). Key: W4=Forest District, SAX=Name of contractor, C/3318=Company number, S/2050=Authorization number given by Forest Commission, KI=Species Group (African Teak).



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these benefits can be maximized. It is also imperative that involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities is integral to these efforts.

International organizations are already responding to this challenge. In 2013, a voluntary partnership was established comprising 14 international organizations (including TRAFFIC) with substantive mandates and programmes to promote the sustainable use and conservation of wildlife resources. The Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management (CPW) provides a platform for addressing wildlife management issues that require national and supra-national responses and also works to promote and increase co-operation and co-ordination on sustainable wildlife management issues among its members and partners.

TRAFFIC is committed to working actively to support governments and other stakeholders to leverage these international instruments and mechanisms to ensure that sustainable wildlife management approaches play a key role in the conservation of species and the sustainable development of countries and their communities.

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Sabri Zain, Director of Policy, TRAFFIC

E-mail: sabri.zain@traffico.org

Roland Melisch, Senior Programme Director, Africa & Europe, TRAFFIC. E-mail: roland.melisch@traffico.org

Anastasiya Timoshyna, Medicinal Plants Programme

Leader, TRAFFIC. E-mail: anastasiya.timoshyna@traffico.org