

TRAFFIC POST

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TRAFFIC INDIA'S NEWSLETTER ON WILDLIFE TRADE IN INDIA



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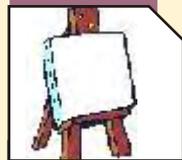
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OUTPOST



CITES UPDATE

India's wild medicinal plants threatened through over-exploitation



India is a hub for wild-collected medicinal plants in Asia, but key species have declined owing to over-collection for supply of domestic and foreign medicinal markets, and action needs to be taken to ensure the sustainability of supplies.



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Kutki *Picrorhiza kurrooa*

Researchers from TRAFFIC and IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, examined the trade in seven medicinal plant species of conservation concern. These are Desert Cistanche *Cistanche deserticola*, Elephant's Foot *Dioscorea deltoidea*, Jatamansi *Nardostachys grandiflora*, Kutki *Picrorhiza kurrooa*, Red Sanders *Pterocarpus santalinus*, Snakeroot *Rauvolfia serpentina* and Himalayan Yew *Taxus wallichiana*. All of these species are protected under national legislation and international trade controls—the latter including listing in CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) which requires international trade to be maintained within sustainable levels. India emerged as a major destination for trade in all but two of the seven species studied—Desert Cistanche and Himalayan Yew. The findings of the study were revealed in a report released on 24 November 2009 at the WWF-India Secretariat, New Delhi.

Wild plant species form the foundation of healthcare practices throughout much of Asia, particularly traditional practices, such as traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Tibetan medicines, whilst compounds such as reserpine from Snakeroot and paclitaxel from Himalayan Yew have important pharmaceutical uses in Europe, North America and elsewhere.

Some species are in demand for their aromatic properties, too, for example the use of Jatamansi oil dates back over a thousand years, whilst Red Sanders is also in demand for its timber and as a source of red dye. In India, collection and processing of medicinal plants contributes at least 35 million work days per year to the poor and under-employed, but rising demand is threatening this vital source of livelihood income both in India and elsewhere.

Many of the medicinal plants in trade in India are collected in alpine regions of neighbouring Nepal, where collection of species such as Jatamansi and Kutki runs to hundreds of tonnes of rhizomes, harvested by thousands of collectors who supply to middlemen who further supply to large-scale wholesalers in Nepal and India. Raw materials are often transported on to wholesale markets in Delhi, Amritsar and Kolkata for onward sale.

Although controls on the collection and trade in medicinal plants exist to bring harvesting levels within sustainable levels, their implementation is frequently poor. Cultivation is routinely promoted as a solution to dwindling supplies but this has its own repercussions. Some species are difficult to grow in artificial conditions and cultivation may be unprofitable for farmers, owing to the long gestation time between planting and commercial harvest.

The report released in New Delhi recommends regional, multi-stakeholder action to improve management of harvests and trade in a way that addresses conservation and development concerns. It promotes implementation of sustainable wild collection practices, which may be the only viable option to ensure sustainable supplies of some of these species. TRAFFIC, the Bundesamt für Naturschutz (BfN), the IUCN/SSC Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG) and WWF Germany recently launched a new standard on the sustainable collection of wild plants (International Standard for Sustainable Collection of Wild Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, ISSC-MAP), which is currently under trial at several projects worldwide including one in Uttarakhand in the Western Himalayas and one in Karnataka in the Western Ghats.

Under a new agreement in October 2008, the ISSC-MAP became hosted by the FairWild Foundation. In addition to the use of the ISSC-MAP by government institutions and authorities, the FairWild Foundation is developing an industry labelling system so products harvested using the sustainable ISSC-MAP criteria as well as social and fair-trade criteria can be readily recognised and certified. The further use of the standard—now called the FairWild Standard—will be promoted throughout the herbal products industry.

Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India, commented: "TRAFFIC India is delighted to be at the forefront of helping ensure the sustainability of medicinal plant supplies, which is to the benefit of healthcare within India and beyond, to India's plant industry and to many rural poor, who depend on the trade for vital household income."

The study was commissioned by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz, BfN). The full report "Review of the Status, Harvest, Trade and Management of Seven Asian CITES-listed Medicinal and Aromatic Plant Species" can be downloaded at <http://www.traffic.org/non-traffic-papers/>

Sniffer dogs to help curb illegal wildlife trade



The first two graduates of TRAFFIC India's Sniffer Dog Training Programme have been successfully placed with the Forest Departments of Uttarakhand and Haryana, and are helping the forest staff to counter illegal wildlife trade.

TRAFFIC India has supported the training of dogs for tracking and detecting illegal wildlife products in India. The main purpose of initiating this programme was to bring in new ideas and techniques to assist enforcement agencies to address issues related to poaching and illegal trade.

Despite efforts, illegal wildlife trade continues to prevail and has evolved into an organized activity threatening the survival of many species in India. The current practices for combating illegal wildlife trade have not proved sufficient to curtail this. In order to curb this growing menace, it is necessary that the best enforcement practices are deployed. Using sniffer dogs for crime detection and prevention is one of the long proven practices TRAFFIC has experience of running in several countries.

This programme is less than a year old and has so far trained two sniffer dogs. The training of these dogs was conducted at the Basic Training Centre (BTC) of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) located at Panchkula, Haryana. The centre is the National Dog Training Centre for enforcement agencies such as the police, narcotics departments and bomb squads.

The dogs have been trained to detect hidden wildlife articles such as Tiger bone, Tiger skin, Leopard bone, Leopard skin and bear bile. They have been placed with the Forest Departments of Uttarakhand and Haryana and are being used by the staff in detecting illegal wildlife trade.

"Besides helping detect illegal wildlife products in trade, use of these dogs will also have a deterrent effect in the long run" said Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India.



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Sniffer dogs being trained at BTC, Haryana

Enforcement agencies receive training on wildlife law enforcement



As part of the TRAFFIC India's 'capacity-building' programme, workshops were organized at Baripada, Orissa and Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand to help improve understanding amongst enforcement agencies about wildlife laws and their implementation. Training and inputs were provided to a diverse group of officials working on wildlife enforcement related issues. Details of these workshops are given below:

Simlipal Tiger Reserve, Orissa: TRAFFIC India, with support from WWF-India, collaborated with the National Tiger Conservation Authority to organize a two-day training workshop on wildlife enforcement for the officials of Orissa Forest Department. The workshops were held on 16–17 February 2009 and were attended by around 50 officials from Simlipal Tiger Reserve and other adjoining Forest Divisions. Dr S.P. Goyal, Head-Wildlife Forensics, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun; Mr Saurabh Sharma, Advocate, Delhi High Court and Mr B.K. Sharma, Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar were some of the key speakers at the workshop.

During the workshop, knowledge and skills on wildlife forensic techniques and implementation of wildlife laws and policies were shared with field managers. The participants were also given a taster of the latest tools and technologies available for curbing illegal trade. A hands-on training session on the use of deep-search metal detectors for locating metal traps inside forest areas was conducted. TRAFFIC India gifted two such metal detectors to Simlipal Tiger Reserve. Literature on wildlife laws was also distributed to the participants. The workshop was organized at the request of the Simlipal Tiger Reserve and was the first such comprehensive training held in Simlipal for the field staff.

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TRAFFIC India's poster "Munias of India in the illegal bird-trade" released at the workshop: TRAFFIC India's latest communiqué titled "Munias of India in the illegal bird-trade" has been produced to help enforcement agencies identify the various species of munias in illegal bird-trade in India.

India is home to eight species of munia, all of which are protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Munias are popular aviculture subjects worldwide. Being small in size and adored for their beautiful colouration, melodious calls, low-cost diet and easy captive-care, they are commercially exploited throughout their range. Although parakeets are the most popular pet birds in terms of preference and popularity, munias rank number one in terms of their sheer volume in bird trade (Ahmed, 2001).

Wildlife forensic kit developed: A Wildlife forensic kit has been jointly developed by TRAFFIC India and Forensic Cell, Wildlife Institute of India. The kit will help forest staff to collect samples in a standardized manner, analysis of which will lead to accurate investigation of the crime scene.

Often forensic samples from the wildlife crime scene are not collected in a standardized and appropriate manner. By the time they reach the forensic lab, they are damaged or have changed their nature, making it difficult for the scientist to provide accurate results. TRAFFIC India's forensic kit will help the forest staff in following a standardized protocol in collection of these samples. The kit contains most of the equipment required to collect samples such as surgical gloves, a plastic pouch, screw-capped vials, an injection syringe, a scalpel blade, forceps, scissors, a slide case, a glass slide, silica gel, filter paper, measuring tape, etc. Also, along with the kit, TRAFFIC India has produced a detailed manual on how to use the kit for collection of meat, skin, scat and blood samples of wild animals meant for forensic analysis.

TRAFFIC India has always encouraged use of forensic science in strengthening wildlife cases for effective conviction and has conducted many training programmes across the country regarding this. Now along with the training, TRAFFIC India is providing these kits to various Forest Divisions across the country.

Corbett Tiger Reserve: An enforcement training workshop was also held at Corbett Wildlife Training Centre at Kalagarh, Corbett Tiger Reserve for the forest staff of the Corbett Landscape. This workshop was organized by TRAFFIC India with support from WWF-India and in collaboration with the National Tiger Conservation Authority and Forest Department of Uttarakhand. The workshop was held on 21–22 February 2009 and was attended by over 50 officials from forest divisions in the Corbett Landscape including, Lansdowne, Terai West, Ramnagar and Haldwani. The key resource persons at the workshop were Mr. Ritwick Dutta, Advocate-Honourable Supreme Court of India; Mr. Vivek Sehajpal, Wildlife Forensics Scientist; Mr. DVS Khatri, Chief Conservator of Forests, Finance & Planning, Uttarakhand Forest Department; and Mr. Narendra Singh, Director-Corbett Wildlife Training Centre, Kalagarh.

Orientation programme on wildlife conservation for the Judiciary



TRAFFIC India and WWF, in partnership with Gauhati High Court and Assam Forest Department, held a two-day orientation programme on wildlife conservation for the Judiciary in Assam. This workshop was a follow-up of the previous workshops that were organized in Guwahati in 2008. The workshop was held on 14–15 March 2009 and was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Justice B.K. Sharma, Gauhati High Court. The programme was attended by 60 senior Judicial Officers from Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

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The workshop's principal aim was to sensitize the judiciary to issues related to wildlife conservation. The judiciary plays a significant role in championing the cause of forest and biodiversity conservation, and the workshop provided a timely update on the status of forest and wildlife legislation, international conventions on related issues and enforcement of wildlife laws in India.

Hon'ble Justice B.K. Sharma said, "Judges must have in-depth knowledge about the various provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and forest offences. This will help them to handle cases better". He further urged the participating judges to exercise moral responsibilities while dealing with such cases. Mr M.C. Malakar, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF), Assam, presided over the workshop. He talked extensively about the rich biodiversity of north eastern states of India and the tough challenges that lie ahead in preserving it.

Other speakers at the workshop included Hon'ble Justice I.A. Ansari, Gauhati High Court; Dr Bibhav Talukdar, Head-Aranyak, Mr Sanjeev Chadda, Member-Central Empowered Committee (CEC), Mr Vivek Sahajpal, Wildlife Forensic Scientist, Mr Ritwick Dutta, Supreme Court Lawyer and Mr Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India. The workshop was successful in generating interest among the participants about curbing illegal wildlife trade and the implementation of wildlife laws. The participants have requested TRAFFIC India to organize such programmes periodically as it helps them to know about the new judgements and notifications in wildlife cases in India.

TRAFFIC India designs each such programme after careful interaction with the user agency and experts to ensure that the content and delivery of such programmes meet the expectations and requirements of the user agency. The customization of such programmes has been very useful as is borne out by the regular requests received for conducting more of these, including requests for repeat programmes by various agencies.

Deep search metal detectors to help find snares and traps in the forest



TRAFFIC India and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) organized a training of the forest guards of Sariska and Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve on use of deep search metal detectors. These metal detectors help to locate snares set up by poachers to catch Tigers and other wild animals. The training was organized at Sariska on 8–9 January 2009 and at Bandhavgarh on 5–7 February 2009.

"Metal snares are often used to catch Tigers and other big cats, but they are almost impossible to find because they are cleverly camouflaged. However, by using deep search metal detectors, forest guards can now find even the most cleverly hidden traps", said Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India.

Over 35 forest officials were trained at Sariska Tiger Reserve and over 40 at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve. TRAFFIC has provided a set of metal detectors to each of the Reserves for their day-to-day patrolling.

Deep search metal detectors are ideal for remote field operations because they are robust, simple to assemble and use, and do not require complicated maintenance or handling. The detectors can also be used during post-mortem examinations to see if snared animals have bullet wounds. This helps strengthen legal follow-up that leads to more effective prosecutions for poaching. The use of metal detectors is likely to have a deterrent effect in the long run, simply as poachers become aware that a new technology is in place to stop their efforts.

TRAFFIC India along with providing full training in the use of detectors has also developed a handy manual in English and Hindi to help field personnel.

"The feedback from trainees is very positive and they see many benefits from using the equipment", said Sinha. Senior officials are enthusiastic too, and several have contacted TRAFFIC to ask how they can obtain more detectors.

TRAFFIC India's metal detector programme, which is generously funded by WWF-UK and WWF-Germany, has provided equipment to various Tiger Reserves throughout India, including well-known ones such as Corbett, Ranthambore, Kanha, Pench, Simlipal, Bandhavgarh and Rajaji.



© Samir Sinha

Forest staff using deep search metal detectors at Sariska

Kudos to security forces for helping curb illegal wildlife trade



TRAFFIC India congratulates the Indian Army and other security forces for actively conducting wildlife seizures and helping to check illegal wildlife trade. The Army last year agreed to provide support to TRAFFIC India by sharing actionable information gathered by its Intelligence Units across the country on poaching and illegal wildlife trade, especially at the trans-boundary level. Some of the significant wildlife seizures made by these agencies since the beginning of 2009 are:

- Five hundred and eighty pangolin scales were recovered from a woman courier, by the Assam Rifles on 23 June 2009 at Bongyang checkpost, Chanded district, Manipur.
- Twenty tons of Red Sanders *Pterocarpus santalinus* were seized by the Assam Rifles on 22 June 2009 at Bongyang, Chanded district, Manipur.
- Two poachers were arrested and a .315 bore rifle and 15 detonators were seized at Marigaon district, Assam, on 4 May 2009, by the Mangaldai Wildlife Division with assistance from troops of 77 Mountain Brigade, Red Horns Division, Indian Army.
- Eighteen suspected poachers were detained inside the Chakrasila Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam, on 31 March 2009 by the army personnel of Red Horns Division. Arms and other lethal weapons were recovered from them.
- Two Tiger *Panthera tigris* skulls and paws, 16 kg of Tiger bone, 340 kg of pangolin scales and 191 deer antlers were seized by the Assam Rifles on 16 February 2009 at Bongyang. The seized items were found in a truck heading towards Moreh, Manipur (border town with Myanmar). This catch was followed up with two successive seizures of six kilogrammes of Leopard *Panthera pardus* bones and eight skulls of various other wild animal bones on 23 February 2009 and five kilogrammes of pangolin scales and 33 deer antlers on 24 February 2009.
- A Leopard skin and 4.5 kg of Tiger bones were seized by the Indo Tibetan Border Police on 13 February 2009 at Jaigaon, West Bengal, from a Bhutanese boy who was allegedly carrying these body parts.
- Thirty truck loads of Red Sanders *Pterocarpus santalinus* were seized at Bongyang in January 2009 by the Assam Rifles. The trucks were on their way to Myanmar and had come all the way from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

MALAYSIAN ARMY TO BE TRAINED FOR WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT

TRAFFIC Southeast Asia (TSEA) in collaboration with WWF-Malaysia is engaging with the Malaysian Army on curbing illegal wildlife trade. TSEA has recently conducted a workshop with the Malaysian Army. Based on its experience of working together with the Indian Army, TRAFFIC India has also offered their support for this and has sent relevant training material and other details for this engagement.

TRAFFIC's network meeting organized in India



The TRAFFIC network WWF/IUCN Wildlife Trade Meeting was from 26—30 November 2008 at Ramnagar, Uttarakhand, India. TRAFFIC India was instrumental in organizing this meeting which had over 50 participants from all the TRAFFIC offices (Australia, Europe, East Africa, Central Africa, Southern Africa, South America, North America, East Asia and South-east Asia) and from TRAFFIC International, based in Cambridge, UK, and also from IUCN, the International Union for Conservation for Nature, and WWF, the global conservation organization.

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TRAFFIC 'Alert'



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Forty-three jailed for smuggling animal parts in Madhya Pradesh

In January 2009, 43 people were sentenced in Madhya Pradesh's Katni Forest Division for poaching and smuggling of animal parts. Minister of State for Forests (independent charge), Rajendra Shukla, said in an official statement that of these 43 people, 11 were sentenced to three years' imprisonment, 18 for two years and the remaining 14 for one year.

Prominent among those who were sentenced were international poachers like Shabbir Qureshi and Darya Singh, Shukla said. Both were arrested along with Ashok Pardhi, a known poacher, in June 2004 and seven Leopard skins were seized from their possession. All three have been sentenced to three years' imprisonment each. Property worth INR20 million was seized from Qureshi.

Darya Singh, who was arrested for smuggling Tiger and Leopard skins, had cases registered against him in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

TRAFFIC India adds.....

TRAFFIC India congratulates the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department and other enforcement agencies involved for being able to ensure strong conviction in this wildlife case. Even though the punishment can not replace the damage that has already been done to the wildlife by these notorious poachers, it will act as a deterrent for all those who continue to operate in this clandestine wildlife trade.

Source:
<http://www.dailytimesindia.com/2009/01/29/66.htm>

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The main purpose of the meeting was to share experiences while highlighting the recent areas of progress, opportunities and challenges in various regions of work, enumerate the drivers of illegal and/or unsustainable trade and specify approaches to tackle these, and finally to set and plan programme goals for the years 2009—12. There was also a special session on overview of wildlife trade in India and South Asia which had additional participants from TRAFFIC India's partner organizations, State government, etc. The session was chaired by Dr R.B.S. Rawat, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests—Uttarakhand. Participants included Mr S. Chandola, Chief Wildlife Warden—Uttarakhand; Mr Brijendra Singh, Hon. Wildlife Warden, Corbett Tiger Reserve; Mr A. K. Mukerji, retired DG (Forests), Govt. of India; Mr Sanjeev Chaddha, Joint Secretary, Central Empowered Committee of the Supreme Court of India; Mr S.P. Yadav, Joint Director, National Tiger Conservation Authority; Ms Tania Plahey and Mr Arif Hussein, DEFRA (the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs); Mr Vinod Singhal, Field Director, Corbett Tiger Reserve; and representatives of The Corbett Foundation and Rainbow Friends of Nature.



Mr Steven Broad, Executive Director-TRAFFIC said, "We are thankful to TRAFFIC India for helping us organize this meeting in India. We are hopeful that the learning here will culminate in on-the-ground action".

"At a time when illegal wildlife trade is taking a heavy toll on our precious flora and fauna, it is imperative to enhance our current work and initiate actions that will help curb this trade and regulate it in a manner such that it is not a threat to the conservation of nature. We are hopeful that the goals and targets set for 2009—12 during the meeting will help us achieve this" he added.

OUTPOST: ASEAN countries make major progress on wildlife, habitat conservation



The Government of Thailand, with support from the World Bank, ASEAN-WEN, the Save the Tiger Fund, TRAFFIC, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the FREELAND Foundation, held an important meeting to strengthen regional co-operation to curb illegal wildlife trade. This meeting, "A Forgotten Crisis: Arresting Wildlife Depletion through Strengthened Partnerships and Regional Cooperation", was held from April 10—12 in Pattaya, Thailand. It concluded with strong commitments by Asian governments and international partners to co-ordinate enforcement efforts in a concerted effort to halt wildlife crime and habitat depletion.

ASEAN-WEN is the region's largest environmental law enforcement network. It links scores of environmental agencies, police organizations, Customs bureaus and members of the judiciary from all 10 ASEAN member countries to share intelligence, conduct investigations, and train officers to combat wildlife trafficking and implement international and national laws regulating wildlife trade.

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TRAFFIC 'Alert'



Sixteen jailed for poaching Lions in Gujarat

On 26 February 2009, a Gujarat court sentenced seven women and nine men to five years in jail for poaching specimens of the rare Asiatic Lion *Panthera leo persica*. They were also fined INR2000. This was the third and final round of sentencing in the notorious poaching case. The accused were arrested for poaching six Asiatic Lions from Gir in Gujarat and illegal possession of wildlife articles. Two Lion claws too were recovered from the main accused Kuntar Singh and Nanaka Singh during their arrest in April 2008.

These 16 were convicted under sections 120 & 429 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) which carries a maximum of four years' imprisonment and a INR1000 fine. They were also convicted under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 which carries a sentence of five years and a INR1000 fine. Both the sentences, however, will run concurrently.

"What is notable is that this judgement is the third consecutive conviction in the Lion poaching case. In all the three cases it was the same gang. What held true in the earlier two cases held true in this one too", said Inspector General of Police (Prisons) Keshav Kumar. "One of the accused, Prabhakar Keshav Gajakosh, a politician and timber contractor was also sentenced. He was the international link for the Indian wildlife mafia and was arrested by Karnataka police on tip-off by the Gujarat police. Twenty three Tiger skins, 20 Leopard skins and 23 other skins were seized from him".

TRAFFIC India adds.....

Asiatic Lion, also known as the Indian Lion, is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, under which poaching and trade in the species is prohibited and punishable by law. It is listed in Appendix I of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) under which international commercial trade in the species is illegal.

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With illegal trade in wildlife estimated at over USD10 billion across Asia, second only to weapons and drug smuggling, participants at the conference made a call to action, with agreement on a new wildlife manifesto, "Combating Wildlife Crime in Asia," supported by ASEAN Secretary-General Surin Pitsuwan, Thailand Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, H.E. Suwit Khunkitti, and World Bank President Robert Zoellick.

Mr Zoellick, in his message, said, "ASEAN members, other interested countries in Asia, and a powerful coalition of partners in civil society with strong support from the World Bank have come together today to tackle wildlife crime head on and to take smart steps—immediate steps—to co-ordinate a regional law enforcement response to protect endangered species and protect habitats".

James Compton, Asia-Pacific Programme Co-ordinator of TRAFFIC, presented the study "What's Driving the Wildlife Trade?" at this international workshop. This study is a review of expert opinion on economic and social drivers of wildlife trade and trade control efforts in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. All four of these countries are among the South-east Asian countries that act as major sources of wildlife in trade. The trade examines the factors that influence wildlife trade in South-east Asia, and in particular trade that is illegal and/or unsustainable. To view the report please visit <http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/10/3/new-study-on-whats-driving-the-wildlife-trade-in-south-east.html>

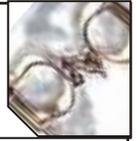
"Since its inception in 2005, ASEAN-WEN has become a model for regional cooperation in transnational law enforcement on illegal wildlife trade. We are hopeful that South Asian countries will similarly come together to set up a regional mechanism for trans-boundary enforcement. TRAFFIC is already working with South Asian countries towards this" said Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India.



James Compton(R) & Samir Sinha - TRAFFIC, presenting "What's Driving the Wildlife Trade?" in Pattaya

For more information visit www.asean-wen.org

TRAFFIC 'Alert'



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Lions are victims of habitat loss and human-wildlife conflict in India, as well as victims of illegal wildlife trade. Strong and timely convictions such as those in the Gujarat Lion poaching case mentioned above have set a benchmark for effective investigations and prosecutions to curb illegal wildlife trade in India. The Gujarat Police must be complimented for their efforts.

Source: <http://www.headlinesindia.com/state-news/gujarat/16-jailed-for-five-years-for-poaching-lions-in-gujarat-7797.html>

Tantrik who advised woman to sacrifice a rhino arrested

In March 2005, the Mumbai police arrested a 36-year-old tantrik who took nearly INR300 000 from a 30-year-old woman and duped her into believing that sacrificing a rhinoceros would help her find a match. The accused, Farid Shah, even promised to go to Uttar Pradesh to catch a rhino!

The victim came across an advertisement in a vernacular daily stating that performing a certain *puja* would solve all their problems. The woman, a computer engineer and employed as manager in a city-based software company, immediately called up Shah and sought an appointment, the police said. "After listening to my problem, Shah asked me to perform a puja and sacrifice a hen or goat. Later, he told me to sacrifice a buffalo, after which, he claimed, I would start getting marriage proposals within 20 days," she said in her complaint.

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CITES UPDATE:

Bosnia and Herzegovina join CITES



Bosnia and Herzegovina, situated in south-eastern Europe, bordering Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, joined CITES as its 175th Party.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is home to nearly 90 species listed in the CITES Appendices, in particular many species of orchid and birds of prey. CITES trade with Bosnia and Herzegovina comprises mainly medicinal plants (exports) and reptile leather products (imports). The Convention entered into force in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 21 April 2009.

CITES UPDATE:
Qatar to host the next CoP



The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP 15) will be held in Doha, Qatar. The Government of Qatar had earlier agreed to organize this meeting in January 2010 and later requested the CITES Secretariat for more time in order to prepare for this meeting. Finally, both the host country and the CITES Secretariat have agreed in principle that the meeting will be held in Doha from 13—25 March 2010. The Secretariat will soon make a formal announcement to confirm these dates.

CITES UPDATE:
CITES directs Parties to declare all stocks of rhinoceros horn and derivatives



Rhinoceros horn in ivory piles, Kruger National Park, South Africa

Under the *Notification to the Parties* of 25 May 2009, CITES has directed all the member countries to provide status of their stocks of rhinoceros horn and derivatives to the Secretariat in a prescribed format. The Parties have been asked to declare their stocks before the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP 15), due to be held in Doha, Qatar, in March 2010.

This decision was a follow-up of the request that was made under the *Notification to the Parties* of 16 December 2008, asking all member countries to report all seizures of rhinoceros specimens (whether horns or

other rhinoceros products) using the Ecomessage format that was designed by Interpol (see *Notification to the Parties* No. 2008/068 of 16 December 2008 for further details). Any incidents of illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens should also be reported, as should any rhinoceros poaching incidents where persons are detained or suspected. Earlier at its 57th meeting (Geneva, July 2008), the CITES Standing Committee had agreed that a CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force should be convened to address illegal trade in specimens of this species. A Task Force, consisting of representatives from mainland China, Hong Kong S.A.R., Kenya, India, Mozambique, Nepal, South Africa, Thailand, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe, together with the CITES Secretariat, ICPO-Interpol and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force, was set up. The task force met in Nairobi, Kenya, on 18 and 19 November 2008.

The Task Force agreed that poaching of rhinoceroses and illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens had reached serious levels in some countries. It was noted that a number of individuals appeared to have engaged repeatedly in poaching of rhinoceroses, dealing in their horns and the smuggling of specimens from one continent to another. However, it was also noted that information regarding such individuals has not been widely shared, collated centrally or effectively analysed. The Task Force was of the firm opinion that opportunities to bring such people, and their associates to justice had been missed. Following this, all member countries were asked to declare not only the stocks of rhinoceros horn and derivatives but also report in future any seizures of rhinoceros horn and derivatives.

TRAFFIC 'Alert'



Continued from page 8

She visited Shah again after 20 days, when she was told to sacrifice a rhino. After Shah became non-traceable, the victim lodged a complaint with the police.

TRAFFIC India adds.....

From time immemorial, tantriks and other witchcraft practitioners have been using wildlife in some form or other in their occult practices. In order to make some easy money, they prescribe sacrificing wild animals and sometimes consuming their body parts as a remedy for people's ailments and their other problems. Among other wildlife, owls are one of the most exploited groups of species for this practice. Tantriks and rural medicine men prescribe, among other remedies: owl-eye broth for night vision, owl claws as good luck charms, owl feathers to repel evil spirits, owl meat as aphrodisiac and owl torture for directions to hidden treasure.

Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* is a highly endangered species. It is protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and its international trade is banned under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

Source:
<http://madraswanderer.blogspot.com/2009/03/miseries-of-being-owl.html>;
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Mumbai/Police-nab-tantrik-who-duped-woman-of-Rs-3L/articleshow/4311582.cms>

Four arrested while trying to sell Leopard skin

On 13 April 2009, four persons were arrested while trying to sell a Leopard skin in Udthagamandalam, Tamil Nadu. A team of forest officials pretending to be buyers had established contact with the gang. When the culprits turned up for the transaction they were nabbed.

Continued on page 10

TRAFFIC 'Alert'



Continued from page 9

TRAFFIC India adds.....

TRAFFIC India congratulates the Tamil Nadu Forest Department for cracking this case. The information regarding the sale of the Leopard skin was anonymously sent to TRAFFIC India and was further passed to the Forest Department. The Department immediately acted on it and detained the poachers. More arrests and recoveries are likely after investigation.

Source:

www.thehindu.com/2009/04/15/stories/2009041554330400.htm

Bears continue to be poached for bile

In May 2009, a gang of poachers struck again in the forests of Vidarbha, Maharashtra. They poached two Sloth Bears and decamped with their paws and bile. The incident took place at Gangazari in Tiroda. Mukesh Ganatra, Deputy Conservator of Forests, Gondia said, "It is a clear case of electrocution. The matter came to light on May 19 when locals reached their farms in the morning". The bodies were found in farmland. The bears were estimated to be three years old. Sources said that the modus operandi strikingly resembled that of the Katni gang of poachers from Central India.

The wildlife in Vidarbha is reeling under severe threat of poaching after the poisoning of two deer and other animals near Bhandara, and fears of nearly 20 Tigers having been poached outside Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve.

TRAFFIC India adds.....



© WWF-Canon / Y.-J. REY-MILLET

There are four species of bear found in India—Himalayan Black Bear *Selenarctos thibetanus*, the Himalayan Brown Bear *Ursus arctos*, Sun Bear *Helarctos malayanus* and the Sloth Bear *Melursus ursinus*. The Brown Bear, Sun Bear and the Sloth Bear are protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 while the Himalayan Black Bear is protected under Schedule II, Part II. Hunting and trade in all four species is banned under this Act. Furthermore, international commercial trade in these species is prohibited under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

In India, populations of all the bear species have suffered significantly due to illegal trade of bear gall bladders and bile. Bear bile is used in medicines in countries like China, Japan and South Korea and is also used occasionally in Ayurvedic and Tibetan medicines. South Korea is believed to be the largest consumer of bear parts in the world. Gall bladders and bile extracts are often smuggled out as frozen food and cannot be easily distinguished from those of cows, sheep or pigs, thus making detection extremely difficult for the enforcement agencies. Bear paws, meat, and fat are also traded alongside and are considered a delicacy in many Asian countries.

Source:

<http://www.dnaindia.com/report.asp?newsid=1257906>

<http://www.animalalliance.ca/kids/anipart1.htm>

<http://www.animalsasia.org/index.php?UID=G7C61FB6ZY89>

TRAFFIC 'Alert'



Twenty one monitor lizards seized from smugglers

In June 2009, 21 monitor lizards were rescued from the clutches of smugglers at Suhelwa wildlife sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh. Sources said that these lizards were on their way to China via Nepal. The forest team arrested smugglers and handed them over to Sirsia police. The accused were residents of Badalpur village.

According to forest officers, monitor lizards are boiled and their oil is extracted for purported medicinal purposes. Their meat is also in demand in India, Nepal, China and many other countries. Their skin is also used for making shoes, purse, bags and other items.

Last year in October 2008, the Tamil Nadu Forest Department seized two monitor lizards from a canteen at Villianur, Puducherry. The lizards were kept for preparing meat dishes at the canteen, said officials of the Department.

TRAFFIC India adds.....

There are four species of monitor lizard found in India—Bengal Monitor *Varanus bengalensis*, Yellow Monitor *Varanus flavescens*, Desert Monitor *Varanus griseus* and Indian Water Monitor *Varanus salvator*. All of these are protected under the Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, under which hunting and trade of the species is banned. Indian Water Monitor Lizard is listed in Appendix II of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) while all the other three species are listed in Appendix I. The international trade of all four species to and from India is prohibited.



© Hartmut JUNGIUS / WWF-Canon

Monitor lizards are victims of habitat loss as well as targets of the illegal reptile skin trade. Live monitors are also seen in India during festivals and in fertility rites. Their eggs are considered a delicacy and the entire animal is also eaten; oil extracted from fat is used in the treatment of failing eyesight and in cooking. Monitor fat is used as an aphrodisiac and the excretion is used in the treatment of eye and skin diseases. Travelling *hakims* in India also exhibit a variety of drugs and tonics derived from these animal sources.

Source:

http://www.zsienvs.in/endb/end_reptilia/reptilia_data/varanus_salvator.htm

http://www.zsienvs.in/endb/end_reptilia/reptilia_data/varanus_bengalensis.htm

<http://envfor.nic.in/divisions/re/ta5p5.html><http://www.expressbuzz.com/edition/print.aspx?artid=0s1fPYCUMak=>

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Allahabad/Smugglers-arrested-with-monitor-lizards/articleshow/4609882.cms>

<http://www.hindu.com/2008/10/31/stories/2008103150730200.htm>

IN FOCUS:
Is 2009 a year of doom for the Tiger?



45 tigers killed so far this year

Experts cite govt failure in curbing poaching, increasing human presence

Gyan Varma, NEW DELHI

The government has been making all the right noises about its efforts to save the tiger. But the results, so far, have been little to roar about — 2009 has, in fact, been the

deadliest in recent years for the big cats. There is also a worrying trend of tiger deaths due to man-animal conflict, and not just poaching.

Despite millions being pumped into saving tigers and interventions at the highest level, as many as 100 tigers

have been killed in the past three years. Sources in Project Tiger, set up by the ministry of environment and forest, also confirm that the first six months of 2009 accounted for 45 of those deaths. In the past two years, government statistics show 28 tiger deaths in 2008 and 27 in 2007. Two years ago, Madhya Pradesh's Panna reserve boasted at least two dozen tigers. Now it has none.

"The government has been unable to control poaching," said Sunita Narain, chairperson, National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the empowered committee appointed by the government. She says though NTCA had submitted a report to the government, cautioning it about the increasing number of deaths this year, no action has been taken.

"There is no dearth of funds



IN ALL: 100 deaths over last three years

THIS YEAR: 45 and counting

POISONED: At least 12 confirmed cases

with the government. But it is unable to protect the tigers because the guards are too old and cannot run around the reserves to break the nexus of poachers," said Narain, adding that recruitment is handled by the states and the centre has not much say in it.



exclusive

*Daily News & Analysis, Ahmedabad
29 June 2009, Page 7*

The recent spate in Tiger mortality reported from across the country has left most conservationists wondering about the future of Tigers in India. Over 45 Tiger deaths have been reported since the beginning of 2009. The Tiger is a victim of habitat degradation, illegal wildlife trade and human-wildlife conflict. Unless concerted efforts are taken to save the species in the wild, the future appears bleak for the Tiger.

The Tiger *Panthera tigris* is an endangered species and is listed under the Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. It is also India's National Animal.

This Act gives it protection against hunting/poaching and trade of skins, bones and other body parts. Any person who commits such an offence is punishable with an imprisonment of not less than three years, extending up to seven years, along with a fine of not less than INR50 000 which may extend up to INR200 000. In the event of a second or subsequent conviction, an offender can receive imprisonment for a term of not less than seven years and a fine of not less than INR500 000 that can vary up to a maximum of INR5 000 000.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) presently, renders international commercial trade in Tiger parts illegal. India has been a signatory to this convention since the year 1975.

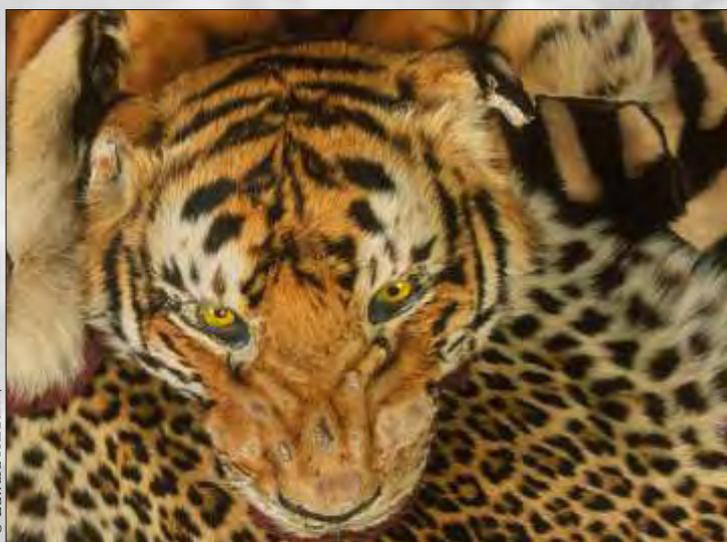
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Besides habitat degradation and loss and human-wildlife conflict, illegal trade in Tiger bone, skins and other body parts has been one of the primary threats to the survival of the species in the wild. However, with support from the international community, efforts have been directed to curb this trade. For example, at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP 14), the ban on international trade in Tiger parts and derivatives was reinforced and China was asked to phase out its privately run "Tiger farms" that presently house over 4000 of these big cats. Owners of these farms have been pressurising the Chinese government to allow legal trade in Tiger parts. Finally, the CITES Parties adopted a strong Tiger trade decision by consensus. "Tigers should not be bred for their parts or derivatives" was the unequivocal message from the forum.



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Survey finds 'no signs' of tigers in Panna

NEHA SINHA
NEW DELHI, MARCH 3

FIRST, Panna tiger reserve lost all its tigresses to poachers. Now, it may have lost its tigers as well. According to sources at the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) tracking the camera-trapping evidence, there are now no signs of tigers in the once densely populated reserve.

While Madhya Pradesh continues to deny that Panna may have lost all its tigers, it has interestingly asked the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests for permission to translocate a tiger to the reserve, calling it part of a "long-term plan". The ministry has so far not cleared its request.

Panna had between 16-24 tigers till 2006 and close to 40 tigers in 2002. However, a WII survey using 42 cameras found 'signs' of a maximum of two tigers in December-January in Panna, with two of the pictures belonging to the same tiger. However, since then, the continuous camera trapping has not shown any signs of the animals, WII scientists say.

Calling this serious, tiger scientist Raghu Choudhary, who has worked extensively with WII and is an expert on Panna, says: "This is a situation worse than Sariska because Panna had more than 40 tigers. This is complete and total loss."

The WII survey also confirmed that Panna had no more tigresses, a charge Madhya Pradesh had denied till

the findings. To deal with this, the state is in the process of acquiring two tigresses, one each from Bandhavgarh and Kanha. In fact, to hurry up the process, the state has even ditched the elaborate aerial route and a tigress is right now on its way from Bandhavgarh by road to the reserve. The second tigress is likely to be moved from Kanha soon. Originally, a helicopter was to do the translocation and a rescue of Panna had been carried out for this purpose.

Dr H Pabla, Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, says the request that a tiger be translocated as well is part of the same plan. "There are male tigers in Panna," he says, "but the population is scattered. When the females are

translocated here, they might not find tigers to mate with. Thus we have a long-term plan of translocating a tiger too."

A senior official from the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests said the question of agreeing to Madhya Pradesh's request for a tiger "does not arise" at the moment. "No permission has been given so far to translocate a male tiger in addition to translocating the two females.

Experts are demanding an investigation. "If there is indeed a male tiger or two male tigers in Panna, they should be radio-collared and monitored. If Madhya Pradesh claims that it still has male tigers, then they shouldn't have to ask for another tiger translocation," says Choudhary.

The news of Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh having lost all its Tigers is not only alarming, given the small number of wild Tigers that remain today but also embarrassing for the country. In 2004, when Sariska was declared Tiger less, it was an extremely sad time in the history of conservation. Now for Panna to happen a few years down the line shows we have not learnt our lesson. What is even more disturbing are the signals suggesting that there could be several other Tiger Reserves in a similar situation.

Even though the National Tiger Conservation Authority has issued a series of advisories to strengthen the protection of wild Tigers in India but it remains to be seen how these are implemented at the ground level.

Mr Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India said, "Leadership in protection of Tigers is clearly to emerge at the field level. Every single wild Tiger irrespective of where it is found is under threat. All Tiger bearing areas must put in place effective planning for strengthening security for wild Tigers and carry out periodic audits of such security measures including by independent evaluators. TRAFFIC has offered its support and commitment to state forest departments and other enforcement agencies for handling this crisis".

*The Indian Express, New Delhi
3 March 2009, Page 4*

Continued on page 14

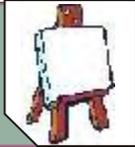
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AN OVERVIEW OF TIGER DEATHS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 2009:

S. NO	DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER OF TIGER DEATHS
1	19 June 2009	Bor Dam, Pipalparao Forest Range, Terai Central Forest Division, Uttarakhand	1
2	12 June 2009	Bandipur National Park, Karnataka	1
3	4 June 2009	Nagarhole National Park, Karnataka	1
4	2 June 2009	Vanvihar National Park, Bhopal	1
5	30 May 2009	Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, Goa	1
6	27 May 2009	Ramnagar Forest Division, Uttarakhand	1
7	23 May 2009	Ramnagar Forest Division, Uttarakhand	1
8	14 May 2009	Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan	1
9	13 May 2009	Outskirts of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra	1
10	7 May 2009	Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
11	6 May 2009	Chiroli, Chandrapur	1
12	25 April 2009	Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa	1
13	24 April 2009	Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
14	18 April 2009	Kaziranga National Park, Assam	1
15	13 April 2009	Keri Forest, Goa	1
16	12 April 2009	Gangaram village, Narsampet, Warrangal, Andhra Pradesh	1
17	12 April 2009	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
18	10 April 2009	Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
19	4 April 2009	Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
20	4 April 2009	Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan	1
21	2 April 2009	Van Vihar National Park, Bhopal	1
22	25 March 2009	Adhyalmendha lake, Chandrapur, Maharashtra	1
23	24 March 2009	Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra	1
24	23 March 2009	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam	1
25	18 March 2008	Bhadravati, Chandrachur	1
26	17 March 2009	Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand	1
27	10 March 2009	Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand	1
28	7 March 2009	Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand	1
29	4 March 2008	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
30	26 February 2009	Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra	1
31	26 February 2009	Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand	1
32	24 February 2009	Faizabad district, Uttar Pradesh	1
33	22 February 2009	Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra	1
34	13 February 2009	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam	1
35	8 February 2009	Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh	1
36	31 January 2009	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
37	29 January 2009	Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand	1
38	29 January 2009	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
39	23 January 2009	Tadoba-andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra	1
40	21 January 2009	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam	1
41	20 January 2009	Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
42	18 January 2009	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
43	10 January 2009	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam	1
44	7 January 2009	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	1
45	5 January 2009	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam	1
46	3 January 2009	Kanha Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh	2
47	3 January 2009	Kaziranga Tiger Reserve, Assam	1
48	2 January 2009	Bhandara, Maharashtra	1

Please note: Atleast 11 Tiger skins and other derivatives have been recovered from over 18 seizures conducted since the beginning of 2009.

SIGNPOST: Other significant news stories to read



World's richest biodiversity hotspots are most war prone: More than 80 percent of the world's major conflicts have taken place in the most biologically rich and diverse places on earth, a new study says. These hotspots are considered top conservation priorities because they house more than half of all plant species and at least 42 percent of all vertebrates, and are highly threatened. For more information, please visit <http://www.fastnews.in/world-news/worlds-richest-biodiversity-hotspots-are-most-war-prone>

Global CITES operation nets over 4500 specimens of endangered species in one day: The summary result of an intensive global one-day CITES operation carried out by 90 Customs administrations across the globe on 15 January 2009 reveals seizures totalling 4630 live specimens of endangered species as well as products and derivatives. These seizures included specimens from as many as 80 kinds of species, including ivory tusks, musk, Tiger derivatives, caviar, rhinoceros horns, lynx, snow lotus, and Lion skins with many of the species regarded as critically endangered and at the edge of extinction. For more information, please visit <http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2009/WCO-cites-operation.shtml>

Dead Tigers to be frozen, studied: In a bid to fix accountability and check the practice of showing unnatural Tiger deaths as natural, the National Tiger Conservation Authority in India has decided that each dead Tiger will be deep-frozen, stored and studied by an independent team to ascertain how it died. A team formed for this purpose will include an official from the Authority, a State veterinary doctor and a non-governmental Tiger expert nominated by the chief wildlife warden of the State. They will treat injured Tigers too. For more information, please visit <http://www.physorg.com/news163646477.html>

Pink or red? experts debate corals' future: Coral experts met in March 2009 in Hong Kong to discuss ways to stop the over-exploitation of pink and red corals in the world's oceans. Millions of items and thousands of kilogrammes of red and pink coral those in the genus *Corallium* are traded internationally each year as jewellery and in other collectables. For more information, please visit <http://www.traffic.org/home/2009/3/23/pink-or-redexperts-debate-corals-future.html>

Thousand new species in Greater Mekong: Over 1000 new species have been discovered in the Greater Mekong Region of South-east Asia since 1997, says a new report by WWF. Among the most incredible finds documented in First Contact in the Greater Mekong are the Lao Rock Rat, thought to have gone extinct 11 million years ago but discovered in a Lao food market; the hot-pink "dragon millipede" that produces cyanide in self-defence; the world's largest huntsman spider, which has a leg span of over 30 centimeters; and a new species of purple banana from Southern China. For more information, please visit <http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/12/17/1000-new-species-in-greater-mekong.html>

Myanmar emerges as ivory trade and elephant smuggling hotspot: Around 250 live Asian Elephants have been smuggled from Myanmar in the past decade, mostly destined for "elephant trekking" tourism activities in neighbouring Thailand, a new report by TRAFFIC has revealed. Meanwhile blatant illegal ivory trade continues in Myanmar, with TRAFFIC surveys of 14 markets and three border markets in Thailand and China finding 9000 pieces of ivory and 16 whole tusks for sale. For more information, please visit <http://www.traffic.org/home/2008/12/10/myanmar-emerges-as-ivory-trade-and-elephant-smuggling-hot-sp.html>

Corrigenda

In the November 2008 issue of the TRAFFIC Post, under the TRAFFIC Alert section on page 6, it was stated that "Lion skin was seized in Chhattisgarh". This was on the basis of newspaper reports. It has since been pointed out that what was seized was not a Lion skin but a Tiger skin.

Also on page 8, under the TRAFFIC Alert section, it stated that the Tiger trade racket was busted in north India in September 2008. Please note that the seizure actually took place in July 2008. These errors are regretted.

HEADLINES

SHAHTOOSH SHAWLS WORTH CRORES SEIZED AT DELHI AIRPORT

Customs officials at Delhi Airport have seized 100 shawls worth crores of rupees. The shawls were found hidden in a suitcase belonging to a passenger. The shawls are made of Shahtoosh, a rare and endangered species of cashmere wool. The seizure was made by the Customs officials at the airport. The shawls were found hidden in a suitcase belonging to a passenger. The shawls are made of Shahtoosh, a rare and endangered species of cashmere wool. The seizure was made by the Customs officials at the airport.



Leopard count down by 69 in eight weeks

At Least 36 Big Cats Were Poisoned, Trapped Or Died Of Accidents Between January 1 & February 25

Leopard TOLL: A report from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) reveals a significant decline in the leopard population in India. Between January 1 and February 25, at least 36 big cats were reported to be poisoned, trapped, or died of accidents. This brings the total number of leopards killed in India to 69 in the last eight weeks. The report highlights the urgent need for conservation efforts to protect this endangered species.



Over 50 blackbucks die in Rajasthan wildlife sanctuary

Bikaner (Rajasthan) June 2: Over 50 blackbucks recently died out of a flock to a looting unexpected. The Bikaner Wildlife Sanctuary in Rajasthan. The game warden and rangers at the Tal Chhapar Wildlife Sanctuary, some 160 kilometers from Bikaner, are of the view that the number of deaths could be 100 if not for the timely intervention. They say the blackbucks were found dead in a field. The game warden and rangers at the Tal Chhapar Wildlife Sanctuary, some 160 kilometers from Bikaner, are of the view that the number of deaths could be 100 if not for the timely intervention. They say the blackbucks were found dead in a field.

Census counts 1572 croes in Bhitarkanika

Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa, has recorded a population of 1572 crocodiles. This is a significant increase from the previous census. The sanctuary is home to a large population of crocodiles, and the increase is attributed to better conservation efforts and a decline in poaching. The sanctuary is home to a large population of crocodiles, and the increase is attributed to better conservation efforts and a decline in poaching.



POACHERS ENDANGER TURTLES

Endangered turtles are being poached in large numbers. The poachers are targeting turtles for their shells, which are used in traditional medicine. The poaching is taking place in the mangrove swamps of the Sundarbans. The poachers are targeting turtles for their shells, which are used in traditional medicine. The poaching is taking place in the mangrove swamps of the Sundarbans.



93 lions have died in Guj in 3 yrs

ROAR'S GONE: A report from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) reveals a significant decline in the lion population in Gujarat, India. In the last three years, 93 lions have died. This is a concerning trend for the Asiatic lion, which is already an endangered species. The report highlights the urgent need for conservation efforts to protect this species.



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TRAFFIC
 the wildlife trade monitoring network

is a joint programme of