

TRAFFIC POST

the wildlife trade monitoring network

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TRAFFIC INDIA'S NEWSLETTER ON WILDLIFE TRADE IN INDIA



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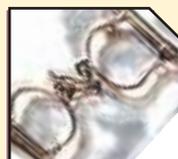
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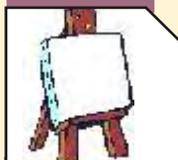
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Experts meet in Nepal to plan action to save the Tiger



More than 250 experts, scientists and government delegates from 13 Tiger range States called for immediate action to save Tigers before the species disappears from the wild, citing the urgent need for increased protection against Tiger poaching and trafficking in Tiger parts. The recommendations were made during the four-day Kathmandu Global Tiger Workshop 2009 held on 27–30 October 2009 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The purpose of the workshop was to bring all participating countries to work on a strategic action plan to stop the alarming downward trend in Tiger numbers, to introduce new ideas and also to allow participating countries to share their experiences regarding protection of Tigers.

China has historically been the main consumer of Tiger parts and products, and promised during the workshop to work with its neighbours to end Tiger trade and bring back wild Tigers. A much reduced but persistent demand for Tiger parts and products in China continues to drive poaching of wild Tigers throughout the species's range. Trade in Tiger parts has been banned in China since 1993, but several large-scale Tiger farms exist in the country and their owners have been pressurizing the government to reopen the trade. Any reopening of the trade would be a catastrophe for wild Tigers.



© Samir Sinha

The participants at the Global Tiger Workshop 2009 suggested using the Chinese Year of the Tiger, which begins in February 2010, to create global awareness of the critical plight of wild Tigers and enlist support for their conservation.

The workshop urged all countries to implement CITES resolutions, enhance the capacity of INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the CITES Secretariat and regional wildlife enforcement networks (including ASEAN-WEN) to combat illegal trade in wildlife at the international level.

The workshop also called upon countries to implement effective Tiger conservation measures such as conserving and managing buffer zones and corridors that connect core Tiger breeding areas, stop infrastructure projects in such areas, avoid financing development projects that adversely affect critical Tiger habitats, and empowering local communities that live in and around Tiger landscapes with sustainable economic incentives and appropriate technologies to minimize human-Tiger conflict.

The Kathmandu Global Tiger Workshop is the first in a series of political negotiation meetings occurring throughout the year and leading up to a final Heads of State Tiger Summit in September 2010.

The workshop was hosted by Nepal's Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, Government of Nepal, and co-organized and co-sponsored by the CITES

Secretariat, Global Tiger Forum, Global Tiger Initiative, Save The Tiger Fund and the World Bank.

Source:

www.panda.org

http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=11302



© Staffan Widstrand / WWF-Canon

TRAFFIC India and NTCA prepare national database on the mortality of Tiger and other species



The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has been working with TRAFFIC India to set up a national web based database on Tiger and other species mortality in India. This database will begin operations shortly, with access for Field Directors of Tiger Reserves, Chief Wildlife Wardens and others authorized by the NTCA. The database is expected to be a useful tool for strengthening field level conservation. The website is undergoing a final security audit before its formal launch.

Kerala judiciary extends support for strengthening wildlife enforcement



Hon. Judges of the Kerala High Court took part in an "Orientation Programme on Wildlife Conservation" on 3-4 October 2009 in Kochi, Kerala. The programme was conducted jointly by TRAFFIC India and WWF-India in partnership with the Kerala Judicial Academy.

The workshop aimed to sensitize the judiciary about issues related to wildlife conservation. The judiciary plays a significant role in championing the cause of forest and biodiversity conservation, so it was felt necessary to update them on the status of forest and wildlife legislations, international conventions on related issues and enforcement of wildlife laws in India.

The programme was inaugurated by the Chief Justice of Kerala, Hon. Justice SR Bannurmath in the presence of Hon. Justice Kurian Joseph, Executive Chairman, Kerala State Legal Services Authority. Hon. Justice PR Raman, President of the Kerala Judicial Academy presided over the inaugural function, which was

graced by the presence of 30 other Senior Judges of the Kerala High Court, 14 Principal Judges of district courts of Kerala and other officers of the judiciary. Overall, more than 60 senior judiciary officers attended this programme.

During the programme, the Hon. Chief Justice SR Bannurmath expressed his concern over the growing illegal wildlife trade in the country and the need to build awareness on environmental and wildlife related laws among the members of the judiciary in Kerala. Justice Bannurmath also urged the Senior Judges to play a catalytic role in wildlife conservation.

Key resource persons for the programme included Dr S.P. Goyal of the Wildlife Institute of India, Sri S.P. Yadav of the National Tiger Conservation Authority, Sri A.D.N. Rao and Sri Ritwick Dutta, Advocates from the Supreme Court of India.

Mr Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India, during his presentation, emphasized that wildlife crime had now become much more organized and transcended national borders. He stressed the need for co-operation, collaboration and awareness to meet this challenge.

The orientation programme was the fourth in a series for the judiciary conducted by TRAFFIC India.



Judges at the workshop in Kochi, Kerala

© MKS Pasha

New guidelines for preparation of security plans for Tiger Reserves in India



The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) in association with TRAFFIC India has prepared new guidelines for scaling up security at Tiger Reserves in India. The guidelines were drawn up amidst the on-going Tiger crisis which has seen more than 60 Tigers dead in India in 2009 to date.

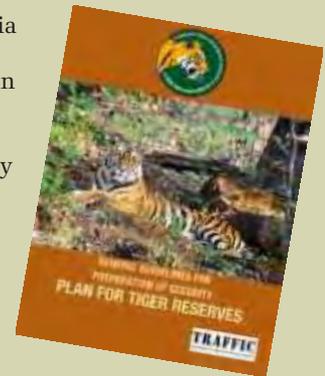
The Generic guidelines for preparation of security plans for Tiger Reserves were released by Shri Jairam Ramesh, Hon. Minister of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India at the 4th meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority held on 6 October 2009 in New Delhi.

The growing demand in some countries for Tigers parts and derivatives is one of the greatest threats to the survival of the big cats. The NTCA has advised all Indian States to prepare a specific Tiger Conservation Plan and to use the newly developed guidelines to prepare security plans for their Tiger Reserves.

Dr Rajesh Gopal commented: "Illegal demand for Tiger parts and derivatives is a threat to the already endangered Tiger population in the country, necessitating enhanced intelligence-based enforcement."

"These newly released guidelines will help States to develop an effective security plan for strengthening management of their Tiger Reserves."

The document provides insights into the nature of the threat to wild Tigers, evaluation of protected areas, preparation of security maps, prevention and detection of wildlife crimes, patrol planning, intelligence gathering, running informer networks, establishing criminal profile directories, understanding the scene of crime, media management, and other topics.



WCCB, Defra and TRAFFIC India collaborate to strengthen wildlife enforcement



The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India; TRAFFIC India and Defra (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Govt. of UK) are collaborating to disseminate knowledge on measures and skills for combating wildlife crime across the country. To mark the beginning of this effort, a two-day workshop on wildlife crime enforcement was organized at the Tamil Nadu Police Academy, Chennai on 20–21 August 2009. Over 30 officials from the Forest Department, Police, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Customs and Railway Protection Force (RPF) attended.

Inaugurating the workshop, Thiru R. Sundararaju, Chief Wildlife Warden and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, said that this multi agency training was the first of its kind in Tamil Nadu. He congratulated the efforts of WCCB, Defra and TRAFFIC for providing the opportunity to key enforcement agencies in Tamil Nadu to acquire the skills for combating illicit wildlife trade.

Mrs Rina Mitra, Additional Director, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau stressed the enormity and impact of the illegal wildlife trade and the need for the workshop. She hoped the workshop would pave the way for similar



© MKS Pasha

From left to right: Shri Arunachalam, DIG-Tamil Nadu Police Academy; Mrs Reena Mitra, Addl Director-WCCB; Thiru R. Sundaraju, Chief Wildlife Warden & PCCF, Govt. of Tamil Nadu and Mr Samir Sinha, Head-TRAFFIC India at the workshop in Chennai

programmes for sensitizing officers and building the capacity of frontline staff in combating wildlife crime.

Mr Arif Hussain of Defra noted that his organization looked forward to working with the Govt. of India and TRAFFIC in taking the initiative forward.

Similar enforcement training workshops are planned in other parts of the country over the coming months.

Wildlife enforcement training workshops conducted across India



As part of TRAFFIC India's "Capacity Building" programme, wildlife enforcement training workshops were conducted in the States of Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. The workshops were organized to provide training and inputs to a diverse group of officials working on wildlife enforcement and other supportive issues.

Since December 2007, TRAFFIC India has successfully conducted 16 workshops and trained over 700 officials across the country. The training programmes and modules are tailor-made for the diverse target groups, although common subjects include wildlife forensics; the role of CITES; evaluating scenes of wildlife crime; setting up and handling information networks; conducting search and seizures; developing documentation that leads to successful prosecution in a court of law and more. The programmes enable TRAFFIC India to share knowledge on the new tools and technology that are required to combat poaching gangs and to break the wildlife trade nexus across regions.

A synopsis of the two latest workshops is given below:

Raipur, Chhattisgarh: TRAFFIC India and WWF-India in partnership with Chhattisgarh Forest Department and the National Tiger Conservation Authority, conducted a two day enforcement training workshop on wildlife conservation for forest department officials in Chhattisgarh. The workshop was held on 29–30 June 2009 at Raipur and was inaugurated by Mr Vikram Usendi, Hon. Minister of Environment & Forest of Chhattisgarh. Over 50 officials of the Chhattisgarh Forest Department participated.

Nagpur, Maharashtra: TRAFFIC India in partnership with WWF-India and the Maharashtra Forest Department conducted a training workshop on wildlife law enforcement on 1–2 August 2009. The workshop was held at Nagpur and over 45 forest officials from important Tiger areas of Maharashtra participated. The aim of this workshop was to strengthen the ability of frontline wildlife staff and managers to understand and enforce wildlife law effectively.

During the workshop, WWF-India handed over two four-wheel drive Bolero Camper vehicles to the Maharashtra Forest Department for use in Bor and Nagzira wildlife sanctuaries. The vehicles are specifically meant for anti-poaching and fire protection purposes in these sanctuaries, located in Maharashtra's Vidarbha region.

Amendment to Biological Diversity Act, 2002 smoothens the process of filing complaints



In order to expedite law enforcement and implementation, the MoEF (Ministry of Environment and Forests) through a notification no. 68 dated 12 January 2009, has authorized all range officers and above to file complaints in cases of violation of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. Previously only Central Government or those authorized by them were able to file complaints.

TRAFFIC Alert



Eight Common Marmosets stolen from Alipore zoo

Eight Common Marmosets *Callithrix jacchus* were stolen from Alipore Zoological Gardens, Kolkata on 8 August 2009. This was not the first attempt to steal marmosets from India's oldest zoological park. Thieves had earlier targeted the monkey enclosure in March 2009, but were chased away by the guards. The theft has now cast a cloud over security arrangements at the zoo, which were handed over to a private agency four years ago.

Later, seven of the eight marmosets were recovered from Durg in Chhattisgarh. The eighth monkey is believed to have died while the animals were being transported from Kolkata to Durg.

TRAFFIC India adds.....

This is not the first time that animals have been stolen from a zoo in India. This year in July a Sand Boa was stolen from Trivandrum zoo in Kerala, while eleven snakes were stolen from Vandalur zoo and Guindy Snake Park in Chennai. Two Green-winged Macaws were also stolen from Nandankanan zoo in Orissa. Concerns have been raised about security at zoos across India.

The exact source of demand for the stolen zoo animals is yet to be identified. However, investigation of the stolen marmosets from the Kolkata zoo suggests a growing demand for rare exotic animals within India, with exotic animals targeted from government as well as private zoos.

Exotic animals are currently not protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and as such, regulating their trade is extremely difficult. There is a need to focus on this little known but high value theft of exotic animals and birds and take steps to regulate it.

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Commemorating Wildlife Week 2009



TRAFFIC India in collaboration with WWF-India and the National Zoological Park, New Delhi, has organized an environmental quiz “Wild Wisdom” to commemorate Wildlife Week 2009. The quiz was held on 6 October 2009 at the WWF-India Secretariat in New Delhi and received a tremendous response with 26 schools participating from Delhi and adjoining areas. After several interesting rounds, Sanskriti School, Chankyapuri, emerged as the winner followed by Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Vasant Vihar.

It is the third year running “Wild Wisdom” has been held during Wildlife Week, but this year, it was bigger and will culminate with a mega intercity wildlife quiz being organized in November 2009 in New Delhi.

“Don't Buy Trouble” film wins CMS Vatavaran Award



TRAFFIC India's film “Don't Buy Trouble” has received an award at the CMS Vatavaran Environment and Wildlife Film festival held in New Delhi this October. The award was in the “Best Public Service Announcement” (PSA) category, which includes messages, short or promotional films, commercials or advertising campaigns that educate or inform the public at large.

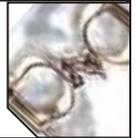
This film is part of TRAFFIC India's campaign to curb illegal trade in wildlife. A one minute version of the film captures glimpses of the burgeoning illegal wildlife trade in India that threatens the nation's precious flora and fauna, and is the latest addition to TRAFFIC India's consumer awareness “Buyers Beware” campaign.

Besides highlighting the gruesome reality for many species in illegal trade, the film also draws attention to the various national and international laws that protect wildlife and informs viewers about the legal consequences of engaging in such trade.

The film was made by renowned wildlife filmmaker Himanshu Malhotra and was produced by TRAFFIC India/WWF-India.



TRAFFIC Alert



Continued from page 5

Source:

http://www.asianetindia.com/news/red-sand-boa-stolen-tvm_58005.html
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/city/kolkata/-8-rare-monkeys-stolen-from-Alipore-zoo/articleshow/4875722.cms>
<http://www.samaylive.com/news/rare-birds-stolen-from-nandankanan-zoo/641132.html>
<http://www.expressbuzz.com/edition/story.aspx?Title=8+sand+boas+stolen+from+Guindy+snake+park&artid=35p9RgKma84=&SectionID=lifojHIWDDUU=&MainSectionID=lifojHIWDDUU=&SEO=Vandalur+zoo&SectionName=rSY%7C6QYp3kQ=>
<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/kolkata-cops-raid-pune-mumbai-dens/514264/>
http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/india-news/seven-stolen-marmosets-recovered-from-durg_100239845.html#ixzz0VyWKnuU3

Endangered marine species seized in Tamil Nadu

On 11 August 2009, the Tamil Nadu Forest Department apprehended three fishermen and seized 250 kg of dried sea cucumbers and 150 kg of seahorses at Mandapam North Sea shore, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu. During a routine coastal surveillance, officials noticed a group of fishermen standing on the seashore with gunny bags. The officials tried to check the bags, but the fishermen resisted, attempted to assault the officials then tried to escape. However, they were overpowered and the bags seized. The marine species were destined for smuggling to Sri Lanka using a clandestine boat, sources added.

TRAFFIC India adds.....

Domestic trade in Sea Cucumbers *Holothurians* and Seahorses *Sygnathidians* is prohibited under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Seahorses are also listed in Appendix II of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

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CITES UPDATE:

CITES requests Tiger range States to comply with conservation measures



At its 58th meeting held in Geneva from 6–10 July 2009, the Standing Committee of CITES noted that a significant number of Tiger range States had failed to comply with the conservation measures suggested for Asian Big Cats during the 14th Conference of the Parties held in The Hague, Netherlands in 2007.

The CITES Standing Committee also issued notification to all Tiger range States to submit reports by 20 October 2009 to determine if those Parties having intensive operations for breeding Tigers on a commercial scale have restricted their captive populations to a level supportive to the sustainability of Tigers in the wild. To view the notification, please visit <http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2009/E029.pdf>

CITES UPDATE:

New CITES guide to prevent illegal trade in falcons



© Chris Martin Bahr / WWF-Canon

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

The Government of Canada and the Falcon Enforcement Task Force of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) launched a new guide on falcons and hawks in July 2009, to coincide with the 58th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

The CITES guide to falconry species is available in two editions: one for the general public and the other specific for law enforcement officers. The public version of the guide enables identification and provides description of the six falcon and one hawk species most commonly traded for falconry purposes. It also contains information on the identification

of juvenile falcons and falcon hybrids.

An expanded Law Enforcement Edition also includes information on illegal activity and trade in these species. It will help law enforcement officers to monitor and control the cross-border movement of falcons.

In the mid-2000s, illegal trade in birds of prey slumped because of falconers' fears over avian flu. However, it seems to be growing again as evidenced by major recent seizures in several countries. Illegal activities involve harvesting the eggs of falcons and hawks from nests in the wild and the trapping of wild birds. The eggs or live birds are then smuggled to countries where falconry is historically and culturally significant and where birds can attract prices of tens of thousands of dollars. Some falcon species are becoming increasingly rare in the wild, and such poaching significantly affects their survival.

The guide can be downloaded at <http://www.ec.gc.ca/publications>.

Source:
Press release, www.cites.org

TRAFFIC Alert



Continued from page 6

Despite the protection, illegal trade in seahorses continues to thrive. Seahorses are used as an ingredient in traditional Chinese medicines and are believed to have aphrodisiac properties. The main markets for seahorse trade are in China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea, Malaysia and Taiwan.

Sea cucumbers are found in the Gulf of Mannar, India's only National Park for these species, and are smuggled from the Ramanathapuram-Tuticorin coast in Tamil Nadu to countries such as China, Japan and Malaysia where they are prized as aphrodisiacs and also for their medicinal value.

In order to stop this trade and to curb the damage being done to our precious marine ecosystem, there is a need to undertake studies to assess the illegal trade in these marine species and formulate action accordingly.

Source:
<http://www.ias.ac.in/currsci/feb252002/377.pdf>
<http://www.india-today.com/itoday/20040913/environment.html>
<http://news.webindia123.com/news/Articles/India/20090811/1316232.html>

Forty six Indian Softshell Turtles seized in West Bengal

On 12 July 2009, authorities at Bidhannagar More intercepted a vehicle coming from Bihar and recovered 46 Indian Softshell Turtles, a Schedule I species. Two people from Malligunj on the Bengal-Bihar border were arrested. Forest Department officials had been tipped off about the duo taking the turtles to Nepal. It is believed they would have been carried further to China, where turtles fetch a high price for their flesh as well as for their medicinal value.

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OUTPOST:
World's Customs linked through
ENVIRONET



The World Customs Organization (WCO) has launched ENVIRONET, a secure internet-based tool to share information quickly and securely amongst environmental law enforcement officers worldwide to enhance environmental border protection.

Environmental crime is increasing globally, with enforcement officers playing a pivotal role in controlling international trade in environmentally sensitive goods and in eradicating illegal trafficking. To be effective, Customs officers need rapid access to information on, for example, expert opinion of the identity of wildlife parts in trade, or information about the legality of exporting particular items. To assist officers in these tasks, the new, simple way of sharing information quickly and easily was developed.

The new communication tool focuses on trade in goods falling under several international agreements, including those covering trade in hazardous chemicals, living modified organisms, chemical weapons, as well as wildlife products falling within the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Information can also be exchanged on nuclear materials and illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing.

ENVIRONET complements the existing EU-TWIX, a TRAFFIC-run system, which includes a mailing list that links enforcement authorities dealing with wildlife trade in the European Union (EU). EU-TWIX is highly specialized, dealing only with wildlife crime issues and with a built-in database allowing analysis of wildlife seizures, whereas ENVIRONET is more general, dealing with seven types of environmental offences.

ENVIRONET will be provided and maintained by the WCO to members of a select closed user group comprising Customs, law enforcement officers, and members of similar, recognized national authorities, free of charge.

TRAFFIC Alert



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"A big racket works here to catch and send turtles to China. Those recovered on Sunday were collected from forests in Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand," said Manindra Biswas, Conservator of forests (territorial), North Bengal.

TRAFFIC India adds.....



© Ashutosh Tripathi

Indian Softshell Turtle *Nilssoniana gangeticus* is listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife

(Protection) Act,

1972 under which all trade in the species is banned. International trade in the species is prohibited under CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) where the species is listed in Appendix I.

Indian Softshell Turtles primarily inhabit the Ganga and Mahanadi river systems where they are threatened by extensive habitat loss and illegal wildlife trade. The turtles are exploited for their meat and also for use in traditional Chinese medicines. They are collected along the entire Gangetic belt and sent to markets in West Bengal where they are either sold for their meat or are sent to other countries. Recent reports suggest a growing demand in this turtle species for its plastron (the flat part of a turtle's shell structure), which is used to make gelatin in many countries.

Source:

- <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Kolkata-/Duo-held-with-46-rare-turtles/articleshow/4770598.cms>
- <http://www.nytt.org/asia/trade-ws.htm>
- http://zsienvi.nic.in/endb/end_reptilia/reptilia_data/trionxy_gangeticus.htm



© Gerald S. Cubitt / WWF-Canon

One arrested in West Bengal for possessing 20 musk deer sacs

On 1 October 2009, a Bangladeshi national was arrested in West Bengal's Maldah district for possessing 20 sacs of the musk gland of the highly prized and threatened Himalayan Musk Deer. Following a joint raid by officials of the Border Security Force (BSF) and the West Bengal Forest Department, Asimuddin Mandal was arrested at Mohaddipur checkpost. The source of the musk sacs is currently unknown, but it is known they were en route to Bangladesh.

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TRAFFIC Alert



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TRAFFIC India adds.....

The Himalayan Musk Deer *Moschus chrysogaster* is listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Internationally it is listed in Appendix I of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Therefore, both domestic and international trade in the species is prohibited. However, Musk Deer continue to be killed for the glands present near the navel of adult males. Musk is used to make perfumes, soaps, cosmetics and in certain traditional medicines in Asia.

Poachers kill male deer to remove the sac which yields about 25 g of musk. It is traded through Delhi, Kolkata, Amritsar to Pakistan, Middle East, Hong Kong, Japan and Myanmar.



© TRAFFIC

Musk pods

Source:

<http://www.thehindu.com/2009/10/04/stories/2009100455710700.htm>

IN FOCUS:

Edible-nest Swiftlet: A harbinger of a new conservation era



© Manchi Shirish S

For the first time in the history of wildlife conservation in India, a wildlife species previously accorded the highest protection under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been delisted to allow sustainable trade. This marks the beginning of a new thinking where sustainable and controlled trade in a species or its derivate is being considered as a strategy to secure the conservation of species; in this instance, the Edible-nest Swiftlet.

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In India, Edible-nest Swiftlets *Collocalia fuciphaga* are found in the Nicobar and more commonly in the Andaman Islands, where they inhabit rock caves near the shore.

Their nests are constructed entirely of hardened saliva and are considered a delicacy in Chinese cuisine. They rank amongst the world's most expensive animal products. The nests are also believed to have aphrodisiac and medicinal properties and are used in many traditional medicines. The species has been exploited throughout most of its range although there is very little demand in India as none of the traditional medicine systems utilize the nests.

The Edible-nest Swiftlet has been delisted from Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, for a limited period of three years in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This was after a group of conservationists, non-governmental organizations and local communities demonstrated a mechanism whereby local communities could participate in harvesting and preserving the nests.

Mr Samir Sinha, Head-TRAFFIC India said: "This is the first time in India that sustainable harvesting is being considered as a conservation tool. We are happy to learn that there is active participation of local communities both for protection and harvesting of the nests. The success of this venture depends on the ability to demonstrate the sustainability of nest harvesting levels."



© Abrar Ahmed

Nests of Edible-nest Swiftlet

Edible-nest Swiftlet is not listed in CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora).

Selling bird's nest soup to save this bird: there's a change in law

NEHA SINHA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 17

TO save a bird, its nest will now be sold. In an unusual conservation strategy, the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL) has delisted the Edible Nest Swiftlet, a cave-nesting bird found in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, from the Wildlife Protection Act (WPA). Reason: local communities which poached the bird's nests — used in the famous bird's nest soup, a delicacy in Chinese cuisine and thought to be an aphrodisiac — are now being roped in to harvest the nests commercially. This, argues the NBWL, will help to sustain both the communities and the Edible Nest Swiftlet itself. The controlled sale of nests, which are made by the saliva of the Swiftlet, could only have been possible if the bird, accorded highest protection under Schedule One of the WPA, was delisted from the act. At a meeting of the NBWL Standing Committee chaired by Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh last month, the bird was delisted for three years. The proposal had been pending with the NBWL for three years. "Conservation strategies need to be flexible. One way of protecting this bird

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

Swiftlet delisted MANOH SHERRA

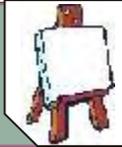
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International trade in swiftlet nests with special reference to Hong Kong Amy S.M. Lau, David S. Melville. (April 1994).

Indian Express, New Delhi, 18 August 2009

SIGNPOST: Other significant news stories to read



Endangered species list released: The Ministry of Environment and Forests has issued a notification under the Biological Diversity Act (2002) and released a revised list of endangered species in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala. The National Biodiversity Authority has issued alerts to protect 13 animal species and 26 plant species threatened with extinction in Kerala, the state with the most number of threatened species in the list.

For more information, please visit

<http://www.expressbuzz.com/edition/story.aspx?Title=Endangered+species+list+released&artid=zDLcvN/e8fk=&SectionID=1ZkF/jmWuSA=&MainSectionID=fyV9T2jIa4A=&SectionName=X7s7i|xOZ5Y=&SEO=>

Dramatic decrease in illegal timber trade between Burma and China but smuggling continues: The illegal cross-border timber trade between Burma and China has decreased significantly since 2005. However, "snake business" is widespread and the authorities in China should do more to clamp down, according to a new detailed review by the campaign group Global Witness.

For more information, please visit

http://www.globalwitness.org/media_library_detail.php/855/en/dramatic_decrease_in_illegal_timber_trade_between_

India says Chinese medicine fuels Tiger poaching: Talks between India and China to try to save the endangered Tiger failed to make much progress, India's environment minister said on 17 September 2009. The use of Tiger parts in Chinese medicine was encouraging the poaching of India's Tigers, Jairam Ramesh told reporters. China was also operating Tiger farms in violation of international agreements, which stimulated demand, he said.

For more information, please visit

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE58G4XQ20090917>

Rare wild animals recovered from a private collector in West Bengal: Over 50 wild animals including peacocks, rare turtles, a giant squirrel and over 30 species of birds were recovered in a raid conducted by the forest department at a private collector's residence in Chandranagar in West Bengal's Hooghly district in September 2009. Several animals seized are listed under various Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

For more details, please visit <http://www.thehindu.com/2009/09/16/stories/2009091657122000.htm>

Ten months for eBay ivory trader: A man who traded in elephant and whale ivory on eBay was sentenced to 10 months in prison following an international investigation by the UK's HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). Nicholas Noonan, 46, of Bedfordshire, UK, pleaded guilty on 5 October 2009 to charges relating to illegal trading in African Elephant tusks and Sperm Whale teeth as well as ivory artifacts. They had been carved into billiard balls or used to make corkscrews before being sold on the commercial website.

For more details, please visit <http://www.traffic.org/home/2009/10/20/10-months-for-ebay-ivory-trader.html>

DNA "Barcode" to help nab illegal wildlife traders: A new tool has emerged that could give investigators around the world a way to stop the illegal trade in threatened and endangered species. The idea is that customs agents can send samples of items made from animal products like crocodile skin boots or antelope hide bags to a DNA analysis lab where researchers can determine exactly what species the product or meat is from. This kind of analysis is now possible because researchers at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City have identified a specific section of DNA that is unique to each species. By analysing this "barcode of life," they can determine if the skin is from an endangered antelope or one that's allowed to be hunted.

For more information, please visit <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112819451>

HEADLINES

66 tigers dead in 8 months

23 Big Cats Died Due To Poaching... STATE OF AFFAIRS... The tiger population in the state has declined by 66 per cent in the last eight months...



Probe on into smuggling elephants to Kerala

The Kerala government has ordered a probe into the smuggling of elephants to Kerala from other states...



Poachers kill 23 of 66 tigers dead this year



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Poachers trying to poison rhinos in Kaziranga National Park

Kaziranga National Park officials have reported that poachers are trying to poison rhinos in the park...



Notorious poacher Papaiah nabbed

Wildlife experts consider a major breakthrough in the hunt for the notorious poacher Papaiah...

Tiger, leopard parts prices in China markets have doubled

Prices of tiger and leopard parts in China markets have doubled since July and August...

Year of tiger: India will ask China to plug poaching

India will ask China to plug poaching during the Year of the Tiger...

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