

Between the Conferences Of the Parties

of the UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

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Understanding the Impact

Unintended Consequences: Rhino Poaching and CITES Decisions

Frederick O'Regan, IFAW President, USA

In October 2004, the CoP13 agreed to support a proposal from Namibia and South Africa to allow the hunting of 10 African black rhinos, despite the species' CITES Appendix 1 listing.

Viewed in isolation, this decision may appear supportable; after all, some proceeds from the hunting licence fees are intended to be used to protect the black rhino and its habitat. But, in truth, it is one more example of a disturbing trend within CITES; to essentially sacrifice individual animals in a classic moral folly in which the ends attempt to justify the means.

Tragically, the application of Adam Smith's "invisible hand" of market forces to support wildlife preservation has resulted in regional declines of many species in addition to the rhino, most notably elephants and great apes.

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© Michael James & Eleanor Lowe, Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy

Coincidence? four year old rhino Fungai killed one day after CoP13 decision

Enforcing the Law

IFAW Helps Protect Garamba's Wildlife

James Isiche, IFAW Country Director, Kenya

Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the last wild refuge of the northern white

rhino, the rarest sub-species of these large mammals on earth. But rampant poaching within the Park has drastically reduced the rhino population to fewer than 10 individuals and continues to threaten them and other species such as elephants.

The situation is so desperate that both the Park's elephants and northern white rhinos face extinction, unless radical action to enhance anti-poaching efforts is taken soon.

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Understanding the Impact

Unintended Consequences: Rhino Poaching and CITES Decisions continued from page 1

In fact, within one day of the approval to “trophy-hunt” the 10 black rhinos, poachers shot and removed the horn from a four year-old female black rhino named Fungai by the rangers whose job it was to protect her. Her death marked the first poaching incident in the Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy in Zimbabwe since its establishment in 1986.

So instead of protecting rhinos and their habitat, this decision to “sport” hunt them supports the law of unintended consequences.

Additionally, “sport” or trophy hunting erodes local and international ethical and moral conservation values and fuels the perception by indigenous populations that poaching is an appropriate activity to augment their meagre annual average incomes.

The illegal trade in wildlife products is estimated to be the world’s third largest black market behind only illegal drug and arms sales, despite the best efforts of law enforcement officials worldwide.

Furthermore, the double standards inherent in the argument that rich people can hunt endangered wildlife for sport, while poor local villagers are not allowed to kill legally protected animals out of need, is a blatant injustice. As Born Free spokesperson Ian Redmond has pointed out, if the law seems unjust it is much harder to enforce.

There is, however, an important role that economic forces can legitimately play in sustaining wildlife. A recent South African study (Sims-Castley, Rebecca, Kerley, Graham I H, and Geach, Beverley, November 2004) has found that eco-

tourism on private ranches generates more than 15 times the income derived from hunting.

Ecologically and economically sustainable models for non-consumptive wildlife utilisation have been proven over time, most notably by the decades-long success of whale watching worldwide (Hoyt and IFAW 2001).

With these pro-wildlife economic models in mind, it is time for nations around the world to support only scientifically sound, ecologically sustainable and ethically moral policies that advance the well-being of animals and people, not the entertainment needs of elite trophy hunters.

Japan Abandons Science

Vassili Papastavrou, IFAW whale biologist, United Kingdom

Parties to CITES agree that decisions to list or downlist species on the Appendices should be made using the best available science. However, at the last CITES meeting the Government of Japan made assertions that had no basis in science. For example, during the discussion on Thailand’s listing proposal of the Irrawaddy dolphin, Japan made the statement that there were 4,000 Irrawaddy dolphins and that they were therefore not endangered. Similar statements were repeated when Japan filed its reservation to the listing stating on 22 December 2004 that, “Scientists in our nation have a view that this species’ estimate is in the order of several tens of thousands within its whole distribution, there is no danger of extinction, thus do not meet criteria for CITES Appendix I listing.” There are no such estimates in the literature and no data or analyses were presented to support the assertions by Japan regarding either population numbers or conservation status.

Japan also opposed the Appendix II listing of the humphead wrasse, seemingly at odds with all the available scientific data. Both Norway and Iceland supported the listing, as did an *ad hoc* expert advisory committee established under the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation. Seeing no support for its position, Japan eventually decided not to obstruct the consensus.

Elsewhere, Japan states that the number of minke whales in the Southern Ocean is 760,000, despite the fact that the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission withdrew this figure (originally derived from surveys conducted approximately 15 years ago) in 2000. The IWC is now in the process of determining a new estimate that is likely to be much lower. At this stage it is not known whether a real decline has occurred or simply that the last estimate was too high. The Japan Whaling Association and the Japanese Institute of Cetacean Research have issued graphs which purport to show a seven-fold increase in the number of minke whales in the Southern Ocean since 1900. Once again, the IWC Scientific Committee, of which Japanese scientists are active members, has never come to any such conclusion.

Science is conducted through various international norms. These include the publication of papers in scientific journals, which are carefully peer-reviewed prior to publication by appropriate experts and then commented upon in subsequent such papers. Alternatively, scientific information including data and analyses are reviewed by specialist committees (such as the IWC Scientific Committee), which are established for such a purpose. By abandoning internationally accepted processes, Japan has abandoned science itself.

Enforcing the Law

IFAW Helps Protect Garamba's Wildlife, continued from page 1

Garamba employs about 130 wildlife guards. Park management faces capacity and resource challenges, including inadequate skills, equipment and supplies. To facilitate anti-poaching operations, IFAW is partnering with the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) to provide reliable transport and train security wardens. IFAW has developed a comprehensive curriculum for Garamba anti-poaching personnel in order to increase their effectiveness in field operations.

IFAW is also commissioning a socio-economic study within communities neighbouring the Park to guide the development of community projects that will enhance goodwill for wildlife and raise awareness about the importance of protecting Garamba National Park.

In addition, IFAW is facilitating diplomatic meetings between ICCN and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to enhance collaboration in curbing the wanton poaching of wildlife. With the 9 January 2005 signing of a Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Sudanese government, we look forward to the time when Garamba National Park will benefit from cross-border co-operation in wildlife conservation between the new Sudan and the DRC.



© Clement Mwale, LATF

A Zambian man sentenced for possessing ivory tusks

Pilot Training for Kenya Wildlife Service

Bill Clark, IFAW Senior Advisor, Israel

Wildlife in Kenya is enjoying improved protection as a result of IFAW's pilot training project for the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS).



© IFAW

Flying ace pilots KWS flight training

2005 marked the fifth consecutive year of the project, which focuses on improving the safety and proficiency of KWS pilots flying patrol missions. The project has significantly reduced the number and seriousness of aviation accidents and improved pilots' skills. Together, these outcomes have resulted in greater frequency and higher quality of patrols, thus improving wildlife protection.

This year's training was conducted by aerobatic champion, Patty Wagstaff; Alaskan bush pilot instructor, Marcus Paine; Israeli civil aviation examiner, Zvi Ozer and IFAW's senior advisor, Bill Clark.

"Properly planned and conducted air patrols over wildlife habitat have proven extremely effective in discovering poaching gangs and guiding ranger units to intercept and arrest them," said Grace Gabriel, director of IFAW's Wildlife Habitat Protection programme. "More importantly, the mere presence of conspicuous air patrols has acted as an effective deterrent. The large majority of potential poachers know their risk of getting caught increases dramatically when there are routine air patrols, so they simply

don't poach. That means no laws are broken and no animals are killed - the best possible scenario."

Global News Updates

Tsavo Ecosystem Conservation Project Starts in 2005

Reported by Liz Wamba, Kenya

In July 2005, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and IFAW will undertake another ambitious partnership project - the restoration of Tsavo and Chyulu National Parks, through the Tsavo Ecosystem Conservation Project (TECP).

IFAW has been working with KWS for the last five years to restore Meru National Park. Thirty years ago, Meru was a showcase of environmental diversity, but by the late 1990s, most of the large mammal populations had plummeted due to poaching and disease. The Park's infrastructure had all but disappeared.



© IFAW/D Willets

Tsavo infrastructure to be renovated

Today, Meru Park is enjoying a new lease on life. Wildlife, especially elephants and rhinos, have been replenished; Park operations, including security, have been revamped; infrastructure has been improved; human-wildlife conflicts are being miti-

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Global News Updates

Tsavo Ecosystem Conservation Project Starts in 2005, continued from page 3

gated; and other community aspects are being addressed progressively.

Tsavo and Chyulu National Parks - the largest contiguous protected area in Kenya - is home to the largest single elephant population in Kenya. Spread over 40,000 km², the Tsavo ecosystem is larger than the nation of Israel. Its size and close proximity to the Somali border have made the area vulnerable to poaching. Human-wildlife conflicts resulting from escalating populations and land-use changes are rife.

The TECP aims to enhance basic Park operations, infrastructure and law enforcement; resolve human-wildlife conflicts; and encourage scientific research, community conservation and conservation education.

CITES Violation Found in Thailand Theme Park

Reported by Rebecca Brand, Australia

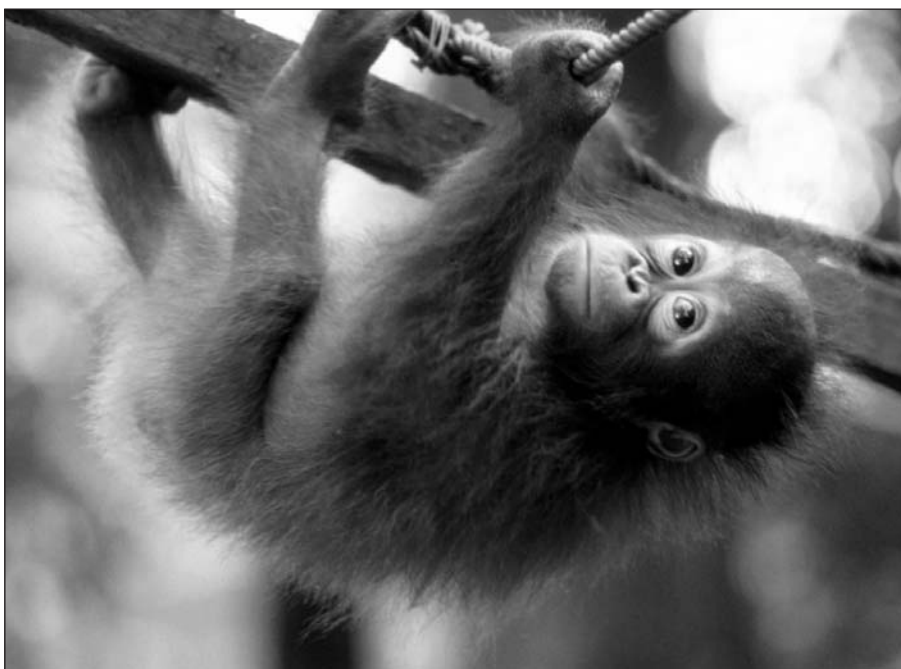
A three-year investigation into the privately owned Safari World theme park in Bangkok, Thailand, has revealed that as many as 115 orangutans were being held in terrible conditions with many forced to participate in mock boxing bouts for tourists. Following international condemnation of these activities, the boxing activities were banned.

During this investigation international conservation and animal welfare groups along with the Indonesian Government began DNA analysis to prove the orangutans had been illegally smuggled into Thailand from Borneo, Indonesia. DNA testing of the orangutans at Safari World in December 2004 confirmed that 72 of the 115 were illegally

brought into Thailand and only 43 including 29 offspring were considered legal. These figures included 15 animals that have died since the original raids on the park.

According to the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOS), the Indonesian Government has repeatedly asked Thailand to return the illegal orangutans and has prepared space at Orangutan

rehabilitation and reintroduction projects on the island of Borneo for their return. However, despite being a member of CITES since 1983, and being obliged to return the animals found in illegal international trade to their country of origin, the Thai Government has yet to do the right and responsible thing. Further information available at <http://www.savetheorangutan.info/index.php>



© IFAW

Orangutans are CITES Appendix 1 Species

Enforcing the Law

Project Cloud Juice

Bill Clark, IFAW Senior Advisor, Israel

“Cloud juice” is simple drinking water - pure and clear. It is vital to life, especially to wildlife rangers on extended patrols in large, remote, hot and arid areas.

Knowing this, poaching gangs in East Africa have recently devised a new system of escaping pursuit by Kenya Wildlife Service rangers. Before entering a park to poach wildlife, the gang chooses an escape route across very

rugged and arid terrain where there is no water and which is not passable by motorised supply vehicles. The gang then uses donkey caravans to carry in jugs of drinking water, burying them every 15 to 20 kilometers along the escape route. Then they go poaching.

KWS rangers, upon detecting poaching activities, respond quickly and begin pursuing the poachers. But sometimes, during the second or third day of the chase along the poachers' predetermined escape route, the rangers run out of water. Dehydrated and exhausted, without the possibility of getting more water, the rangers often have to end their pursuit, letting the poachers get away.

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Global News Updates

Project Cloud Juice, continued from page 4

In response, IFAW commissioned a series of parachute-drop experiments to explore methods of dropping water jugs from the air by patrol planes. Project Cloud Juice has developed a workable system for an airplane flying at 200 feet to drop jugs of drinking water using small, specially designed parachutes. Twenty such parachutes are now being manufactured for shipment to KWS in the near future.



© IFAW

A perfect 10 litre landing

The next time poachers think they will make an easy getaway after illegally killing wildlife in national parks, they will be surprised to find KWS rangers also have ample drinking water to chase them down and apprehend them.

New Ranger Unit Protects Chad's Imperiled Elephants

Bill Clark, IFAW Senior Advisor, Israel

Participants at CITES CoP13 in Bangkok, Thailand, last October were dismayed to hear a report that identified south-eastern Chad as one of the four “hot-

spots” of elephant poaching in Africa. Two months later, we were saddened by reports that two Chadian rangers were killed in a desperate gun battle with ivory poachers.

IFAW has responded to these tragedies by working with Chad's Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife to create a new ranger unit which is now operating in the areas around the edge of Zakouma National Park that were identified as poaching “hotspots.”

Commanded by veteran park warden, Emmanuel Keryang, the new 10-ranger unit is now equipped with IFAW-supplied field equipment, bicycles and motorbikes. The delivery of a 4x4 vehicle is the next increment planned to strengthen this new unit. In addition to deterring poaching gangs before they reach Zakouma (which has the densest elephant population in Chad), the new unit is also working with communities in the vicinity to resolve elephant-human conflicts, such as damage to farms and structures.

Understanding the Impact

CoP13: Progress on Compliance and Enforcement but a Step Backwards for Elephants

Rosalind Reeve, IFAW consultant, Kenya

CITES CoP13 in Bangkok proved a landmark meeting for enforcement. The Prime Minister of Thailand, H.E. Dr Thaksin Shinawatra, set the tone in his opening speech by highlighting the need for stronger enforcement. The CoP acted on his words by unanimously approving amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.3 proposed by Kenya. These include recommendations for national enforcement action plans, regional enforcement cooperation mechanisms, *ad hoc* CITES enforcement task forces, par-

ity for wildlife law enforcement officers with their police and Customs counterparts, and strengthening Interpol's wildlife crime work. The scene is now set for major advances in enforcement, but only if Parties meet the challenge and put the recommendations into action.

CITES compliance mechanisms saw progress too. Concerns that negotiations for compliance guidelines were jeopardised by disagreements at SC50 were laid to rest for now as the Standing Committee Working Group on Compliance held productive discussions in the margins of CoP13. Most significantly, the group agreed that the guidelines would only clarify the existing compliance system, not redefine or weaken it, and decided to use the controversial second draft text as the basis for further negotiations. Although the Working Group restricted itself to Parties, it requested NGO input. IFAW provided comments with its partner, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, and will continue to follow the process closely. Meanwhile, an unexpected proposal by Argentina to delete the provision enabling use of trade suspensions against Parties with inadequate national laws was defeated following a tense debate and an appeal from the Secretary General not to pull the teeth of CITES.

The ivory trade debate gave less cause for optimism. Kenya's proposal to CoP13 presented an ideal opportunity to provide a safety net for both African and Asian elephants amidst persistent concerns about increased poaching and illegal trade in the wake of the CoP12 Decisions. The proposed 20-year moratorium on ivory sales was intended to afford sufficient time to appropriately define, implement and evaluate effective controls and monitoring systems in importing and exporting countries, and to build a comprehensive programme aimed at ending illegal ivory trade, enhancing enforcement capacity in Range States, developing

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Understanding the Impact

CoP13: Progress on Compliance and Enforcement but a Step Backwards for Elephants, continued from page 5

cooperative enforcement mechanisms, bringing domestic ivory trade under stringent control in designated ivory importing countries and halting domestic ivory trade in other countries. The rationale was simple - Kenya believed it crucial to base any future decisions concerning the ivory trade on a set of appropriately defined conditions, backed up by a state-of-the-art verification system, and to ensure the future safety of vulnerable elephant populations. There was widespread disappointment among Parties and NGOs when the Kenyan proposal ultimately failed.

Several African countries expressed support for the Kenyan proposal. Francophone African countries in particular voiced concerns about increased poaching in the region and its harmful effects on their forest elephant populations. Some spoke out strongly against the ivory trade proposal from Namibia and encouraged Range States to err on the side of caution when considering future ivory trade proposals.

Even though Kenya failed in its attempt to strengthen trade controls, it was encouraging to see so many African countries questioning not only whether controls have been appropriately defined to date, but also the enforcement burden imposed on all Range States by legal trade and whether, in fact, the ivory trade can ever really be controlled. Discussions at CoP13 set the stage for a more transparent approach to the debate in the future. There is little doubt that more Parties are becoming more outspoken in their op-

position to the resumption of a legal ivory trade. While positive steps have been taken by the CITES Secretariat to control unregulated domestic ivory markets - a major driver of illicit activities - they fail to deal effectively with markets outside Africa. Furthermore, a lot of work remains to be done to properly understand the real impacts of CITES Decisions on poaching and illegal trade. This will take time. Perhaps Parties will come round to realising that the only real hope for African and Asian elephants lies in revisiting Kenya's proposed moratorium on ivory sales at CoP14.

Scientific Research Updates

Amboseli Elephant Research Flourishing Despite Drought

Summarised from Cynthia Moss Elephant Trust: Update by Christopher Galazzi

The seasonal rains of March through May failed to arrive at Amboseli National Park, Kenya in 2004, endangering the lives of many animals, most notably the Park's elephants.

Although not yet starving, the Amboseli elephants may be only months away from this possibility, which is why the field research of Soila Sayialel, Norah Njiraini and Katito Sayialel is so critical. They are monitoring individuals, families, group sizes, locations, activities, associations, births, deaths, mating and other critical long-term data to clarify the social and ecological dynamics of Amboseli's estimated 1,350 elephants.

One notable finding of recent aerial and ground surveys performed by seven Maasai scouts outside the Park is that the

elephants are travelling farther afield. They may be returning to their old migration routes and range. Many who have been observed deep within Tanzania do not revisit Amboseli for months, even years, at a time. The elephants' return to their former 2,500 square mile range is encouraging because it enables the 150 square mile park to support the 300-odd elephants that inhabit it at any one time.



© ATE
55+ year old Amboseli matriarch, Echo, with her newborn calf

Other important research includes DNA analysis of elephant calves to provide information on paternity, which supports much of the field observation of mating and guarding behaviour. To ease elephant-human conflict, Winnie Kiru is testing appropriate elephant deterrents to help farmers implement solutions based on scientific knowledge of elephant behaviour. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Born Free have joined IFAW in supporting this research.

The Amboseli research group will soon be releasing a book covering 30 years of its elephant research. Edited by Cynthia Moss and Harvey Croze, the book is expected to be available by the end of this year.

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Understanding the Impact

Export Quotas - Questions of Science and Process

Jason Bell, IFAW Country Director, Southern Africa

Both South Africa and Namibia submitted proposals to CoP13 to increase their export quotas for leopard hunting trophies and to be granted export quotas for black rhinoceros hunting trophies. Their proposals were submitted in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.21 on the interpretation and application of quotas for species included in Appendix I.

Prior to and at CoP13, IFAW expressed numerous concerns about the substance of the proposals. In the case of the black rhino, both countries dismissed potential negative consequences for more vulnerable rhino populations of reopening trade in rhino products, even if only for the purposes of hunting trophies. In the case of the leopard, no scientific justification existed for the drastic increase in quotas. IFAW expressed further concern that South Africa had failed to take steps to regulate large predator hunting in South Africa, despite the exposure of numerous unethical hunting practices over the past seven years.

IFAW engaged in South Africa's public consultation process prior to the submission of the leopard and black rhino proposals. Many people are unaware that South Africa went ahead with the submissions in the face of severe criticism from local politicians, scientists, and conservation and animal welfare organisations. Not only did they submit the proposals, they maintained a fallacious

approach to defending their scientific merits. This seriously calls into question just how effective CITES is at a national level. In submitting the proposals, South Africa represented the interests of the hunting industry alone and failed to act in the best interests of the conservation of the species concerned.

Further cause for concern is the lack of attention paid to these proposals by Parties - they were adopted with only minor amendments after little debate and discussion. IFAW believes that all proposals and issues at meetings of the CoP need to be considered carefully and seriously by all Parties. Individual governments have vested interests, but it is incumbent on Parties as a whole to lead by example. After all, it is the Parties that ultimately decide whether proposals are approved or not and whether CITES acts in the best interest of species through a precautionary approach and a pro-conservation agenda. This can only be achieved if Parties give due consideration to all issues on the CITES table. If not, the effectiveness and credibility of one of the most important global conservation agreements is called into question.

South Africa has recently declared a moratorium on the increased leopard-hunting quota approved at CoP13, apparently recognising that it was based on incorrect population data. IFAW applauds this decision and urges the South African government to be more proactive in their future decision-making in this regard. Meanwhile, in December last year Namibia postponed the auction of hunting concessions on state land, including protected areas, amidst criticism from the tourism industry and NGOs, implying that Namibia too has been flying in the face of public opinion and favouring the interests of the hunting lobby.

Global News Updates

IFAW Animal Action Week Sparks Global Activities to Protect Wildlife

Reported by Nick Jenkins, United Kingdom

Twenty-nine-year-old Adele Nelson fell in love with wild animals and has devoted her life to them. That dedication led to her being presented with an IFAW Animal Action Award at the House of Lords in England.

The awards are part of the annual IFAW Animal Action Week (AAW). In 2004, the AAW theme was "Keep Wildlife Wild!" - with a focus on the threats to wildlife from various forms of trade; for food, as "exotic pets," for fashion, for traditional medicine, and as souvenirs, trinkets and ornaments.

Adele, of Liverpool, England, symbolises the concern people have about wildlife trade. She spends six months at a time as a volunteer in different parts of the world protecting wildlife, financing her passion by working as a veterinary nurse the other half of the year.

The main thrust of IFAW Animal Action Week is education. It is the largest event of its kind in the world. In 2004, AAW reached into thousands of schools in 12 countries and more than 750,000 young people participated in its various actions. More than a quarter of a million people signed a pledge not to participate in any aspects of wildlife trade. In addition, the press and media coverage reached more than 100 million people.

"The concern about the threats to wildlife from various forms of trade is remarkable. As the theme for last year's IFAW Animal Action Week, it attracted

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IFAW Animal Action Week Sparks Global Activities to Protect Wildlife, continued from page 7

more interest than ever before,” said Nick Jenkins, IFAW AAW organiser.

The 2004 AAW education pack included a 20-page classroom activities guide on the “bushmeat” trade, plus a 15-minute video covering wildlife trade issues, particularly the threat of extinction now faced by many endangered species. The video was introduced by the world famous primatologist Jane Goodall.

The AAW web site for 2004 was the most ambitious yet, with a high level of interactivity, such as the “Adopt a Wild Animal for Free” program run in partnership with BBC Wildlife Magazine. The international media sponsor for the week was the Animal Planet TV channel. A number of national publications in different countries acted as local media partners.

In many countries, including China, Russia, Canada, South Africa, Australia and the United Kingdom, famous celebrities and leading politicians gave their support to the fight against wildlife trade.

Enforcing the Law

Stopping the Illegal Shahtoosh Trade in India

Ashok Kumar, Wildlife Trust of India, India

The truth about shahtoosh shawls - that Tibetan antelope, or chiru, are killed for the wool from which the shawls are made - only became known in India in 1993 when the renowned wildlife scientist,

Dr George Schaller, wrote to Indian conservationists.

In the minds of law-makers in India, Nepal and China, as well as other signatories to CITES, there was never any doubt that the Tibetan antelope needed total protection; it was listed in Appendix I of CITES in 1979 and protected in national wildlife laws in its range countries.

However, traders continue clinging to the age-old myth that shahtoosh wool is shed by an animal and collected from rocks and bushes to justify their illegal activities.

The complete story of the Tibetan antelope - biology, distribution, conservation threats, trade routes for wool from poached animals, the process of weaving shahtoosh shawls in Srinagar, capital city of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, and the illegal trade in these shawls in India and overseas - was documented by IFAW in collaboration with Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) in “*Wrap up the Trade*” (2000).

Various resolutions on conservation and trade control of Tibetan antelope have been adopted by CITES since CoP11, urging increased enforcement to eliminate poaching in China, the smuggling of wool in India and other consuming countries.

The question now is: What is holding up a complete halt to the trade? Primarily, the reason is Jammu and Kashmir’s special status in the Indian Constitution, which permits the state to have a separate wildlife law.

Until May 2002, the Tibetan antelope was listed in the state’s law in Schedule II, which permitted a regulated trade. However, in reality, there was no regulation, the state government having completely ignored its responsibility. A series of Public Interest Litigations begun in 1998 succeeded in achieving favourable orders. Behind-the-scenes policy initiatives by WTI resulted in up-listing the Tibetan antelope to Schedule I in May 2002. Even so, the state still failed to

enforce the law on the grounds that the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people were at stake.

An in-depth study of the shahtoosh weaving industry was conducted by IFAW and WTI and published in “*Beyond the Ban - A Census of Shahtoosh Workers in Jammu and Kashmir*” (IFAW/WTI-2003). A door-to-door survey of 45,405 families revealed that only 14,293 people were involved in the shahtoosh trade, but they also weave pashmina shawls.

WTI, in collaboration with donor agencies and the Indian government, is now working on a proposal for alternative livelihoods for shahtoosh weavers. IFAW and WTI believe that an up-market grade of pashmina branded as “Kashmina” and marketed internationally can maintain the income levels of shahtoosh weavers.

Enhanced enforcement in China has curbed the flow of raw shahtoosh wool, though traders have developed new routes. But demand for shahtoosh shawls persists, as the recent seizures in Dubai and Delhi demonstrate. The Supreme Court of India is currently proceeding to a final hearing of the shahtoosh case “*Ashok Kumar vs. State of J&K*.”

A 500 year-old tradition will take time to change, but the time to change is now.

Ensuring the survival of the Tibetan antelope, a species that has roamed the vast and desolate Qinghai-Tibet Plateau for centuries, is both an ecologically and economically responsible thing to do.

European Seizures of Elephant Parts Highlight Worldwide Threat

Jenny Hawley and Rosa Hill, IFAW United Kingdom

In February 2005, Dutch general inspection service and customs officials at Amsterdam’s Schiphol airport seized a large illegal shipment containing the body parts of eight African elephants. It in-

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Enforcing the Law

European Seizures of Elephant Parts Highlight Worldwide Threat, continued from page 8

cluded 22 legs, eight tusks, three tails, a skull and a complete elephant hide, along with skulls and hides from lechwe, a species of antelope. The consignment was *en route* from southern Africa, through the Netherlands and Germany, to destinations in Spain, Portugal and the Czech Republic.

Other large seizures of elephant parts have been made recently elsewhere in Europe.

Last November, police in the United Kingdom (UK) seized 142 items worth about £60,000. In July 2004, Spanish police seized almost three tonnes of ivory and 110 kilograms of elephant hair, some of which had been turned into jewellery. An IFAW investigation in 2004 found thousands of ivory items on sale in the UK and over the Internet, most illegal and without required documentation.

IFAW welcomes the successes of European enforcement officials. However, the recent seizures and IFAW's investigation demonstrate that the illegal trade in elephant parts is not restricted to Africa and Asia, but is also a problem in Europe. The latest seizure, which originated in southern Africa, is also a grave reminder that illegal trade in elephant products is not limited to ivory.

At CITES CoP13, Parties granted permission to South Africa and Namibia to trade in elephant leather for commercial purposes, a move opposed by IFAW. We believe that allowing any legal trade enables poachers to move illegal products into the market - with devastating impacts on vulnerable elephant populations.

Malaysia Empowers Wildlife Enforcement Officers

Peter Pueschel, IFAW Programme Manager, Germany

Malaysia, a country that is hit hard by many problems with wildlife protection due to poaching, smuggling and habitat destruction, has just taken a positive step toward combatting wildlife crime. With the formation of a Wildlife Crime Unit in February 2005, the Wildlife and National Parks Department of Malaysia has given power to its Wildlife Enforcement Officers to act outside of their regional areas and against national as well as foreign wildlife criminals. The Unit allows officers to communicate with officers outside of their region, aiding cooperative efforts and urging collaborative action in stopping wildlife crime. This follows decisions at the CITES CoP13 in Bangkok, where the improvement of enforcement capacities and their cooperation in countries and regions had been identified as an absolute priority to combat wildlife crime worldwide.

Such empowerment of wildlife enforcement agencies is a missing component in the enforcement of CITES in many parts of the world. IFAW congratulates Malaysia for this trend-setting initiative and encourages other CITES Parties to follow suit.

Global News Updates

Countries Urged to File Ecomessage Reports

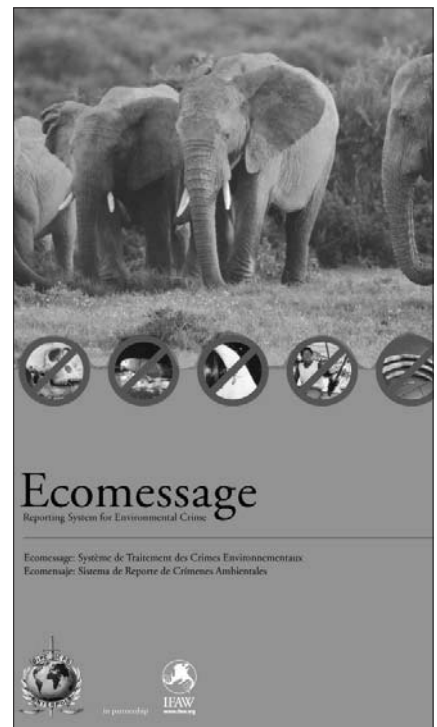
Reported by Kate Natrass, USA

As reported in the last issue of *Between the CoPs*, IFAW is working with Interpol, the International Criminal Police

Organisation, to promote the use of *Ecomessage*. *Ecomessage* is an information-sharing system and database for law enforcement agencies worldwide, designed to facilitate inter-agency communication in the fight against global environmental crime.

In cooperation with Interpol, IFAW produced *Ecomessage* packets in four languages that contain instruction booklets and all the forms needed for a law enforcement agency to file an *Ecomessage* on wildlife crime. The packets also include a CD with the pertinent information in electronic format. IFAW has been distributing the packets to CITES management and relevant agencies since September 2004, both by mail and to delegates at CITES CoP13 in Bangkok.

International cooperation is essential in curbing wildlife crime. We urge all agencies to submit information regarding crimes of an environmental nature to *Ecomessage*. Please contact IFAW if you would like to receive an *Ecomessage* packet - and help stop the illegal wildlife trade!



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Connecting Worldwide Enforcement Efforts

Enforcing the Law

Tiger Conservation in the Russian Far East

Masha Vorontsova, IFAW Director, Russia

The fight is on to save the last remaining Siberian tigers, *Panthera tigris altaica*. Once abundant across the Russian Far East, only about 400 animals still remain in the wild and the subspecies is the most threatened feline in the world listed in CITES Appendix I.

Threats from logging, habitat fragmentation, expanding road systems and competition from humans for food sources, as well as poaching to supply the Chinese traditional medicine industry, have all led to the Siberian tiger's dwindling numbers.



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Poaching spoils for sale in Moscow

Russia banned tiger hunting in 1947 a few years after declaring the Sikhote-Alinsky Nature Reserve, intended to protect the last Siberian tigers and one of a network of nature reserves across the Russian Far East to protect the region's unique fauna and flora.

Yet, despite strict legislation to protect the tigers, prosecution of violators has been poor and has led to the establishment of the Russian Government's anti-poaching programme, Inspection Tiger.

The Amur Leopard and Tiger Alliance (ALTA), is an initiative of Russian

and Western conservation bodies to save the highly endangered Amur leopard, and Siberian, or Amur, tiger.

IFAW is a member of ALTA, and together with the Phoenix Fund and other ALTA members, supports Inspection Tigers' teams. In 2004 these teams conducted 68 anti-poaching patrols and investigated a variety of violations including two dead tigers, confiscation of two tiger skins and 21 illegal rifles.

Solomon Island Dolphins: Time for the Mexican Government to Do Its Part

Beatriz Bugada, IFAW Country Director, Mexico

In 2003, over 100 wild bottlenose dolphins were captured alive in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific. Twenty-eight of them were then exported to Mexico to be confined in a private amusement park near Cancun, Quintana Roo. IFAW launched a thorough investigation into the operation and proved that it constituted a gross violation of several national and international laws, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

As a result of the investigation, IFAW filed formal complaints before Mexican federal authorities against the government officials involved, including an Undersecretary for the Environment. We also urged the government to take decisive action to enforce the law and send a strong signal that such illegal acts would no longer be tolerated. In December 2003, a branch of the government announced "administrative actions" against 28 officials and former officials.

Meanwhile, the unacceptable exploitation of the dolphins - several have died in captivity - created a national and international outrage. Governments including Australia and New Zealand, and non-government organisations jointly urged the Solomon Islands to ban live dolphin exports. Finally, in January 2005, the Solomon authorities announced the prohibition, citing their duty as a responsible member of the international community. The decision was hailed as a major success for the conservation and welfare of dolphins worldwide.

The Mexican Government must now follow suit. The administrative actions announced over a year ago are a step in the right direction but much remains to be done. Those who authorised and benefited from the illegal operation should be punished. Civil and criminal charges should be filed with the Attorney General. Most importantly, the dolphins need to be rescued from the inhumane and life-threatening circumstances they continue to endure.

The international community has done its part. Now the ball is in Mexico's court.

Workshops

Providing Wildlife Expertise to Law Enforcement Network

IFAW is providing financial, technical and participatory support to the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) conference scheduled for mid-April 2005 in Marakkech, Morocco. INECE is a worldwide alliance that seeks to improve compliance and enforcement with environmental agreements, including CITES.

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Workshops

Providing Wildlife Expertise to Law Enforcement Network, continued from page 10

“We are increasingly aware that criminals who violate environmental agreements - whether they traffic in hazardous wastes or endangered species - have worldwide networks of operation,” said Peter Pueschel, director of IFAW’s Protection Against Commercial Trade (PACT) programme. “Thus, if we want these environmental agreements to succeed, compliance and enforcement practitioners must also work with international networks. INECE is a natural partner for IFAW. Strengthening capacity to implement and enforce environmental requirements is an essential goal for both our organisations”.

CITES Training Seminar Held in Croatia

On September 2004, the first training seminar for Customs and Border Police enforcement officers working along the borders of Croatia was held by the Ministry of Culture, Nature Protection Division, Croatian CITES Management Authority. The training was undertaken in cooperation with Danish CITES experts. The meeting met its objectives of providing the officers with an overall understanding of CITES, CITES permitting procedures for the main groups of CITES-covered species, and the types of legal and illegal international trade.

Earlier in 2004, the European Union (EU) approved Croatia as an applicant country for membership. The CITES training was an important step forward in the EU approximation process.

Kuwait Conducts its First CITES Training Workshop

The Environment Public Authority of the Living Resources Department (EPA), Kuwait’s CITES Management Authority conducted a full CITES

capacity training workshop in March 2005 in Kuwait City, Kuwait. Officers from CITES management and scientific authorities, customs and border patrol participated in the workshop. Highly skilled and experienced instructors conducted training in CITES implementation and enforcement procedures, the collaboration of governmental agencies, and case studies of CITES compliance and enforcement for wildlife species frequently found in trade in the region.

The region’s high profile wildlife contrabands include elephant ivory, caviar and birds of prey. Having wildlife and customs officers alerted and trained will enhance enforcement of both national and international laws and help awareness building in the region. The workshop also serves as an encouragement to countries in the region that have not joined CITES, such as Iraq and Oman.

The workshop received generous cooperation from the General Administration of Customs and sponsorship from Kuwait Airways. IFAW applauds the initiative taken by the Kuwait EPA and appreciates very much having the opportunity to assist and contribute to its success.

Editor’s Note

Grace Ge Gabriel, IFAW Deputy Director, Wildlife and Habitat Protection Department, USA

Few things are more exciting to a newsletter editor than receiving comments from readers. I was moved and humbled by a letter from Mr. Kalie I. Bangura, the Senior Game Superintendent, Wildlife Conservation Branch, Forestry Division (MAFFS) of Sierra Leone, writing in support of the article “No Ivory Sale Should be Allowed to Proceed” (Issue#3, January 2004).

Mr. Bangura informed that between 2003-04, Sierra Leone lost four elephants to illegal poaching for the ivory trade. “I am of the opinion that many more elephants might have been illegally hunted considering the 10 years Civil

war which affected every life and property in the country. The confiscation of six pieces of carved ivory from a UN Peace Monitor in Sierra Leone in March 2003 can confirm my opinion. ... The abovementioned incidents show alarming state of affair in the conservation of our fragile habitats and scarce wildlife resources, with a current estimated elephant population of +1-200 heads in Sierra Leone. The factors responsible for this alarming situation include weak local legislation, inadequate and inefficient and non-equipped staff personnel, exclusively high demands of forest elephant ivory, and above all, most African countries cannot pay for biodiversity conservation. ... It is an un-debatable fact that elephant poaching will rise to an uncontrollable level should parties to the Convention approve ivory trade to resume”.

What we are hearing from elephant range states to the international community is their desperate plea for help. Sadly, their plea has largely been ignored by the world, as the failed 20 year ivory trade moratorium proposed by Kenya at CoP13 showed. See article in this issue “Progress on Compliance and Enforcement but a Step Backwards for Elephants”. However, the fight goes on and letters of this kind continue to remind the CITES Parties of their responsibility to make decisions adhering to the precautionary principles and to ensure that international trade in wildlife specimens does not threaten their survival.

In the coming issues, we are looking to create a “Readers Corner” containing letters to the editor. Please send your letters to:

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This publication is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Russian.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare works to improve the welfare of wild and domestic animals throughout the world by reducing commercial exploitation of animals, protecting wildlife habitats, and assisting animals in distress.

IFAW seeks to motivate the public to prevent cruelty to animals and to promote animal welfare and conservation policies that advance the well-being of both animals and people.



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