

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 27 November – 1 December 2017

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

ASIAN BIG CATS IN CAPTIVITY: REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 1 g) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP17) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* urges:
 - g) *those Parties and non-Parties on whose territories tigers and other Asian big cat species are bred in captivity to ensure that adequate management practices and controls are in place to prevent parts and derivatives from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities.*
3. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted three Decisions related to Asian big cats in captivity [clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosi*), Asiatic lion (*Panthera leo persica*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*) within its Asian range, tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*)] in captivity:

Decision 17.226

Directed to Parties with Asian big cat captive facilities

All Parties in whose territory there are facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity are requested to:

- a) *review national management practices and controls that are in place for such facilities, to ensure that these management practices and controls are adequate to prevent Asian big cat specimens from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities;*
- b) *ensure strict application of all management practices and controls implemented to regulate the activities of facilities that keep Asian big cats in captivity, including with regard to the disposal of specimens from Asian big cats that die in captivity; and*
- c) *report to the Secretariat on progress with regard to the implementation of this Decision.*

Decision 17.229

Directed to the Secretariat

Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) *conduct a review of the number of facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity in the territories of Parties and the number of Asian big cats kept in these facilities;*

- b) *liaise with ICCWC and other partners, as appropriate, to review legal and illegal trade in Asian big cats from or through such facilities, identifying those which may be of concern; and*
- c) *undertake a mission to those Parties in whose territories there are facilities of concern with the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the operations and activities undertaken by them.*

Decision 17.227

Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall review the report and recommendations of the Secretariat concerning the implementation of Decisions 17.226, 17.228, 17.229 and 17.230, and determine whether any further time-bound, country specific actions are necessary to ensure implementation of these Decisions.

4. These Decisions stemmed in part from a review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16) presented to the Standing Committee at its 65th meeting (Geneva, July 2014). As a result, concerning the prevention of illegal trade in parts and derivatives from breeding facilities, the Committee recalled Decision 14.69 and urged Parties to develop and implement regulatory controls for Asian big cat breeding facilities to prevent illegal trade, including oversight of any international trade to ensure non-commercial purposes, and monitored destruction of the specimens that die in captivity.

5. Decision 14.69, directed to Parties, especially Appendix-I Asian big cat range States, states:

Parties with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale shall implement measures to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers; tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives.

6. Also relevant in this context, at its 67th meeting (Johannesburg, September 2016), the Standing Committee recommended to the Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) that:

Regarding monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade

Lao PDR

- a) *verify the legal origin of parental stocks and specimens in trade;*
- b) *register, control and monitor authorized farms to ensure that only authorized trade occurs; and*
- c) *ensure that export permits and re-export certificates are endorsed, with quantity, signature and stamp, by an inspecting official, such as customs, in the export endorsement block of the document.*

Implementation of the Decisions 17.226, 17.227 and 17.229

7. Decision 17.226 contains no timeframe and the Secretariat has received no spontaneous reports from Parties on the implementation of the Decision. The Secretariat believes that a specific call for reports will be required through a Notification to the Parties, so that responses can be considered in the light of the Secretariat's report on the implementation of Decision 17.229.
8. In June 2017, the European Union agreed to provide funding to the Secretariat to undertake activities related to a number of decisions adopted at CoP17, including Decision 17.229. The Secretariat would like to express its grateful thanks to the European Union for this generous support. At the time of writing, the funds for this work had not completed the necessary administrative processes in order to be spent, but the Secretariat has begun the process of identifying a consultant to review the number of facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity in the territories of Parties and the number of such cats kept in these facilities. The Secretariat will provide an oral update on progress over this matter at the present meeting.