

TRAFFIC EAST ASIA FINAL PROJECT REPORT

Project No. / Activity No.	INT040.01
Project Title	Update of <i>Killed for a Cure: A Review of Trade in Tiger Bones</i>
Activity Title (if different)	Publication and launch of <i>Far from a Cure</i>
Reporting Period	1 January to 30 June 2000
Financial Report	Completed

INTRODUCTION

In 1994, TRAFFIC International published a *Species in Danger* report entitled *Killed for a Cure: A Review of the Worldwide Trade in Tiger Bone*. The report became a widely-used reference for describing and quantifying the global trade in tiger bone for use in traditional medicines. However, changes in the markets for tiger bone, many as a result of information presented in *Killed for a Cure*, meant that much of the information in the report was no longer relevant. In fact, there was speculation among some conservationists that the trade in tiger bone was no longer the overriding incentive for human-caused tiger mortalities.

TRAFFIC International and the TRAFFIC Network launched *Far from a Cure: the Tiger Trade Revisited* in March 2000 in advance of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (Nairobi, 2000). *Far from a Cure*, authored by Kristin Nowell, vice-chair of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, updated TRAFFIC's earlier publication, using new information that had become available since 1994, including the results of new market surveys and other original research conducted under the auspices of the project. The project, co-ordinated by TRAFFIC East Asia, focused on researching trade in tigers (alive and dead) and *all* their commercially valuable parts, not only tiger bone.

The resulting report was distributed worldwide, to field biologists, conservation organisations, law makers, law enforcement agencies, academic institutions, and all Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Trade data, conclusions, and recommendations will be used to encourage the anti-poaching, legislative, law enforcement, and public outreach activities necessary to stop illegal trade in tigers and their parts.

Conservationists and other key decision makers in tiger conservation and related law enforcement and public outreach efforts need the most accurate and up-to-date information possible about today's trade in Tigers and their parts and derivatives in order to strategically set priorities for trade monitoring, law enforcement, anti-poaching, and public awareness activities. In addition, donors, government agencies, and non-governmental organisations need this information to optimise the limited time and money available for tiger conservation measures.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the current project were:

- to document current availability of tigers, tiger parts and derivatives in key consuming markets;

- to document, where possible, volumes and patterns of international and domestic trade in tigers and their parts and derivatives in key range states and consuming markets;
- to compile and review data on poaching incidents in India, Russia and some other range states, to examine the relationship of these incidents to commercial trade in tigers and their parts and derivatives;
- to compile and review seizure information to assess trends in law enforcement, trade routes, levels of illegal trade, and smuggling methods;
- to review new legislative changes (enacted since 1994) concerning trade in tiger and their parts and derivatives; and,
- to estimate the level of threat to wild tigers posed by the current levels of poaching and trade in tigers and their commercially-valuable parts.

OVERALL PROGRESS IN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES

Production and distribution of *Far from a Cure* has been completed. Specific activities related to the project, details of the launch of the report and its impact to date are described in more detail in later sections. In general, the project has achieved its short-term objectives and provides for better understanding of the tiger trade in its current form. In terms of medium and long-term objectives, *Far from a Cure* provides guidance to advance anti-poaching programs, increase effectiveness of law enforcement activities, and improve outreach programs aimed at stopping illegal trade in tiger parts and derivatives. Key audiences include relevant government bodies, law enforcement officials, conservation organisations, field biologists, and potential consumers of tigers and their parts and derivatives.

The recommendations in *Far from a Cure* include suggesting actions such as:

- Strengthening of legislation which regulates trade in tigers or anything claiming to contain tiger derivatives;
- Banning of domestic trade in tiger parts and derivatives in countries where such trade remains legal;
- Increased policing of illegal trade in tigers and their parts and derivatives; and
- Designing of new public outreach initiatives in key range and consuming states.

The TRAFFIC Network will continue to monitor and report on developments related to the trade and utilisation aspects of tiger conservation. Examples of specific activities are included below.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The project ran from April 1999 to April 2000. Judy Mills, Director of TRAFFIC East Asia, was project co-ordinator. Kristen Nowell, vice-chair of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group and Director of Cat Action Treasury (CAT), was the principal researcher and author of the final report.

From April to May 1999, the principal researcher undertook a literature review (and collection) on tiger trade and related subjects. In late May 1999, after the TRAFFIC Network annual meeting in Washington DC, a special meeting was held on the project, providing an opportunity for the principal researcher to acquaint the relevant TRAFFIC offices (East Asia, Southeast Asia, India, North America, Europe and Oceania) with the project and its importance. The meeting also provided an important opportunity for input early in the project from all relevant offices.

The principal researcher provided a bibliography compiled from the earlier literature review, and TRAFFIC staff made note of additional reference materials. Copies of these references, and also

copies of other tiger trade-related material from TRAFFIC files, including news clippings were later provided to the principal researcher. Offices also collected tiger seizure information from the governments in their area, either by written request, or by sending copies of CITES annual reports to the principal researcher.

The principal researcher designed a short questionnaire to be administered anonymously to knowledgeable people in the traditional Asian medicine community. This approach was designed to ask for the informed opinions of insiders in these communities. It was felt that this approach had not been tried yet, and stood the best chance of assessing the extent to which underground trade is carried on in former major consuming markets. TRAFFIC staff reviewed the questions, and agreed to carry out the interview surveys. The Washington meeting also identified gaps in existing knowledge of recent levels of tiger trade. The gaps were identified as Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong, Myanmar, Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore, Russia, the Middle East, North Korea, China, and Bangladesh.

Surveys were organised and carried out over a five-month period. TRAFFIC and CAT were able to organise wildlife trade and/or traditional medicine surveys within a three-month period for most of these countries (excepting Russia, North Korea, the Middle East, China and Bangladesh). Annex I in *Far from A Cure* describes the different ways in which these surveys were carried out. An overview of the activities carried out at the office level included the following:

- In the case of Cambodia, TEA made a grant to CAT to hire an experienced interview surveyor from the Cambodian government's Wildlife Protection Office.
- For Russia and China, the principal researcher relied on the report of the CITES Tiger Technical Mission whose members included the Director of TRAFFIC East Asia.
- TRAFFIC Vietnam conducted surveys in Laos and Vietnam completed by August 1999. Both reports stand out for their insight into important markets from where previously only a few brief surveys had been carried out.
- TRAFFIC Southeast Asia provided extensive unpublished information, and organised a TCM market survey in Malaysia, an interview survey in Singapore, and a tiger TCM trade survey in Myanmar.
- TRAFFIC Indonesia provided a synopsis of their tiger poaching and trade research, then ongoing.
- Databases on tiger poaching and seizures in India, provided by TRAFFIC India were very useful for the report. TRAFFIC India also organised a Zoo Outreach survey of southern India, the first time this important region had been looked at in depth.
- TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan responded to numerous requests for further information about the market and changing legislation there.
- TRAFFIC East Asia-Taipei provided useful material despite the difficulty of gathering current information in Taiwan.
- TRAFFIC East Asia translated a number of Chinese-language, tiger-related TCM journal articles.
- TRAFFIC Europe obtained seizure information from a number of European governments.
- TRAFFIC Canada organised a mail survey in partnership with a national TCM organisation.
- TRAFFIC USA sent detailed US FWS seizure information.
- TRAFFIC Oceania provided information on new legislation.

Other organisations also provided valuable information for this report, including the Wildlife Protection Society of India (India), Global Survival Network/WildAid (Russia and Thailand), PSPK (Indonesia), and Animals Asia Foundation (China). Several dozen specialists affiliated with the Cat Specialist Group were also contacted regarding their areas of expertise.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

Far From A Cure: The Tiger Trade Revisited was launched by TRAFFIC International on March 30th, 2000. Participating in the launch were TRAFFIC International, TRAFFIC offices in East Asia, Southeast Asia, Europe, India and Oceania, as well as WWF International and a number of WWF National Organisations.

A press release (attached) was produced as part of this launch and distributed to all TRAFFIC and WWF offices prior to the launch. The press release highlighted the fact that, despite a marked fall in the consumption of tiger-bone medicines in former major consuming States, there is little evidence of a major reduction in poaching of some key tiger populations. The press release highlighted the urgent need for tiger range States, especially key countries in Southeast Asia, to strictly enforce trade bans, improve anti-poaching capacity, develop specialised enforcement units for undercover investigations and provide incentives against commercial tiger poaching. The support from the Save the Tiger Fund, WWF-UK, WWF-US and WWF-Japan were mentioned in the release. The press release and executive summary were translated into Chinese, Japanese, German, and French.

A set of slides of selected visuals from the report, including various tiger parts in trade, products and seizures, were duplicated for use upon request by the media. In addition, the images were scanned electronically and distributed to TRAFFIC and WWF offices.

Specific media events were also held by TRAFFIC and WWF offices in the UK, Hong Kong and India. WWF released a modified version of the press release, which was produced by WWF UK. Coverage generally focussed on a core message of the report, that is the worrying degree of poaching, especially in Southeast Asia, despite the reduction in demand of tiger bone medicine.

Press coverage was monitored, with articles related to the report picked up by wire news agencies, television stations and newspapers. These included the BBC, CNN, Discovery Channel, Associated Press, Xinhua News Agency, Environment News Network and, among the national newspapers, South China Morning Post and the Independent in UK. Reports of local newspaper coverage were also received from Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, France and India.

The BBC screened a live television interview on the launch date with the head of WWF UK wildlife trade programme, Stuart Chapman. TRAFFIC East Asia Programme Officer Rob Parry-Jones was also interviewed on radio by the BBC World Service.

TRAFFIC featured the report in its **English-language website** at <http://www.traffic.org>, which had a special section with the press release, executive summary and an option for users to download the full report. The press release and executive summary were also placed on TRAFFIC's **Chinese and Japanese-language websites**. The report was also featured in a number of the websites of WWF National Organisations, as well as tiger-related websites such as the Tiger Information Centre at <http://www.5tigers.org/>

WWF featured the report in a number of its publications, such as WWF UK's Summer 2000 newsletter to its supporters. It will also be featured in the forthcoming issue of TRAFFIC's own newsletter *Dispatches*. An announcement of the report was made in the latest issue of the journal *TRAFFIC Bulletin*.

In conjunction with CITES COP11, TRAFFIC reproduced the **Executive Summary** of the report in the form of a colourful, attractive leaflet (attached), which was distributed to all Party delegations attending the conference.

In addition, TRAFFIC produced a COP11 Update, *Control of illegal trade in tigers: A CITES priority*, (attached) that was distributed to all Party delegations at the conference.

Far from a Cure was supplemented by additional publications in two TRAFFIC offices. TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan distributed 200 copies of their report *Tiger on the Japanese Market* (in Japanese) to key decision makers in Japan. TRAFFIC India produced 1,000 copies of *Figured - Tigers in India 1994-1999* for distribution in India and abroad.

TARGETS ATTAINED AND IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PROJECT

In addition to its general public launch, the report was distributed to the relevant government agencies dealing with wildlife conservation and wildlife trade, including CITES Management Authorities and non-Party management authorities, as well as the relevant non-governmental organisations, research institutions, universities and individual experts. **TRAFFIC International received correspondence from various Management Authorities informing TRAFFIC of the comprehensiveness and usefulness of the report.**

In terms of timing, the report was released just a few days after US President Bill Clinton's famous visit to Ranthambhore National Park in India and his subsequent plea for tiger conservation. This helped raise the media profile for tigers, which our report later helped to complement and support with specific conservation information and issues a few days later.

However, the report played a far more important role in the run-up to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP11). The findings of the CITES Tiger Mission Report was announced in the media in the first week of April and created a high-profile conservation controversy just a week before the beginning of COP11. The controversy centred around the CITES Mission report's negative analysis of the state of tiger conservation in India and its recommendations to the global conservation community. *Far From A Cure* was distributed to key decision-makers at the Conference and **became an invaluable tool and resource in helping the various parties involved address this sensitive issue to its final - and more positive - conclusion at COP11.**

This controversy and the availability of the report also **helped tigers receive a much higher profile and more attention at the COP than originally anticipated.** TRAFFIC's update on *Control of illegal trade in tigers: A CITES priority* was an urgent response to deliberations on the issue at the Conference, citing and highlighting a number of the key findings and recommendations from *Far From A Cure*.

One of the events held at the Conference was a press conference on April 11 "Stopping International Trade in Tigers and Tiger Parts" by members of the CITES Tiger Mission and the Indian delegation. At the conference, S.C Sharma of the Indian delegation **highlighted *Far From A Cure* to the press entourage**, quoting incidents and figures from the report

During the press conference, the CITES Secretariat stated that it was considering Indonesia as the venue for the next CITES Tiger Mission, specifically quoting information on illegal poaching in Southeast Asia from the media reports subsequent to the *Far From A Cure* launch as a matter for concern.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE PROJECT

Surveys were organised and carried out over a five-month period, originally budgeted, rather unrealistically, at two months. Originally, producing the report was budgeted at one month, and review, editing and publication at three months. In the end, it took about five months to collate and analyse the data, and write a draft and final report. Editing, review and publishing was accomplished in about two months, with Herculean effort and ability on the part of TRAFFIC International's Julie Gray, who got it to the printers in time for the launch and the April 2000 CITES meeting.

PLANNED FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- Demand for the report has already exceeded the initial print run of 2,000 so a second print run of 2,000 copies is planned for July 2000 with financial support from WWF-US.
- A Japanese-language version of *Far from a Cure* will be produced and distributed during the current calendar year.
- TRAFFIC will participate in the WWF Global Tiger Conservation Strategy Workshop to be held in September, 2000.
- TRAFFIC will monitor developments related to a planned CITES Mission to Indonesia.

In light of the recommendations in the report, a number of additional activities at the Network and office levels have been planned. These include:

- Border monitoring and capacity-building activities in Southwest China related to trade in tigers and other wildlife;
- Ongoing information collection on illegal tiger trade in Sumatra with partner organisations;
- Working with the Government of Vietnam to improve enforcement activities against illegal trade in tigers and other wildlife.
- Continued enforcement assistance in India including consolidation of TRAFFIC India's tiger database, strengthening and enlarging informer networks around Protected Areas carrying significant number of tigers, and investigating selected illegal trade 'hotspots' especially those on the international borders.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

As a result of the current project, the TRAFFIC Network has the most complete and extensive data on tiger trade of any conservation organisation. The offices generally make good use of this information, on a local and regional level. However, TRAFFIC's capacity to integrate the data on a global level, which it is increasingly expected to do by the international conservation community, would be enhanced by developing an overall strategy on how to maintain, update, and utilise the information it now has and will continue to collect.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The TRAFFIC Network is grateful to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Save the Tiger Fund, along with WWF-US, WWF-UK, and WWF-Japan for making this project possible.

TRAFFIC

the wildlife trade monitoring programme of WWF and IUCN

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Tigers still under threat from poaching and trade

CAMBRIDGE, March 30, 2000 . . . Despite a marked fall in the consumption of tiger-bone medicines in former major consuming States, there is little evidence of a major reduction in poaching of tigers in the wild. A report released today by TRAFFIC - the wildlife trade monitoring programme of WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature* and IUCN-The World Conservation Union - revealed that tiger parts in traditional Asian medicine continues to be a threat to wild tigers, with the trade in some markets shifting to skins and other products beside bone. The report urged tiger range States, especially key countries in Southeast Asia, to strictly enforce trade bans, improve anti-poaching capacity, develop specialized enforcement units for undercover investigations and provide incentives against commercial tiger poaching

'Far From A Cure: The Tiger Trade Revisited' examines the tiger trade in the late 1990s. In particular, it looks at the extent illegal trade in tiger bone can still be considered the leading threat to the tiger's survival. This report follows the highly successful TRAFFIC Report *'Killed For A Cure: A Review of the Worldwide Trade in Tiger Bone'*, which was released in 1994 and has become the leading reference for those in the conservation community seeking to understand the trade in tigers. Since the publication of that report, definite progress has been seen in some aspects of controlling the trade - but problems still exist.

'Far From A Cure' was published with financial support from Save the Tiger Fund (a special project of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in partnership with ExxonMobil), Johnson and Johnson, WWF-UK, WWF-US and WWF-Japan.

Increased skin seizures

"The report revealed that major illegal supplying markets still operate openly in Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam," said TRAFFIC Executive Director Steven Broad. "These countries are home to key tiger populations but market surveys there indicate trade volumes are sizeable and there has been little enforcement action against poachers and traders."

TRAFFIC India Director Manoj Misra said that in other tiger range states the trade is more covert but still exists. India and the Russian Federation seem to have supplied less tiger bone but a sizeable market for skins persists. "Unlike bone seizures, skin seizures in India increased in the 1990s," Misra noted.

One of the largest seizures in recent times, a raid at Khaga, in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, on 12th January this year resulted in the recovery of four tiger, 70 leopard and 221 blackbuck skins, and 18,000 leopard nails. The seizure and subsequent arrests were the result of the support provided through the informer network set up by TRAFFIC India's Enforcement Assistance Unit.

Misra also noted that the illegal trade is frequently the result of human-tiger conflict. "Tigers are sometimes killed by local communities because they are a danger to people and damage impoverished livelihoods when they prey on livestock. However, there is also a strong financial incentive to trade the body parts of such problem tigers. Tigers may also be killed for trade but misrepresented to the authorities as being killed for protection."

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TRAFFIC is a joint programme of WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature* and IUCN-The World Conservation Union. TRAFFIC works in co-operation with the CITES Secretariat.

*WWF is known as World Wildlife Fund in Canada and the USA.



Reduced retail sale and use

Manufacture of tiger bone medicine has officially ceased in key producer countries, with China promoting the bone of *sailong* (a common type of mole rat) as a substitute for tiger bone. However, counterfeit medicines labelled as containing tiger bone are being produced. Manufacturers have changed the packaging of their medicines to remove all references to tiger bone. "Unfortunately, just as it is not possible to determine whether medicines labelled as containing tiger bone really do, it is equally impossible to know if the new medicines do not," Broad noted.

Increased enforcement of domestic trade bans and cooperation with the traditional medicine community has helped reduce retail sale and use of tiger-bone medicines. Attitudinal surveys indicated that less than five per cent of consumers surveyed in Hong Kong, Japan and the USA said they had ever taken tiger bone medicines, with most saying they would use alternatives to tiger bone. For example, made-to-order raw bone preparations were available at 59% of pharmacies surveyed in Taiwan in the early 1990s, but the figure was less than 1% in the late 1990s.

Increased enforcement critical

In the light of these developments, the report urges range states to strictly enforce trade bans, improve anti-poaching capacity, develop specialized enforcement units for undercover investigations and provide incentives against commercial tiger poaching. "The trade is now largely illegal and operating almost exclusively through smuggling, with large numbers of individuals smuggling small volumes through a variety of channels," Misra said. "This type of trade is very difficult to eliminate and it is critical for countries to significantly increase law enforcement and trade monitoring capacity."

The report also urges the close cooperation and work with traditional medicine practitioners to continue. The community can play an important role in eliminating any remaining trade, promoting the use of substitutes and raising conservation awareness among consumers.

Priority must also be given to communities living alongside tiger populations. "As long as tigers and people continue to compete for space and sustenance, human-tiger conflicts will continue and aggravate the problems caused by commercial poaching," Misra said. "Management solutions, such as compensation, livestock protection and management and developing alternative livelihoods, must be developed."

"While advances were made in the 1990s towards reducing the use of tiger bone in traditional Asian medicine, we must not be complacent with the successes so far," Broad concluded. "Some old problems still exist and new ones have emerged, all of which pose serious threats to the future survival of the tiger."

END OF RELEASE

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* WWF is known as World Wildlife Fund in Canada and the USA.



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Control of illegal trade in tigers: A CITES priority

TRAFFIC and WWF Briefing, April 2000



Whilst some progress has been made towards curbing commercial trade in tigers since the early 1990s, poaching of and illegal trade in tigers and their parts and derivatives still continue. A TRAFFIC report released in March 2000, *'Far From A Cure: The Tiger Trade Revisited'*, examined the tiger trade in the late 1990s and found that, despite a marked fall in the consumption of tiger-bone medicines in former major consuming States, there is little evidence of a major reduction in poaching of some key tiger populations.

Far From A Cure concludes that further measures are necessary to reduce the threat that trade still poses to the survival of the species in the wild. The trade now operates almost exclusively through smuggling, with a large number of individuals smuggling small volumes through a variety of channels. This type of trade is very difficult to eliminate and it is critical for countries to significantly increase law enforcement and trade monitoring capacity.

The importance of effective enforcement was highlighted when one of the largest seizures in recent times, a raid at Khaga, in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, on 12th January this year, resulted in the recovery of four tiger, 70 leopard and 221 blackbuck skins, and 18,000 leopard nails. The seizure and subsequent arrests were the result of the support provided through the informer network set up by TRAFFIC India's Enforcement Assistance Unit.

Among the key recommendations in the TRAFFIC report are the boosting of anti-poaching capacity and development of specialized enforcement units for undercover investigations. The TRAFFIC report also urges the participation of all range States in CITES and prohibition of trade in any products claiming to contain tiger.

Many of these findings and recommendations were reflected in the reports of the CITES technical and political tiger missions mandated by Decision 10.66 of the tenth COP. WWF and TRAFFIC commend the CITES Secretariat and Standing Committee for their extensive work in association with these missions. WWF and TRAFFIC endorse most of the recommendations contained in the mission reports.



However, WWF and TRAFFIC note that the political tiger mission recommendations for India on cessation of external tiger conservation funding and the possible imposition of trade sanctions seem inappropriate. Many of the problems noted in the section of the political mission report that refer to India are generic to most tiger range States.

It is clear that there are problems with tiger conservation in India which remain to be addressed, in particular: lack of high-level political commitment; prolonged judicial follow-up to wildlife crime; and limited resources.

WWF and TRAFFIC urge that priority be given to continuing the process to address tiger conservation issues initiated within the context of CITES, namely Res. Conf. 9.13 'Conservation of and Trade in Tigers' adopted at the the ninth COP in 1994, subsequently revised at the tenth COP (Res. Conf 9.13 (Rev)) and strengthened through Decision 10.66.

WWF and TRAFFIC also call upon the Parties to continue to make the illegal trade in tigers and their parts and derivatives a priority issue at COP 11 by:

1. **strengthening Res. Conf. 9.13 (Rev) through removing reference to: "by the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties" from paragraph a) under URGES, and incorporating appropriate recommendations of the mission reports.**

2. **adopting a new Decision, based upon 10.66 but with the following amendments:**

- a) **Direct the Parties to compile information and report to the Secretariat on progress in implementation of Res. Conf 9.13 (Rev) and on their follow-up on the reports of the CITES tiger missions, six months prior to the 45th meeting of the Standing Committee;**

- b) **Direct the Secretariat to report to the 45th meeting of the Standing Committee on control of illegal tiger trade;**

- c) **Direct the Standing Committee to report back to the 12th Conference of the Parties on progress of implementation of Res. Conf. 9.13 (Rev).**

- d) **Direct the Standing Committee to establish a review and negotiation process similar to that embodied in Res. Conf 8.9 (The Significant Trade Process) to promote the development of remedial measures to increase compliance with Res. Conf 9.13 (Rev).**

Copies of TRAFFIC report *Far From A Cure* are available at COP11 from TRAFFIC. Call 072 526262 for more information.

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The World Conservation Union

TRAFFIC is a joint programme of WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature and IUCN. The World Conservation Union established to monitor trade in wild plants and animals. It has 21 offices in 8 regions worldwide and works in co-operation with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat.

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