



## **Putting Bite into the U.S. Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act: Curbing and Preventing Trade in Medicines Containing Tiger Bone in the United States**

---

*Final Report to the Save the Tiger Fund of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Covering the period January 2001 to June 2002 • Submitted June 2002*

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

In January 2001, the Save the Tiger Fund of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation awarded World Wildlife Fund (WWF) a \$50,000 grant to raise public awareness about the U.S. Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994 and to stem illegal trade in medicines containing tiger bone and rhino horn. Save the Tiger Fund's support has been critical to the success of our program, allowing us to continue our education and outreach program to professional traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) communities in the United States—the world's fastest growing TCM market outside of Asia—and to effectively promote significant conservation advances in China, the center of the traditional Chinese medicine industry.

Through this project we target key audiences including the broader Chinese-American public and the more specialized community of traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, retailers, educators, and consumers. Together with our dedicated partner, the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine (ACTCM), WWF aims to educate these stakeholders and enlist them in our work to catalyze market change and inform others of the threats posed to endangered species. With the Save the Tiger Fund support we have made important progress towards these goals.

### **PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS**

WWF's education and outreach program seeks to tackle demand-side issues to reduce the illegal consumption and trade in the United States in medicines containing tiger parts and other endangered species. Toward this goal, with the Save the Tiger Fund's support we recently completed a survey to assess levels of awareness among TCM users about endangered species issues. This survey was a follow up step to our initial TRAFFIC/WWF survey conducted in 1997, which also evaluated attitudes among TCM users, in order for us to gauge progress made over time through our outreach program. We conducted the 2001 survey in five cities: San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Toronto, and Vancouver. This latest survey suggests that our efforts are having a measurable positive effect. Comparing the two surveys, overall awareness of endangered species used in TCM and the rules and regulations prohibiting the use and sale of endangered species products rose from 60 percent of respondents in 1997 to 90 percent in 2001. In the 2001 survey, more than 90 percent of all respondents knew that tigers and rhinos were endangered. Equally important, a majority of TCM practitioners and instructors now believe there are effective alternatives to endangered species products and are willing to try

them; that saving endangered species takes priority over their continued use in TCM; and that education is key to catalyzing further positive change in the TCM markets. We are extremely pleased at these survey results, which demonstrate that our strategies under this project are working successfully.

### **Launching the TCM Web site**

We will launch the first ever TCM and wildlife conservation Web site ([www.TCMwildlife.org](http://www.TCMwildlife.org)) at the end of June 2002. In partnership with ACTCM, we have created this bilingual Web site in English and Chinese in order to raise public awareness in TCM communities of the laws and regulations governing trade in endangered species and to enhance implementation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act Educational Outreach Program. The Web site contains information on the plight of endangered species used in TCM and how people can become involved in educating others about the range of alternative remedies that are available. The site serves as a medium to promote available alternatives to tiger bone medicine and provide an opportunity for people to address issues in the field of traditional Chinese medicine and discuss strategies that the TCM community can implement to help conserve endangered species.

### **Outreach through media and publications**

As key stakeholders in the TCM community, TCM practitioners need to be aware of what is prohibited to prescribe and what alternative products are available on the market. To facilitate this, WWF developed a list of endangered species used in TCM, which we are pleased to report has been included in a major clinical desk reference book on traditional medicine. This is the first time that such a list has been included in a major TCM reference guide. The 2001 publication, Chinese Herbal Patent Medicines by Jake Paul Fratkin, is a popular guide to more than 1,280 manufactured TCM products from mainland China available in North America. The list of endangered species includes tiger, rhinos, bears, and musk deer and provides a useful guide to alternatives for the TCM professional.

Together with ACTCM, we continue to communicate our tiger conservation message through a number of important media outlets. *The World Journal*, the largest Chinese newspaper in North America, featured a full-page ad on a special 2002 Mother's Day event in the San Francisco Bay Area that included a wildlife painting contest for children organized by WWF, ACTCM, and the newspaper. During the event, we also distributed posters to raise awareness of the plight of wild tigers and other endangered species used in TCM. This was just one of a series of activities stemming from our successful 1998 "Year for the Tiger" campaign in the Bay Area, which heightened awareness about tiger and endangered species conservation needs.



(Mr. Richard Lowenthal, the Mayor of Cupertino, awarded winners of the contest)

In addition, last fall major professional TCM newspaper *TCM World*, for the first time, published an article and advertisement prepared by WWF highlighting concerns about the illegal trade and use of endangered species in TCM. Subsequently, the Herb Research Foundation also published our article in its October 2001 newsletter, which targets most American herbal specialists. And together with Mayway Corporation, one the largest TCM manufacturers in the United States, in spring 2002 we ran a special advertisement in *TMC World* publicizing available alternatives to tiger bone products. This newspaper reaches more than 200,000 TCM professionals in North America, and a number of readers sent letters of support for our efforts and indicated that they would be willing to donate percentages of their fees to WWF's outreach work. At their request, WWF sent information and materials for distribution to other TCM practitioners at an Earth Day 2002 event in Denver, Colorado.

Focusing on the next generation of TCM stakeholders, the first Chinese language children's textbook on saving wild tiger will be released in late 2002. The book consists of an animated story featuring a boy, Mao Mao, who rescues a tiger cub, Ku Ku, whose parents were killed by poachers (see below). The textbook will be published by the Sichuan Children's Publishing House in China and will be distributed to more than 200 Chinese language schools in the United States. Additionally, a company in China has volunteered to pay for 5,000 copies of the textbook for distribution to children in poor areas of China so that these children will also learn the importance of saving wild tigers. We aim to launch the textbook on the first Save the Tiger Day on October 26, 2002. We will launch the book at the San Francisco Zoo in conjunction with events such as wildlife art contests, and we will also publicize it at other events in San Francisco's Chinatown. We would be pleased to work with Save the Tiger Fund to ensure appropriate involvement in the launch, as desired.



### **Disseminating progress to the East Coast**

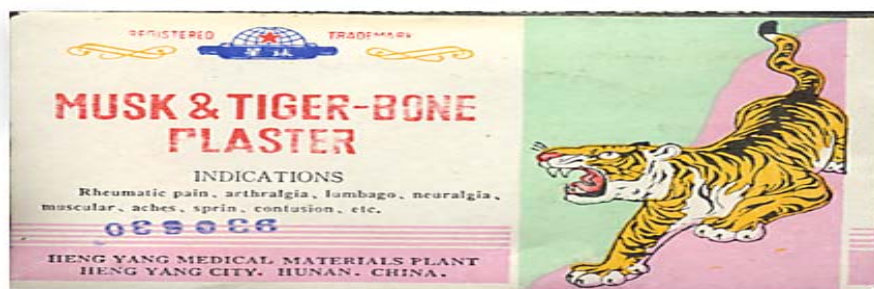
Guided by the successful work that WWF and ACTCM have achieved on the West Coast in the past five years, much of it with Save the Tiger Fund's support, WWF is now working on the East Coast to establish a similar network of stakeholders concerned about endangered species, especially in the large Chinese community of the New York City area. According to our 2001 survey discussed above, in the New York area only 11 percent of TCM professionals are aware of the rules and regulations that prohibit the use of endangered species such as tiger and rhino in TCM.

As part of our overall tiger conservation strategy, we are successfully expanding education and outreach efforts in the New York area, working with important partners such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Conservation Society, WildAid, International Fund for Animal Welfare, and ACTCM. This coming October, WWF will sponsor a special session on TCM and wildlife conservation at a TCM professional conference in New Jersey organized by the TCM World Foundation, a New York based organization. This presents a valuable opportunity to address conservation needs to the TCM professionals in the New York/New Jersey area and to enlist their support for protecting species used in TCM. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has invited WWF to the first TCM outreach symposium in New York on September 8, 2002. The symposium will provide a forum for representatives of TCM practitioners, retailers, manufacturers, schools, Chinese community leaders, associations, and conservationists to discuss concerns and build a common goal towards saving endangered species.

### **Addressing TCM attitudes within China**

In recent years, North America's TCM market has become the largest TCM market outside of Asia. However, the outreach efforts of various conservation organizations targeting

U.S. based TCM importers, retailers, manufacturers, and practitioners have put pressures to protect endangered species on the supply side of the market in China. We recently found an encouraging example of this in China (see below). On a package containing a plaster that is a standard treatment for arthritis and muscular atrophy and which features a tiger on the cover (although it does not actually contain tiger bone), now writing at the bottom of the cover admonishes buyers, “the Chinese government suggests you not poach tigers in the wild.” While so far only a suggestion, this is definitely a sign of changing times.



In order to assure TCM consumers that the TCM products they buy are not endangering animals or plant species in the wild and the ecosystems they come from are relatively in good health, under this grant we initiated a feasibility study to explore the possibility of establishing conservation standards that would benefit the TCM industry, particularly in its efforts to expand its markets outside of China. We hired a consultant to conduct the study, which assessed and evaluated the existing mechanisms of standards and certification programs. The resulting report suggests that many large TCM manufacturers in China and the United States are very supportive of the idea of establishing such standards for TCM products (see attached). Encouragingly, China’s State Drug Administration recently issued standards for “Good Manufacturing Practice

and Good Agriculture Practice” in which TCM companies in China are required to prioritize conservation of endangered species and ecosystem protection as of June 1, 2002. These new standards are partly a result of WWF’s growing influence: we have worked directly with China’s State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SATCM) on TCM regulations, and we are building relationships with the State Drug Administration through TRAFFIC East Asia and the WWF-China Program Office.

On the conservation policy front, as a result of our work including the success of the 1999 “Healthy People, Healthy Planet” conference in Beijing, we have helped leverage a major investment by SATCM for research related to and development of alternatives to endangered species used in TCM, including tigers, rhinos, pangolin, and musk deer. This unprecedented US\$3.75 million commitment bodes well for the future of TCM, tigers, and other endangered species.

### **Influencing Policy in the United States**

In December 2001, we testified before the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy, providing recommendations for the commission’s report to Congress. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) includes traditional Chinese medicine as well as other forms of medicine considered in the United States to be alternatives to mainstream medicine. This commission, established by President Clinton in March 2000, aims to address research on CAM practices and products; evaluate access and delivery of CAM services to the public; and provide appropriate licensing, education, and training of CAM healthcare practitioners. We recommended that:

- Standards be established and certification procedures developed to assure consumers that medicines do not contain any endangered species
- Research includes exploration of natural alternatives to traditional Chinese medicines that currently rely on endangered species parts
- Licensing procedures for CAM practitioners include a requirement that licensees demonstrate an understanding of alternatives to medicinal products that are derived from endangered species

### **CONCLUSION**

We are extremely pleased at the success of our work to date as demonstrated through the results of our 2001 survey, changing attitudes in the Chinese government, media attention to TCM issues, and other evidence. However, despite this progress, tigers and other endangered species still end up in medicines, on dinner tables, and in market stalls. WWF genuinely appreciates the support the Save the Tiger Fund of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has provided to our project. Your funding has been instrumental in allowing us to make important progress in reaching out to the TCM community to secure a sustainable future for the tiger and reduce the TCM community’s reliance upon tiger-based products. We are building on important past achievements in stemming the illegal trade in tiger and other species, and we are optimistic for the future.