

CONVENTION SUR LE COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL DES ESPECES
DE FAUNE ET DE FLORE SAUVAGES MENACEES D'EXTINCTION



Soixante-dix-septième session du Comité permanent
Genève (Suisse), 6–10 novembre 2023

Commerce illégal et lutte contre la fraude

CONSERVATION ET CONTRÔLE DU COMMERCE
DE L'ANTILOPE DU TIBET (*PANTHOLOPS HODGSONII*)

1. Le présent document a été préparé par le Secrétariat.
2. La résolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17), *Conservation et contrôle du commerce de l'antilope du Tibet*, paragraphe 2 b), donne les instructions suivantes au Comité permanent :

2. *CHARGE*

...

- b) *le Comité permanent d'examiner régulièrement les mesures de lutte contre la fraude prises par les Parties visant à éliminer le commerce illicite des produits de l'antilope du Tibet sur la base du rapport du Secrétariat, et de communiquer ses résultats à chaque session de la Conférence des Parties ;*

Mise en œuvre de la résolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17)

3. À sa 74e session (SC74 ; Lyon, mars 2022), le Comité permanent a encouragé les Parties affectées par le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilope du Tibet (*Pantholops hodgsonii*) à maintenir le dialogue avec l'organe de gestion CITES de la Suisse et bénéficier de son assistance concernant les méthodes d'identification, ainsi que de l'échange d'informations et de connaissances relatives à ce commerce illégal. Le Comité encourage l'Inde et l'Italie à redoubler d'efforts pour renforcer les capacités de leurs agents frontaliers à identifier les spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet, notamment les vêtements et les tissus, y compris en faisant appel à l'aide offerte par la Suisse si nécessaire (voir le compte rendu résumé SC74 SR).
4. Le 18 juillet 2023, le Secrétariat a émis la [notification aux Parties No. 2023/086](#) invitant les Parties à soumettre au Secrétariat des informations sur leur mise en œuvre de la résolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17) et toute autre information jugée pertinente. La Chine, l'Inde, l'Italie, les États-Unis d'Amérique et la Suisse ont envoyé leurs réponses. Les rapports soumis sont compilés dans l'annexe au présent document, dans la langue et le format dans lesquels ils ont été reçus. Les paragraphes 5 à 9 ci-dessous résument brièvement les éléments clés communiqués par les Parties dans leurs réponses à cette notification.
5. Le rapport de la **Chine** apporte des informations sur les lois et réglementations en vigueur, les mesures de protection mobilisées, la coopération en matière de lutte contre la fraude et les activités de sensibilisation du public. La Partie souligne que l'antilope du Tibet figure dans sa législation en tant qu'espèce nationale protégée de première catégorie, et que la législation prévoit des sanctions dissuasives strictes en cas d'infraction. Son plan de construction de parcs nationaux et d'autres zones naturelles protégées, ainsi que ses grands projets de protection des espèces sauvages (2021-2035) incluent l'antilope du Tibet parmi les 48 animaux sauvages rares et en danger d'extinction. En outre, la Chine fait part de l'approche coopérative de ses services de lutte contre la fraude qui promeut les actions conjointes entre les différents ministères et les réunions annuelles dédiées à la formulation des politiques, au soutien à la formation et la recherche et au renforcement de la coopération internationale. La Partie souligne dans son rapport que la population

d'antilopes du Tibet reste supérieure à 300 000 individus et attribue cette situation aux mesures de protection qu'elle a mobilisées.

6. L'**Inde** souligne dans sa réponse que l'antilope du Tibet est protégée au titre de l'annexe I à la loi de 1972 sur la protection des espèces sauvages (Wildlife Protection Act) et qu'elle bénéficie donc du niveau de protection le plus élevé. L'Inde signale, en outre, que cette loi a été modifiée en 2022 pour intégrer les dispositions de la CITES et renforcer les sanctions. La Partie souligne que ses autorités ont pris des mesures pour empêcher le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet. De 2009 à 2021, les agences indiennes de lutte contre la fraude ont saisi 828 châles Shahtoosh. L'Inde rend également compte des travaux de son bureau de lutte contre la criminalité liée aux espèces sauvages (Wildlife Crime Control Bureau) et des programmes de sensibilisation menés au cours de la période 2014-2023, auxquels ont participé plus de 13 000 agents de lutte contre la fraude. Le rapport met en avant l'opération "Soft gold", menée d'octobre 2018 à mars 2019 et portant spécifiquement sur le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet. Cette opération a conduit à l'élaboration d'un guide de terrain sur le Shahtoosh à l'usage des services de lutte contre la fraude, visant à identifier et à apporter des indications sur la portée de ce commerce illégal.
7. L'**Italie** signale que son service de lutte contre la fraude, l'Arma dei Carabinieri, est en contact avec les autorités suisses compétentes dans le but d'intégrer une opération de lutte contre le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet dans un prochain plan opérationnel pour 2024-2025. Cette éventualité pourrait faciliter l'organisation d'une campagne de contrôles à l'échelle européenne. La Guardia di Finanza (GdF) a établi un protocole d'accord avec les autorités suisses afin de renforcer la coopération et la collaboration. La GdF sensibilisera ses unités à l'importance de la lutte contre le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet, et plus particulièrement les unités chargées de contrôler le commerce avec la Suisse.
8. La **Suisse** dans son rapport, indique qu'au cours de la période allant de 2020 à juillet 2023, ses autorités ont effectué les saisies suivantes :

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Nombre de cas de saisies de Shahtoosh	63	55	30	7
Nombre de châles Shahtoosh saisis	103	63	33	11

9. Le Secrétariat note qu'il y a quelques écarts entre les données enregistrées dans la base de données sur le commerce illégal CITES pour 2020 et 2021 comme indiqué au tableau 1 ci-dessous du présent document et les données pour 2020 et 2021 communiquées par la Suisse dans sa réponse à la notification aux Parties n° 2023/086. Le Secrétariat a consulté la Suisse à ce sujet et la Partie a précisé que les données soumises dans les rapports annuels de la Suisse sur le commerce illégal ne comprennent que les cas classés, ce qui explique pourquoi les chiffres indiqués dans la réponse à la notification sont légèrement supérieurs à ce qui est enregistré dans la base de données.
10. La Suisse souligne qu'en 2021, une cargaison commerciale de châles contenant une faible quantité de fibres d'antilope du Tibet a été saisie, notant que cela pose des problèmes d'identification et de lutte contre la fraude et soulève des questions sur la manière dont cette matière est obtenue et utilisée. La Suisse a réitéré son engagement à poursuivre ses travaux dans ce domaine, indiquant que des activités de formation sur l'identification des Shahtoosh sont prévues pour la fin de l'année 2023. Elle cherche également à améliorer la collaboration avec les autres Parties à la CITES pour traiter les questions liées à ce commerce illégal. À cet égard, la Suisse précise qu'un bon échange d'informations et de connaissances se fait avec l'Inde.
11. **Les États-Unis d'Amérique** pointent dans leur réponse que l'antilope du Tibet est inscrite sur la liste des espèces « en danger » en vertu des dispositions de la loi américaine sur les espèces en danger d'extinction, ce qui interdit un certain nombre d'activités concernant cette espèce. Le rapport comprend des informations sur quatre cargaisons saisies aux États-Unis depuis 2017 qui contenaient des spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet. La plupart des châles Shahtoosh récemment saisis aux États-Unis comprenaient un mélange de fibres d'antilope du Tibet et d'autres espèces, dont la chèvre cachemire, ce qui rend leur détection plus difficile. Le rapport des États-Unis apporte également des informations sur le travail d'identification des espèces entrepris par le laboratoire du United States Fish and Wildlife Service et note la possibilité de bénéficier d'une assistance technique à travers son unité d'opérations internationales (Attaché Program).

Analyse par le Secrétariat des données sur le commerce illégal CITES

12. Le Secrétariat a effectué une analyse des données de saisie couvrant la période de 2016 à 2021, soumises par les Parties et incluses dans la base de données sur le commerce illégal CITES, comme présenté dans le tableau 1 ci-dessous. Les données indiquent que six Parties (États-Unis d'Amérique, Inde, Népal, Pays-Bas, Royaume-Uni de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande du Nord, et Suisse) ont déclaré un total de 245 saisies de spécimens d'antilope du Tibet entre 2016 et 2021. La plupart de ces saisies (95,5 %) ont été déclarées par la Suisse.
13. La majorité des spécimens saisis étaient des vêtements, représentant 365 des 439 spécimens saisis au total. Les autres spécimens saisis comprenaient des médicaments, des extraits, des tissus, des peaux et des cornes.

Année	Nombre total de saisies	Nombre total de spécimens saisis	Nombre et type de spécimens saisis					
			Vêtements	Médicaments	Extraits	Tissus	Peaux	Cornes
2016	19	27	25					2
2017	18	88	73	10		5		
2018	31	98	43	2		50	3	
2019	67	81	79		1	1		
2020	61*	90*	90					
2021	49*	55*	55					
Total	245	439	365	12	1	56	3	2

Tableau 1. Nombre de relevés de saisie de *Pantholops hodgsonii* et nombre de spécimens de *P.hodgsonii* saisis entre 2016 et 2021 enregistrés dans la base de données sur le commerce illégal de la CITES. * Le Secrétariat note qu'il y a quelques écarts entre les données de la base de données sur le commerce illégal de la CITES et les données fournies par les Parties dans leurs réponses à la notification aux Parties n° 2023/086 pour 2020 et 2021. Ces différences sont clarifiées au paragraphe 9 du présent document.

14. Les données de la base de données sur le commerce illégal CITES montrent une légère diminution du nombre de spécimens saisis, passant de 90 en 2020 à 55 en 2021. Toutes les saisies de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet signalées en 2020 et 2021 étaient des vêtements et ont été saisies en Suisse.

Conclusions

15. Les informations transmises par les Parties concernant leurs efforts pour lutter contre le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet témoignent d'un engagement et d'efforts continus. Il est encourageant de constater que les Parties prennent des initiatives de coopération et d'échange d'informations dans leur lutte contre ce commerce illégal. Bien que le nombre de saisies ait diminué ces dernières années, les données soulignent également que le commerce illégal de spécimens d'antilopes du Tibet se poursuit. Il est donc important que les Parties restent vigilantes et maintiennent leurs mesures de lutte contre la fraude.
16. Le Secrétariat note que, comme la Suisse, les États-Unis d'Amérique ont signalé la saisie récente de châles Shahtoosh composés d'un mélange de fibres d'antilope du Tibet avec d'autres espèces. Les Parties sont encouragées à prendre note de cette nouvelle tendance et à la porter à l'attention de leurs autorités compétentes.

Recommandations

17. Le Comité permanent est invité à prendre note du présent document.

RESPONSES FROM PARTIES TO NOTIFICATION NO. 2023/086
ON TIBETAN ANTELOPE (*PANTHOLOPS HODGSONII*)

CHINA

**Report on the Implementation of Resolution Conf.11.8 on
Protection and Trade Control of Tibetan Antelopes**

As one of the flagship species on the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, the Tibetan antelope mainly ranges in steppe, steppe meadow and alpine steppe areas at an altitude of 4000-5500m in Tibet Province, Qinghai Province and Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. In recent years, by improving legal protection system, continuously cracking down on illegal hunting and trading, strengthening protection measures from its source, cutting off illegal supply, China has been continuously promoting conservation of Tibetan antelopes.

1. Laws and Regulations

China adheres to the principles of prioritizing protection, regulating utilization, and strengthening supervision, and improves preventive and punitive measures for wildlife protection. A legal system for wildlife protection has been formed, with the Wildlife Protection Law of the People's Republic of China and the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China as the main body, complemented by the Regulations of the People's Republic of China on the Management of the Import and Export of Endangered Wild Animals and Plants and relevant judicial interpretations.

The Tibetan antelope is listed as a national first-class protected wild animal. Firstly, article 21 of the wildlife conservation law stipulates that it is forbidden to hunt or kill wildlife under special state protection. Secondly, China introduced "Wild Animals and their Products Value Assessment Measures" to clarify the benchmark value standard of Tibetan antelope, and the judicial authorities will punish the wildlife offenders according to the value of the wildlife involved. Thirdly, Criminal Law of the P.R. China determines punishment according to the circumstances of the crime. If the circumstances are particularly serious, criminals are sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than 10 years or even a life-time imprisonment, as well as a fine and confiscation of illegal specimens, illegal gains and even personal property.

2. Protection Measures

Firstly, the Tibetan antelope is included in the 48 rare and endangered wild animals in the Construction Plan for the Construction of National Parks and other Natural Protected Areas and Major Projects for the Protection of Wildlife (2021-2035), and it is emphasized that supplementary measures such as habitat restoration and connectivity should be taken to strengthen field patrol monitoring to prevent poaching and habitat destruction. Secondly, animal passageways have been built for species such as Tibetan antelope to improve habitat connectivity; Thirdly, national parks and nature reserves related to Tibetan antelopes have been established to strengthen the protection measures.

3. Cooperated Law Enforcement

Chinese government has established the Inter-Ministerial Joint Conference on Combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife attended by 27 ministries and inter-departmental Coordination Group on CITES Law enforcement attended by 9 ministries, and these participants jointly carried out a series of enforcement operations including "Operation Breeze", "Operation Net Shield" and special operations of "Constant Monitoring" and "Import Control at the Boarder". By holding annual meetings, formulating specialized policies, holding joint training workshops, conducting cooperative research, supervising law enforcement, organizing special operations, and strengthening international cooperation, China fights against the destruction of wildlife resources and entire chain of illegal trade on wildlife such as Tibetan antelopes.

4. Raise of Public Awareness

By making full use of Wildlife Protection Awareness Month, World Wildlife Day, International Biodiversity Day and other environmental awareness programs, China improved knowledge sharing of wildlife, including the Tibetan antelope, protection, boosted public participation, and raised public awareness of wildlife

conservation. Through intensified protection measures, remarkable results have been achieved in the protection of the Tibetan antelope, and its population has recovered rapidly. The

number of Tibetan antelope distributed on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has recovered from more than 70,000 in the 1980s to more than 300,000.

P. R. China 2023/8/3



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& CITES Management Authority- India
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DO No. WL-4/64/2023-WL

Dated: 3rd August, 2023

Sub: CITES Notification No. 2023/086 - Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*).

Dear Ms Higuerro,

Please refer to the CITES Notification No. 2023/086, regarding submission of information on implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17) on Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope.

2. In India, the Tibetan Antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*) is listed in the Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and thereby accorded the highest degree of protection from hunting and illegal trade of its parts and products. The Act was amended in the year 2022, wherein, besides incorporation of the provisions of CITES in the Act, the penalties for violation of provisions of the Act have also been enhanced.
3. The Indian enforcement agencies have been taking actions for preventing the illegal trade in the parts and products of the species. During the years 2009 to 2021, the enforcement agencies in India had seized a total of 828 number of *Shahtoosh* shawls, in different Indian ports.
4. The Government of India has established a Wild Life Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and the Bureau has also conducted a more than 200 sensitization / awareness programmes between 2014 and 2023, for various enforcement agencies at exit points. These sensitization programmes were attended by more than 13,000 enforcement officers. In addition, the Bureau has also conducted an enforcement operation, code named as '*Operation Soft gold*', from October, 2018 to March, 2019, specifically with respect to illegal trade in Tibetan antelope. Based on the outcomes of the *Operation Soft gold*, '*A Field Guide on Shahtoosh*', for the law enforcement agencies has been brought out with a view to help understand the dimensions of its illegal trade and also act as a ready reckoner for identification of shahtoosh and its products.
5. We wish to reiterate our commitment for conservation of wildlife and control of illegal trade in wildlife and its parts and products, including Tibetan Antelope.

ITALY

Notification 2023/086_ Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*)

The Enforcement Authority_Arma dei Carabinieri maintains relations with the competent Swiss Authorities, aimed at the potential inclusion in one of the next OAs of the 2024-2025 operational plan, of an operation to combat the illegal trafficking of specimens of Tibetan antelope, within the frame of the “European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats” (EMPACT). Such inclusion would allow the planning of a possible European campaign of controls, in which technicians specialized in the identification of antelope derivatives would provide a training/operational support, as suggested in the 74th CITES Standing Committee of March 2022.

The Enforcement Authority competent to perform controls in Customs, Guardia di Finanza (GdF), has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Swiss authorities: the two authorities have recently renewed their respective strategic lines in order to develop new mutual channels of collaboration on this issue; moreover, Guardia di Finanza will highlight the importance of tackling the illegal trafficking of specimens of Tibetan antelope among its Units, starting from the ones that are more engaged in controls on the trade from Switzerland.

Switzerland

In response to Notification No. 2023/066, we are sending you the seizure numbers of Shahtoosh Shawls for Switzerland. Since we reported data up to the year 2019 the last time that we sent this kind of information to the Secretariat, we will now report data from 2020 onwards (up to July 2023):

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Shahtoosh seizure cases	63	55	30	7
No of Shahtoosh shawls	103	63	33	11

Something to highlight is the seizure of a commercial shipment in 2021, which is an ongoing case. The interesting and also challenging aspect of that case is a very low content of Shahtoosh fibers in the shawls in question, which brings up not only enforcement and identification challenges but also questions around the way the material is sourced and used.

Switzerland is still very committed to continue the work we have been doing in this area. There are some focal trainings on the identification of Shahtoosh planned for later this year. Switzerland continues to seek to improve the collaboration with other CITES Parties in this area. We can report on good exchange of information and knowledge with India.

As always, we would be very interested in hearing about any seizures of information from other Parties and remain open for any further collaboration with countries that also experience issues with this trade.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

U.S. Response to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/086

In Response to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/086, the United States submits the following information on our implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17), *Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope*. Below are enforcement measures taken by the United States to reduce the illicit trade of Tibetan antelope products.

In 2006, the U.S. listed Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*) as “endangered” under the provisions of our domestic law, the U.S. Endangered Species Act, thus prohibiting certain activities including import; export; sale or offer for sale in interstate or foreign commerce; deliver, receive, carry, transport, or ship in the course of commercial activity in interstate or foreign commerce; take; and possession and other activities with unlawfully taken specimens of the species.

Despite our domestic legislation and the protections afforded under CITES from 2017 to the present, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Office of Law Enforcement has intercepted and seized four (4) import shipments containing Tibetan antelope products:

- Two (2) shipments consisting of medicinal items containing Tibetan antelope imported from Vietnam, one (1) for personal use and one (1) for commercial purposes.
- Eight (8) *Shahtoosh* shawls imported from India for commercial purposes.
- One (1) *Shahtoosh* shawl imported from Sweden for personal use.

We note that most of the *Shahtoosh* shawls seized in the U.S. recently have been comprised of a blend of Tibetan antelope fibers and other *Capra* species including cashmere goat, making detection more difficult. The USFWS Clark E. Bavin National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory uses scanning electron microscopy (SEM) to distinguish *Pantholops* dorsal guard hair fibers from those of other bovids. The National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory occasionally assists other Parties in answering questions regarding *Shahtoosh* identification.

The USFWS Office of Law Enforcement has also helped counter the illicit trade in Tibetan antelope through their International Operations Unit (Attaché Program). USFWS Attachés are placed at U.S. Embassies strategically across the globe, where they stand ready to facilitate and provide technical assistance with wildlife trafficking investigations.



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