

Report on

Implementation in Accordance with the National Ivory Action Plan of Thailand
submitted to the 70th Standing Committee Meeting

Thailand has continually implemented the National Ivory Action Plan since 2013 to tackle illegal ivory trade. The current NIAP of Thailand, the NIAP fiscal year 2018, was approved by the cabinet on November 21, 2017. This NIAP will be in effect until September 30, 2018. The Action Plan comprises of 5 main pillars following the Guidelines to the National Ivory Action Plans Process mentioned in Resolution 10.10 (Rev.CoP17), which are on: i) Legislation and regulations; ii) National level enforcement action and inter-agency collaboration; iii) International and regional enforcement collaboration; iv) Outreach, public awareness and education and v) Reporting. The NIAP has been implemented by 16 organizations from both government and NGO sectors.

Key Results of Above Implementations are as follows

1. Legislation and regulations

Thailand has enacted the Wild Animal Reservation and Protection Act (WARPA) 2014 and the Elephant Ivory Act 2015 in order to combat against the illegal ivory trafficking within the country. In addition, Thailand has proposed revisions of related laws and regulations to ensure that Thailand can further strengthen its implementation and enforcement in tackling illegal wildlife trade and possession:

- 1.1 The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has proposed the new WARPA which has received the approval from the Cabinet on March 3, 2017 and is currently under the Council of State's deliberations.
- 1.2 The Department of Tourism has proposed a revision of the Tourism business and tour guide committee's regulation to cover any violations involving elephant ivory and protected wild fauna and flora. At present this regulation is under revision by the Tourism business and tour guide committee and is expected to be approved by September 2018.

2. National level enforcement action and inter-agency collaboration

- 2.1 The Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) has completed the implementation of collecting blood/hair samples from domesticated elephants for DNA examinations in the DNP laboratory. Meanwhile, the Department of Provincial Administration is more than 87% done in registering the DNA code of domesticated elephants into the elephant's ID certificates. This process is expected to result in preventing wild elephants from being disguised as domesticated elephants.
- 2.2 DNP has developed the ivory management database system and it is currently working on improving the present database system to expand its capacity to store large volumes of data and streamline its information management. The new system is expected to be completed in December 2018.
- 2.3 The Royal Thai Police has established its Ivory Action Plan which all police departments in Thailand are mandated to strictly implement and enforce. This

has already resulted in 7 cases of arrests relating to ivory crime suppression from 2017 to 2018. Cooperation between the Royal Thai Police, DNP, and Thai Customs in relation to the enforcement of the Ivory Action Plan has started suppression of online ivory trade and resulted in arrests and seizures of ivory weighing a total of 171.67 kg. Further analysis of the ivory confiscated will inform officials if the ivory originated from African species, which can assist in investigations and arrest of suspects involved in ivory trafficking.

- 2.4 Task force units, comprised of police departments and DNP cooperating in rotation, have been established to implement and better monitor and regulate ivory shops in Thailand. Monthly inspections conducted have found that ivory shops have complied with ivory regulations. These Task force units have also been dispatched in several risk spots for illegal ivory trade, such as tourism hotspots and country borders, to enable better inspections and monitoring to suppress ivory crime.
- 2.5 Research on ivory trade in Thailand has been conducted by Thammasat University with funding support from World Wildlife Fund of Thailand. Findings from the research has provided options for management of domestic ivory markets in Thailand for decision-makers and other stakeholders, and can be used for future ivory market policy implementation. The report is under revision for final approval at a later date.

3. International and regional enforcement collaboration

- 3.1 Thailand has hosted Regional Dialogues on Combatting Trafficking of Wild Fauna and Flora to build cooperation in the detection, control, and suppression of wildlife trafficking in Southeast Asia. Thailand has extended invitations to countries in Southeast Asia and the People's Republic of China for better cooperation on ivory, rhino horn, tiger, pangolin, and rosewood control. The 4th Dialogue was convened in Bangkok in September 2017.
- 3.2 A planning meeting was organized with support from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) with the Mukdahan Wildlife Checkpoint and the programme in Lao PDR in May 2018 to explore opportunities in combatting illegal wildlife smuggling, including ivory, across the Thai-Laos borders. A bilateral cooperative dialogue and meeting between Lao PDR and Thailand is in a planning stage and expected to be organized sometime in 2018 to assess and agree on opportunities and activities to increase joint actions at borders.
- 3.3 Delegates from Thailand participated in the 14th ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement in March 2018, hosted by the Lao Government, in Luang Prabang in Lao PDR, where the Regional Plan of Action on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement was discussed and planned for implementation, to better address challenges and gaps by ASEAN Member States on CITES and wildlife trafficking issues.
- 3.4 Thailand, with the assistance of the Royal Thai Police department, hosted the 1st ASEAN SOMTC Working Group on Illicit Wildlife and Timber Trafficking from March 29-30, 2018 in Bangkok. The meeting provided a venue for the ASEAN Member States to discuss means and exchange opinions on the workplan of the SOMTC Working Group, as well as strengthen efforts at coordination and networking between countries on wildlife and timber trafficking.

- 3.5 In April 2016, Thai Customs seized ivory tusks found in a dozen barrels, declared as “rough stones,” It was consigned from Mozambique and flown from Nairobi, Kenya to Suvarnabhumi Airport in a Kenyan Airways flight. Based on information from an inspection of invoice documents relating to the cargo, Thai Customs cooperated with Kenyan Customs that subsequently lead to the seizure in February 2017 of additional ivory tusks hidden in barrels in Kenya. The cooperation also included coordination with the Consulates of Guinea and Mozambique in Thailand, and resulted in investigations and the issuance of warrants of arrest in September 2017 to 3 suspects from Guinea, Liberia, and Mozambique issued by the Samut Prakan court in Thailand on charges of colluding in the smuggling of prohibited items, wildlife products or carcasses into the country.
- 3.6 The Thai Customs has cooperated with source, transit, and destination countries in order to strengthen efforts at intercepting wildlife trafficking being committed by trafficking syndicates. It has utilized technical experience and technologies to better assess risks in activities. It has coordinated with Customs from other countries, such as Singapore, Lao PDR, and Cambodia, in relaying its risk analyses of suspected wildlife trafficking activities and behaviour. This effort has resulted in seizures of wildlife (e.g. rhino horns) by Customs of these countries.

4. Outreach, public awareness and education

- 4.1 The Department of Tourism has hosted a seminar for increasing knowledge and understanding on the regulation of ivory trade within Thailand to 100 tourism entrepreneurs and tour guides in March 2018.
- 4.2 There is an on-going campaign for raising public awareness to the Thai population and international tourists which are stationed around international airports, important tourist spots, and border checkpoints.
- 4.3 Wildlife Checkpoints around Thailand are tasked with the responsibility to educate the youth and instill in them the sense of duty against illegal wildlife trafficking. This has included activities on wildlife conservation during special days such as the National Children Day, Wildlife Protection Day, and World Wildlife Day.

5. Reporting

Ivory seizure cases in Thailand have been reported using the Ivory and Elephant product seizure data collection form (ETIS). Reports on the implementation involving ivory have been submitted to the CITES Secretariat on a regular basis.

Other measures taken and activities implemented including new policy developments to combat illegal ivory trade in Thailand are as follows;

1. Strong and effective enforcement efforts

- 1.1 The DNP, Royal Thai Police, UNDP, and IUCN have implemented a program for “Combating Illegal Wildlife Trade, Focusing on Ivory, Rhino horn, Tiger and Pangolins”. The program, supported from GEF-6, was approved on January 10, 2018. The DNP is preparing documents for submission to the

cabinet's approval which will ensure continued efforts between the DNP and UNDP.

- 1.2 The DNP has initiated use of the Smart Border Patrol system for 2 Wildlife Checkpoints: (1) Tak Province for the border between Thailand and Myanmar, and (2) Mukdahan Province for the border between Thailand and Lao PDR. The two provinces have been identified as hotspots for wildlife trafficking. The Smart Border Patrol system to improve capacity in combatting wildlife trafficking in the two checkpoints has received support from the WCS (Thailand) and funding from the United States Department of State. The Smart Border Patrol system will be implemented in other wildlife checkpoints of Thailand, based on the positive lessons and results that the implementation in Tak and Mukdahan will be able to deliver.
- 1.3 Thailand is implementing the "Pilot Joint-agency Wildlife Law Enforcement in Thailand to collate intelligence from SMART and i-2" activity, with the participation of the following departments; the Royal Thai Police, Thai Customs, DNP, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Fisheries. The i-2 program has begun implementation with the focal point agency, at the DNP, in conjunction with data analysis from the SMART patrol system. The results of this activity will be utilized for strategic planning and targeted wildlife law enforcement operations in Thailand.
- 1.4 The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has established the Forest Protecting Operation Center by integrating special task forces from 3 of its departments; the Royal Forest Department, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources. This is to ensure more efficient coordination and cooperation of efforts at wildlife crime prevention and suppression.
- 1.5 DNP has established the WILD HAWK Special Task Force for special field operation in investigating and arresting violators of illegal wildlife trafficking and ownerships within the country, based on information and reports from the public and online sources.
- 1.6 Thailand, through the DNP, in cooperation with the Bird Conservation Society, FREELAND, Seub Nakhasathien Foundation, Love Wildlife, Nature Play & Learn Club, TRAFFIC, WildAID, WWF, and IUCN has promoted the "Wild Watch TH" for the public, to encourage the public to actively report illegal activities to officials via the 24-hour open 1362 hotline or the web link: www.facebook.com/1362DNP.
- 1.7 Strict inspections of travelers and cargo at checkpoints in international airports, seaports, and country borders have utilized the latest available technologies such as the Case Management Investigation System (CMIS), the Risk Management System, the Facial Recognition System Detection, the Railway Cargo Inspection System, and the usage of stationary and mobile X-rays in the inspection of cargos and passenger baggage.
- 1.8 DNP is planning to study the possibility of zoning areas for Ivory shops within areas that supply raw ivory to ensure that domestic ivory trade control can be better monitored and enforced.

2. Reducing Demand for Ivory and wildlife products

- 2.1 DNP is participating in the campaign to reduce the buying and selling of elephants and tiger-derived products in Bangkok between the months of June

– November 2018. This will be done in cooperation with USAID Wildlife Asia with the overall goal to change the public perception on buying and consuming products made from elephant ivory and tigers.

- 2.2 The Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand agreed at its meeting held on August 20, 2014 to ban the creation of holy objects with materials derived from protected and endangered animals such as ivory, tiger fangs, and rhino horns. In the cases where said object already exists, they are not allowed for sale.

3. Strong International Cooperation

- 3.1 During the 20th Meeting of ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (20th ASOF) Thailand received the duty of being the lead country of the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (AWG-CITES & WE). This working group is responsible for implementing the Plan of Action (POA) on ASEAN on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement (2016 – 2020).
- 3.2 During the recent Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), Thailand received the duty of being the lead shepherd of the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and Timber (SOMTC WG on ITWT). This was proposed after the 10th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (10th AMMTC) officially recognized the illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber as a new category of crime under ASEAN cooperation, in which Thailand was the initial proposer to the meeting.
- 3.3 Participation in activities and events combatting trafficking of wildlife, including ivory:
 - 3.3.1 Thailand will participate in the 4th London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade which will be held on October 2018 at London, United Kingdom. The head of Thailand representatives in this conference will be the Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. This is to show that Thailand determines to combat illegal wildlife trade.
 - 3.3.2 Law enforcements officials from various related departments in Thailand attended the Tri-Lateral Workshop between Malaysia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) and Thailand on Enforcement Modus Operandi which was held in Putrajaya from March 5 – 7, 2018. The goal of the workshop was to improve the efficiency in intelligence sharing, review case files, and share Modus Operandi on combatting wildlife trafficking. This includes the use of SMART and i-2 technologies.
 - 3.3.3 Thailand cooperated in attending and sharing its experiences in the USAID Wildlife Asia-hosted “Lao PDR Observation mission on counter wildlife trafficking policy best practice” on 21-24 May 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand.

4. Propose solid Legislative Framework with heavier penalties

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment proposed a new WARPA which was approved by the Cabinet on March 7, 2017 and is currently being reviewed by the Office of the Council of State. This proposed legislation will further punish violations against CITES-

protected species by increasing the severity of the penalties of imprisonment and fines. The penalty will be higher than the current WARPA by increasing maximum imprisonment to 10 years and maximum fine to 200,000 baht.

5. Capacity Building of Enforcement Officers

- 5.1 The DNP has held a training course on controlling ivory trade within the country for officials that are responsible for surveillance, inspection, and regulation of licensed ivory stores and dealers in order to ensure transactions are made legally under the DNP framework. The course was held in December 2017 with a participant count of over 100 personnel.
- 5.2 Between March to September 2018, Thailand is implementing workshops on “Wild Fauna and Flora Identification and CITES Enforcement” in 7 locations around Thailand (Sakon Nakhon, Tak, Rayong, Ranong, Songkhla, Phetchaburi and Chiang Rai). The Workshop will strive to build the capacity in combatting illegal wildlife trafficking, by improving efforts and activities along the borders. 350 officials are expected to be trained.
- 5.3 Between March – May 2018, two Trainings on Enhancing effectiveness of illegal ivory trade suppression was held in Thailand. The participants were commanders and inspectors who have just started their new positions.
- 5.4 Thailand participated in the Training on Counter-Transnational Organized Crime (C-TOC) which was hosted by the USAID-Wildlife Asia at Brazzaville, the Republic of the Congo from 5 – 10 February 2018. The objective of the workshop was to improve the efficiency of the investigative intelligence-sharing network. The network aims to support law enforcement of officials from Asia and Africa in combatting wildlife trafficking crimes.
- 5.5 Thailand participated in the Training on International Conservation Chiefs Academy (ICCA) which was hosted by the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) at Shepherdstown, Virginia, USA from 10 – 23 March 2018.
- 5.6 Thailand participated in the World Customs Organization’s (WCO) INAMA Training of Trainers (TOT) and Accreditation Workshop in Malaysia from 9 – 21 April 2018.

6. Reporting

Ivory seizure cases in Thailand have been reported using the Ivory and Elephant product seizure data collection form (ETIS). Reports on the implementation involving ivory have been submitted to the CITES Secretariat on a regular basis.

7. Robust Domestic Framework

- 7.1 Implementation of the National Ivory Action Plan is being done based on a strong cooperation between government and private sectors – with a total of 16 agencies participating. Committees on law enforcement and public relations have been appointed for ivory trade control. These committees report under the advisory oversight of the National CITES Committee of Thailand. A special operation unit within the Royal Thai Police has also been established for illegal ivory trade suppression.

- 7.2 Activities for control of ivory trade and possession are included in the routine work of the DNP as the CITES focal point of Thailand, with an annual budget allocation of around 10 million THB a year.

Conclusion

Thailand is committed to combat the illegal wildlife trade and possession within its borders, especially African-originated ivory and wild elephant ivory. Thailand is committed to close all markets of African ivory within the country completely without exceptions, including African-ivory-made antiques items. Due to the stricter laws and penalties, Thailand is confident that it will progress in the fight against wildlife trafficking. The registration system for domesticated elephant ownerships, the license for legal owners to legally trade, and the strict control to prevent the trafficking of ivory will hopefully prevent any illegal ivory from entering the market. Law enforcement efforts have strengthened and improved in the past 4 years since Thailand started implementation of its NIAP. In 2015, 215 stores came forward to register for ivory trade licenses. Presently, only 117 stores remain in legal business after the ivory controls and regulations took effect. It is expected that the current number of stores will decrease in the future.

Various measures and activities are also being implemented by Thailand to combat illegal ivory trade including: strengthening cooperation and information sharing between countries; passing stricter laws and heavier penalties; enabling a robust domestic framework; sustaining capacity building for law enforcement officials; and continuous reporting to the CITES Secretariat.

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28 June B.E. 2561 (2018)

Dear CITES Secretariat,

Subject : National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process

Reference is made to Notification to the Parties no. JS/BVR/CN dated 19 December 2017. Please find the attachment for the report on any further measures taken and activities implemented to combat illegal ivory trade, including on any new or further policy developments.

Your continued assistance is, as always, highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

(Mr. Somkiat Soontornpitakkool)

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