
MONGOLIA'S EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

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SUMMARY

The law on ratification of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna Flora (CITES) was adopted on 1 May 1995 by the Great Hural of Mongolia. Since 4 April 1996 Mongolia became the 133rd Party to the Convention. Mongolia's Government and people understand that as a signatory of the Convention we will not only rescue regional and global biodiversity from loss but also save the very rare species that are left in Mongolia's territory by following strictly provisions of the Convention.

External relations by Mongolia are expanding and for the last five years the Government has started to provide a policy to utilize natural resources within their rehabilitating ability and to develop export trade with foreign countries. This action is increasing the number of countries interested in trade in wildlife specimens with Mongolia. Therefore Mongolia joined the CITES to protect its rare and endemic animal and plant species. We are proud with such rare species as the Przewalskii horse, Bactrian camel, Gobi bear, Snow leopard, Musk deer, Wild mountain sheep (Ovis ammon), Beaver, Saiga and Antelope live in the wild in the vast territory of Mongolia.

1 NATIONAL LEGISLATION ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

According to studies Mongolia has 665 species of fauna and 5775 species of flora. Mongolian game hunting resources consist of 56 species of mammals, 132 species of birds and 35 species of fish. Mongolia has many useful plants such as 845 species of medical use, 173 species for human nutrition, 64 species of industrial use, 849 species of ornamental plants, as well.

Relations concerning the conservation, use, revitalization of and trade in wildlife and natural plant as well as fauna-and-flora- originated raw materials are basically regulated under the Hunting law and Natural plant law adopted by the Great Hural of Mongolia in 1995.

According to these laws, species are classified into:

1. Very rare
2. Rare
3. Abundant

The list of the very rare species was adopted by the Parliament of Mongolia, while the Government of Mongolia issued the list of rare species. Other species apart from those two lists were considered as abundant.

Seven species of very rare, two of rare, five of abundant are referred to in Appendix 1 of CITES and four species of very rare, six species of rare, forty-seven species of abundant are identified in Appendix 2 of CITES. Therefore 71 species of Mongolian wild animals in total are included. As of plants, a total of 23 species of Orchidaceae including 10 species of very rare, one species of rare and twelve species of abundant are indicated in the Appendix 2 of CITES.

The article 22/1 of the Mongolian Law on Hunting says that export of very rare and very rare animals for research purposes will be regulated in accordance with those International Agreements and Regulations which Mongolia has signed.

The article 22/2 of the Mongolian Law on Hunting says that the State Administrative Central Organization which is the Ministry for Nature and the Environment, is authorized to issue certificates for export of wildlife, based on conclusions and statements of professional organizations.

Export procedures for very rare and rare species and those listed in Appendices of the CITES are carried out strictly under the provisions of the Law on Natural Plants and CITES Convention. Therefore, the Minister for Nature and the Environment has adopted the Resolution #19 on "Export Procedures of Natural Plants, Forest Resources and Flora originated Raw Materials of Mongolia" in 1997.

2 CITES NATIONAL MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY OF MONGOLIA

The Management Authority headed by the Director General of the Environmental Protection Agency, works to implement CITES. The Management Authority has 8 members, who are officers in charge of fauna, forests and flora conservation of the Ministry for Nature and the Environment. The Authority also includes officials from the Environmental Protection Agency and international trade and customs officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Industry.

The scientific authority of the CITES is headed by Dr. Ts. Shiirevdamba, Director of the Department of Administration, Evaluation and Information, Ministry for Nature and the Environment, and consists of 6 scientists from the Institute of Biology, Geo-ecology and the Mongolian National University as well.

The Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for day-to-day operations of the Management and Scientific Authorities of the Conventions.

When Mongolia became a Party to the Convention, the Management Authority of the CITES in Mongolia designed and issued a certificate granting the permits for the export and import of fauna and flora species. In 1996 twelve export certificates on 20 ibex horns, skins of 526 wolves and 5 lynx as well as 25 falcons were given to business organizations, also one kilo of Musk deer pods was permitted to be re-exported abroad. In 1997, the CITES certificate was redesigned in order to meet requirements of the CITES Secretariat and Parties, and it started to be distributed. Five hundred security stamps with a code number of Mongolia were ordered and printed for the Authority. Each stamp is fixed on the original copy of the certificate. In 1997, fifty seven export certificates 28 of hunted and 16 dead Argali horns, skins of 111 wolves and 40 lynx and 150 falcons were given to business organizations. In order to reintroduce Takhi in Mongolia, an import certificate was issued to 7 Przewalski horses from Australia.

3 MEASURES TAKEN TO CONSERVE SPECIES OF FAUNA INCLUDED IN THE CITES APPENDICES

3.1 Argali (*Ovis ammon*)

Argali is included in the list of rare animals of Mongolia and Appendix 2 of the CITES. According to the Law on Hunting of Mongolia, rare species of animals are the species with poor capability of regeneration, limited distribution, and scarcity of resources and with potential threat to extinct in the future. Since 1987, the Mongolian Government has issued special permits on hunting of 20-30 heads of Argali for foreign game hunters. Hunting for other purposes is prohibited. According to the provisions of the Management Authority of Convention, foreign hunters are allowed to make their trophies back home, if they have an export certificate. Most overseas hunters arrive in Mongolia from USA, Mexico and Canada. There are some cases of exporting horns of Argali who had died by natural cases. In 1998 the Government adopted a decision to prohibit export of dead Argali horns.

The following are current measures for conservation of Argali:

- put the Argali habitat under the National special protection;
- use experimental artificial ponds for Argali watering are in use;
- undertake an evaluation of number of population;
- involve local communities and Government organizations in rare wildlife conservation and breeding activities;
- specify a certain percentage of incomes from permitted game hunting for conservation activities, including protection and breeding as well as the enforcement of national environmental regulations. In addition, the National Commission for Conservation of Endangered Species headed by the Minister for Nature and the Environment is under operation.

3.2 Falcon (*Falco cherrug*)

Mongolia has 10 species of falcons, which are listed in the Appendix 2 of Convention. Two species of falcon are included in the list of rare species and they are White Falcon and Amur Falcon.

Over the last few years the relationship between Mongolia and the Arabian world is developing rapidly. Arabian people are expressing their interest in the export of falcons. Estimates of falcon population have been carried out. Based on the results, Mongolia decided to export 150 heads of Saker Falcon. Cases of attempts of illegal export of wildlife have occurred with falcons only. Seven cases of illegal falcon export were revealed and a total of 43 heads of falcons were released from captivity. However a foreign citizen, managed to take four falcons with him out of Mongolia without the certificate from Mongolian Management Authority but fortunately he was arrested in Singapore. Discussions to bring those four birds back to Mongolia was held with the Singapore bird park, however this problem has not yet been finally resolved due to funding difficulties on both sides. The two another foreign citizens tried to take 12 the *Falco Cherrugs* out of Mongolia by car but they were revealed on the Customs of Tuva, Russian Federation. The birds were released near the border of the two countries. There is no guarantee that this type of problem will not be facing again. However,

to prevent similar cases there is more exchange of information between the Parties of the Convention. It is an example the importance and significance of Mongolia's membership to the Convention.

3.3 Pallas Cat (*Felis manul*)

Pallas Cat is an abundant species in Mongolia. However, it is listed in Appendix 2 of the Convention. Therefore, matters regarding the export of Pallas Cat whether to issue permit or not should be decided on the CITES level.

The Mongolian Authority has received a request from the Japanese Management Authority of the Convention, suggesting a temporary prohibition on the export of Pallas Cat skins. Nowadays Mongolia stopped this export, and if there is a necessity, this problem will be reconsidered and resolved through CITES provisions.

3.4 Snow Leopard (*Uncia uncia*)

The snow leopard is included in the list of rare species and Appendix 1 of the Convention. Few leopards occur in Gobi and in the mountains of the southwest of Mongolia. Local communities consider leopard attacks on domestic animals and they claim the leopard population may be increasing. But from a scientific point of view, it has not been proven yet. Some research on leopard habit and behavior has been launched. Illegal poaching of leopards and trails to take them out of Mongolia has occurred at the borders, and confiscated skins were sent to museums as exhibits and for decoration purposes.

3.5 Gray Wolf (*Canis lupus*)

Mongolia has a great source of Gray wolves, and there is no violation in hunting of this species. But the gray wolf is listed in Appendix 2 of the Convention. It is possible to prohibit hunting or limits on hunting of Gray wolves in Mongolia because in Mongolian practice, Grey wolves are considered as main "enemies" of domestic animals in the countryside. There are even some facts on wolf attacks on people.

Mongolia has no experience on exporting wolves alive, but export of processed wolf leather is popular. If some countries apply for wolves, the problem will be considered according to the provisions and certificate.

3.6 Lynx (*Lynx lynx*)

Lynx is listed in Appendix 2 of the Convention. It is not included in the list of rare species of Mongolia. In Mongolia, this species is not subject to hunting. At present, we have not received any proposals from overseas organizations and individuals on hunting the lynx and/or trading in its skin. If necessary, the problem will be considered in accordance with national regulations and CITES provisions.

4 ANIMAL-ORIGINATED RAW MATERIALS

China, Korea and other Eastern Asian countries are expressing their interest in musk pods, deer antlers and bear gall bladders. Musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*) is included in the list of very rare species and listed in Appendix 2 of the Convention. Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) is included in the list of rare species of Mongolia.

Hunting of Musk Deer is prohibited. Research and experiments on breeding them in captivity for commercial purposes are in process. We consider that intensive measures on musk deer conservation should be undertaken in the near future.

We consider that there will be no problem with collecting naturally dropped Red Deer antlers and exporting them. However collectors, as it often happens, do not wait for the natural dropping of Red Deer antlers, and they even prefer illegal poaching. Sometimes, hunters set fires accidentally, and they can be a potential cause for forest fires. Mongolia needs proper management of the Red Deer antler business: advanced technology, primary processing and export. Unfortunately, there are no suitable conditions for this kind of business today in Mongolia. Research activities on breeding Red Deer in captivity and on introducing updated technology in antler business are undergoing. Some cases of illegal poaching of female deer, in order to export the bomb and tail of the animal to China, have taken place. The information on decreasing numbers of Red Deer over the last few years should now receive greater attention.

5 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS TO WHICH MONGOLIA IS A PARTY:

- 1 "Convention on Biological Diversity" (1993)
- 2 "Convention on Climate Change" (1993)
- 3 "Convention to Combat Desertification" (1996)
- 4 "Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer" (1996)
- 5 "Montreal Protocol on the Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer" (1996),
- 6 "Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal" (1997),
- 7 "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat

