

The Third Meeting of the Public-Private Council for the Promotion of
Appropriate Ivory Trade Measures

Summary

Date and time: Monday, November 2, 2016, 10:30–11:30

Venue: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Members: (“*” indicates Joint Secretariat of the Council)

[Public sector]

- Ministry of the Environment*
- Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry*
- National Police Agency
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Finance

[Private sector]

- Ihojohotou Taio Renrakukai (Liaison group with a view to tackling illegal transactions composed of the following four telecommunication and internet business associations: Telecommunications Carriers Association (TCA), Telecom Service Association (TELESA), Japan Internet Providers Association (JAIPA) and Japan Cable and Telecommunications Association (JCTA))
- The Japanese Seal Engravers Association
- Zenkoku Inban Yohin Shoko Rengokai (Association for Seal and Stamp Products Companies of Japan)
- DeNA Co., Ltd.
- TRAFFIC
- Japan Federation of Ivory Arts and Crafts Associations*
- Yahoo Japan Corporation*

[Expert]

- Prof. Nobuo Ishii, Tokyo Woman's Christian University

Agenda

1. Briefing on outcomes of the Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES COP 17)
2. Progress on efforts made after the previous meeting of the Council
3. Other issues

Summary of discussions

1. Briefing on outcomes of CITES COP17

The Secretariat reported that the Council's report released in September had been submitted to CITES COP17 as an information document for dissemination to the CITES Parties and participating organizations.

Following the above, Government delegation members to CITES COP17 who were present at the third meeting of the Council briefed the other Council members on the overview and assessment of the major agenda items concerning ivory trade at CITES COP17 (proposals for amending the CITES Appendices, draft resolutions, reports on Monitoring the Illegal Killing of the Elephants (MIKE) and on the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), and other issues) and they also shared information with other participants on related press reports. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that for the past few years, the Government of Japan has been annually contributing about 50,000 US dollars to the CITES Secretariat to support developing countries in preparing national legislation for implementing CITES and that in October 2016, the Government also contributed 60,000 US dollars to the Secretariat for establishment of an anti-poaching operations center for rangers in a World Heritage Site in Zimbabwe to support CITES' MIKE programme. Moreover, the Ministry also reported that Japan will participate in the third international conference on illegal wildlife trade to be held in Viet Nam from November 16 to 18, 2016, and that Japan will follow the existing stance of the Government if the conference were to discuss the ivory trade issue.

The expert pointed out that the important part in the text of the resolution on the closure of legal domestic ivory market is that it recommends CITES Parties and non-parties to close their domestic markets that are "contributing to poaching or illegal trade". He continued that although the market in Japan does not correspond to the market subject to closure as stated in the resolution, it is very important for Japan to continue to take measures so as not to have such a domestic market, notwithstanding adverse impact that may be caused by other countries. He also stated that Japan should be mindful of the weak points in the current domestic system to this end.

A participant raised a question on possible future actions by the Government in terms of its contribution to elephant conservation in range states. In response, the responsible ministries and agencies answered that in addition to above-mentioned financial contributions, the Government will be able to contribute to conserving elephants through economic activities in legal markets if any international ivory trade is achieved in the future. Another participant asked the Government delegation members to CITES COP17 who were present at the Council meeting opinions of CITES Parties supporting the resolution on closure of domestic ivory trade markets and also asked on the interpretation of the text of the resolution.

2. Progress on efforts made after the previous meeting of the Council

Participating organizations respectively reported the progress on the following efforts and shared related information.

- The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry reported that the Ministry and the Ministry of the Environment have been jointly undertaking on-site inspections concerning ivory trade, as needed, to business operators dealing with ivory and that they have jointly executed an administrative sanction against one of the operators.
- The National Police Agency shared information on arrests related to trade in unregistered ivory products from September to October 2016 and reported that all the ivories concerned were either belongings or personal effects of deceased persons, which were not directly related to ongoing elephant poaching.
- The Ministry of the Environment reported that it has been coordinating with the National Police Agency and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry with a view to raising awareness of the regulation system of ivory trade among antique dealing industries. In addition, the Ministry reported that based on the discussion of the study group on the revision of the Law on Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, [i] the strengthening of penalties under the entire Law and [ii] the publication of registration numbers assigned to businesses operators dealing with designated international endangered species (including elephants) are being discussed and that to this end, the Ministry will endeavor to compile a draft report on the revision of the Law through discussions by the council in charge and a call for public comments.
- The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry reported a variety of efforts since August 2016 for significantly increasing the awareness among related business operators, tourists and other stakeholders that ivory exports are prohibited in principle.

3. Other issues

The Secretariat communicated its hopes that participants will continue to share information and exchange views through the meetings of the Council and that respective associations will advance their own efforts.

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