

## **Preface**

Since the early 1990s a new crisis has been threatening the already endangered tiger species in the world. The main cause for the crisis is poaching for bone and other body parts of tigers for use in traditional Chinese medicine.

Realizing the imminent threat to the remaining populations, some Parties of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) have taken measures in order to alleviate the distress of the tiger. For example China and Korea, the major consumer countries of traditional Chinese medicine, have established legislation to regulate domestic trade in tiger parts and derivatives.

Internationally, at the CITES 9th Conference of the Parties (COP) (1994) a resolution on "Conservation of and Trade in Tigers" (Res. Conf. 9.13) was adopted and it was further strengthened at the following COP (Res. Conf. 9.13 (Rev.)), which states:

### *THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION*

#### *URGES:*

*c) all Parties seeking to improve their legislation controlling the trade in tigers and tiger parts and derivatives or to adopt such legislation to include penalties adequate to deter illegal trade and to consider introducing national measures to facilitate implementation of CITES, such as voluntarily prohibiting internal trade in tigers and tiger parts and derivatives, as well as in products labeled as containing parts and derivatives of tiger.*

Has Japan taken any actions in accordance with this resolution?

The current regulations adopted by the Government of Japan regarding the domestic trade in tiger covers live and stuffed animals, fur, skin, tooth, claw and products made of these parts only ("Law for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). This means that tiger bone, other body parts and products made of these parts such as traditional Chinese medicine are left completely out of control, despite the fact that the marketing of such parts and derivatives have been an issue of great concern for the CITES Parties as the main cause of the tiger's peril in the 1990s.

JWCS and Asian Conservation Alliance (ACA) have been calling on the Japanese government to institute legislation to cover all the tiger parts and derivatives. Such calls have been consistently ignored. The Government insists that the demand for

traditional Chinese medicine containing tiger bone etc. in Japan is so low that the domestic trade in such products will die out on its own, and thus does not justify efforts to establish new legislation.

Does the government's argument stand on a firm ground?

Deeply concerned with the grave situation of the remaining tiger populations, and well aware of the responsibility of Japan as a major consumer of tiger products, JWCS has produced this report with the following objectives:

- to provide some insight into the current situation of marketing of tiger parts and derivatives (products) <sup>1</sup> in Japan;
- to analyze the domestic demand for such products; and
- based on the above findings, to consider the necessity of extended legislation to control the domestic trade in tiger parts and derivatives.

We hope that this report will help CITES member states and any concerned parties consider and suggest what measures Japan should take to comply with the Res. Conf. 9.13. .

## **Section 1: The Current Situation of Tiger Products Marketing in Japan**

### ***Tiger bone***

In September 1997 JWCS investigation found evidence of tiger bone in traditional Chinese medicine pharmacy in Yokohama, but it was not for sale at that time. In August 1998 JWCS investigation found tiger bones in two TCM shops in Tokyo. At one of the two shops, tiger bones were offered for sale, and the shop had two front shin bones in stock. The price was not on display, but JWCS was told that the pharmacy had bought the bones for ¥50,000 (approx. US\$ 420)<sup>2</sup> each.

Aside from such direct observations at the retail level, there have been other incidents

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<sup>1</sup>The 'tiger parts and products' in this report refer to tiger bone, tiger penis and products which contain these tiger parts.

<sup>2</sup> US\$1=¥119, 11<sup>th</sup> June 1999

that strongly imply the existence of domestic demand for tiger bone and marketing to meet the demand.

For instance, a tiger farm in Kamikawa-gun, Hokkaido, established in 1980 has been breeding Amur tiger *Panthera tigris altaica* in order to trade in tiger skin and bones. In the 1980s the farm was open to the public with admission fees. Their advertisement pamphlet states: "We are also engaged in production of tiger bone, the miracle medicine valued in China from ancient times", and "The tigers produced on our farm are given breeding certificates and the products therefrom can be purchased with no violation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)". This pamphlet was widely distributed to the public in the 1980s.

In fact, it is known that this farm was planning to sell tiger bone powder as virility products. In June 1999 an advertising agency told JWCS: " In 1980s the tiger farm ordered the ad agency to make labels for containers of their tiger bone powder but they failed to agree on a contract. The farm asked some other ad agencies to do the job at the same time, but what happened to them is not known."

According to a report submitted by this tiger farm in Hokkaido to the Leipzig Zoo in Germany, there are currently 47 tigers on the farm which have been bred since 1977. The same document reports a total of 18 tigers deaths on the farm as of the end of 1997: 14 tigers between 1989 and 1994; and 4 deaths the date of which are unknown (Zoologischer Garten Leipzig 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1998). However, when the Kamikawa Branch Office of the Hokkaido Local Government conducted an on-the-spot inspection of the farm on 24th May 1999 to check the condition of the "dangerous animals breeding facilities", the authorities could find only nine living tigers (Anon. 1999). It is unknown exactly how the carcasses and body parts were disposed of, but at least it appears certain that there was expectation on the farm to trade in tiger bones as raw material for Chinese medicine or virility products.

In marketing terms, it is clear from the above referenced pamphlet that the farm was attempting to sell tiger products directly to ordinary visitors. It is not clear whether these tiger products were destined for other domestic or even international markets.

The Hokkaido tiger farm activities suggest that demand for and marketing of tiger products are strong in Japan, in opposition to the Japanese government present

position.

Aside from this incident, in 1998 an article appeared in a popular weekly magazine headlined "Animal Skulls for Trendy Interior Decoration", with a photograph of a tiger skull (Anon. 1998). The article mentioned an episode somebody tried to buy a tiger from its owner who could not take care of it any longer, "...in order to kill the tiger for making a stuffed animal and traditional Chinese medicine." This article proves the existence of supply and demand for tiger bones.

### **Tiger bone tablets**

In August 1998 JWCS investigation found tiger bone tablets on sale in seven traditional Chinese pharmacies in Tokyo and Yokohama. The tablets are called *jokingan* (舒筋丸) and *katsurakutan* (活絡丹).

The price of *jokingan* was as follows:

Container size (No. of tablets)	Large (400)	Medium (200)	Small (100)
Price ( J P ¥)	13,000	7,000	3,600
US\$ approx.	109	59	30

The price of *katsurakutan* was ¥6,500 (US\$55) for 100 tablets.

Both *jokingan* and *katsurakutan* are products certified by the Ministry of Health and Welfare under the Pharmaceutical Affairs Law (PAL). These tiger bone tablets are recognised under PAL as medical products. Environment Agency officials claim they conducted import and wholesale stock surveys of these tablets in 1997. However, they have never carried out surveys at all at the retail level. Therefore, if the same products as the surveyed and certified ones are illegally imported and mixed with legal products at the retail level, there is no way for authorities to distinguish between the legal and illegal products.

Furthermore, in February 1999 JWCS found a Traditional Chinese pharmacy selling, in addition to *jokingan*, other tiger bone tablets called *tochukokotsugan* (杜仲虎骨丸) which are outlawed under PAL. JWCS confirmed that one dozen of these products were in stock at this pharmacy. (See details below.)

Brand name: *tochukokotsugan* (tiger bone 6.8%)

Manufacturer: (貴陽中藥廠出品) GUI YANG ZHONG YAO BI CHU PIN

Price: ¥3,600 (approx. US\$30) for 100 tablets

Place of the retailer: Higashiueno, Taito-ku, Tokyo

When JWCS visited the same Chinese pharmacy in August 1998 *jokingan* only was on sale. Answering JWCS investigators' inquiry the shop keeper said, "The wholesaler's stock of *jokingan* is running short as some of our customers buy in bulk at one time. So we just began importing *tochukokotsugan* from China very recently."

According to the Ministry of Health and Welfare, no medicine containing tiger bone has been officially imported since April 1993 (TRAFFIC Japan 1996). Then it appears that the stock of *tochukokotsugan* was illegally obtained.

### **Tiger bone wine**

Between September 1997 and August 1998 JWCS witnessed nine traditional Chinese pharmacies in Tokyo and Yokohama selling tiger bone wine called *kokotsushu* (虎骨酒). All these pharmacies had a stock of it in August 1998. The price of the wine was as follows:

September 1997 (3 shops in Yokohama)

Bottle size:	Large (650ml)	Small (320ml)
Price (JP¥):	10,000	5,500 - 7,000
US\$ approx.	84	46 - 59

August 1998 (9 shops in Tokyo and Yokohama including 3 shops above)

Bottle size:	Large (650ml)	Small (320ml)
Price (¥):	8,600 - 13,000	4,500 - 5,500
US\$ approx.	72 - 109	38 - 46

### **Tiger penis**

In September 1997 JWCS investigation found tiger penises on sale for ¥15,000 (US\$ approx. 126) at a Chinese grocery in Yokohama. Then JWCS was told that the penises were imported from Hong Kong and could be supplied anytime. When JWCS revisited the same grocery in August 1998, the grocery staff said to JWCS "Tiger penises are selling continuously", and "At this moment the stock has run out but we can get some immediately if we order in Hong Kong."

In July 1998 in Tokyo JWCS found dried tiger penises on sale for ¥100,000 each (US\$ approx. 840) at one of six branches of a company specialising in virility products.

In October 1998 JWCS confirmed that tiger penises were on sale from another virility specialized company at all of its ten branches in Tokyo. The price was ¥58,000 (US\$ approx. 487) for ones in preserved liquor and ¥48,000 (US\$ approx. 403) for dried ones (prices varied slightly at different branches). At one of the branches JWCS was told that they had some 100 regular buyers, mainly middle-aged men, for their tiger penis products.

In addition, JWCS found that tiger penises were available by mail-order. In the May 1999 catalogue of a mail-order company, a dried tiger penis "of about 68-cm body length" "from Laos" is offered for ¥298,000 (US\$ approx. 2504). The ad states that the penis is "of a savage tiger living deep in forests of Laos", emphasising its strong virility effect.

### ***Tiger penis tablet***

In July 1998 JWCS found that the same company specialising in virility products (with six branches all over Japan) and was selling tiger penises was also dealing in tablets containing tiger penis powder as virility products. The product is named *ryukogen* (竜虎源), and the price is as follows:

Quantity	50g (for 40 days)	100g (for 80days)
Price ( J P ¥)	144,000	252,000
US\$ approx.	1,210	2,118

Tiger penis tablets are also available by mail-order. The 1998 catalogue of a certain mail-order company also advertises a product named *sokkosei*, (即虎精), which are tablets containing penises of vipers and of soft-shelled turtles, as well as deer liver, sea snake, gecko, and sea horse in addition to tiger penis, as "tonic for promised long life and limitless energy". It also adds a footnote; "Recommended for those feeling unsure with Viagra."

### ***Tiger penis wine***

In August 1998 JWCS identified two kinds of tiger penis wine, called *sambenshu* (三鞭酒) and *tokushitsu-sambenshu* (特質三鞭酒). Both of these preserve penises of three kinds of animals (tiger, deer and fur seal) in liquor. Tiger penis wine is produced in China by different companies. At one Chinese restaurant in Tokyo, one glass of tiger penis wine was priced ¥1,000 (approx. US\$8).

In October 1998, JWCS found another kind of tiger penis wine called *horaishu* (宝来酒) on sale at one of the ten branches of the same virility company which was selling tiger

penises. At another branch of the same company JWCS was told that this wine was available at all of the ten branches of the company in Tokyo. This product is made from penises of tiger, deer and seals and herbs preserved in liquor for at least six months. The price for a bottle (8 liters) is ¥100,000 (approx. US\$840).

## **Section 2 : Analysis of demand for tiger parts / products in Japan**

### ***Korean and Chinese communities***

The retail shops (pharmacies, groceries, restaurants) which JWCS found offering tiger parts and products in Tokyo and Yokohama are very often located in Korean and Chinese communities, such as China Town in Yokohama and areas where there are many shops dealing in Korean food stuff and traditional attire. The Chinese and Koreans have traditionally been the main consumers of tiger parts and products, and logically major consumers of tiger products outside China or Korea are in Chinese and Korean communities. A glance at the distribution of the retail shops visited by JWCS in Tokyo and Yokohama supports the same tendency in Japan. In August 1998 JWCS was told at one of the shops that 60% of those who come to their shop to buy tiger bone tablets (*jokingan*) were Japanese and 40% were people of Korean origin. It is, therefore, logical to conclude that Korean and Chinese communities are a source of significant demand for tiger products in Japan.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Percentage of the Japanese who have used tiger parts / products as traditional Chinese medicine***

In 1997 the Environment Agency surveyed a randomly selected group of Japanese men and women (male 35.8%, female 64.2%) about their "use of Chinese medicine containing tiger parts". The survey results showed that 34 persons out of 1,172 (2.9%) have bought or used Chinese medicine containing tiger parts (EA 1997). Considering the number of male and female adults out of the whole population of 130 million in Japan, this percentage is by no means trivial.

### ***Japanese Regular Customers***

There is a notion that the use of tiger parts / products dates back only to half a century (EA 1997). However, records collected by an historical society in a town where traditional Chinese medicines were produced and consumed indicate that when cholera

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<sup>3</sup>The numbers of Koreans and Chinese registered in Japan are: Koreans 645,373 and Chinese 252,164 (Immigration Bureau, the Ministry of Justice 1998)

prevailed in Osaka in 1822 a medication called *kotousakkiyukoen* (虎頭殺鬼雄黃圓) was prescribed. *Kotousakkiyukoen* was made by mixing ten different raw materials including tiger skull, implying that tiger bone as Chinese medicine has been used in Japan at least 150 years. So we may assume that the Japanese have also used tiger bone in their traditional medicines. (Doshomachi shiryō hozonkai 1998)

In fact in September 1997 at one Chinese pharmacy JWCS was told that one of their regular customers buys six bottles of tiger bone wine at one time. During the same investigation a Chinese grocery which was selling tiger penises commented that they have regular customers of buying tiger penis, including owners of restaurants which have tiger penis soup on their menu. Furthermore, in October 1998 JWCS was told at an virility store in Tokyo that their regular customers who buy tiger penis liquor, mainly elderly male, number as many as 100.

#### ***Recent Increase in Demand, With the Increase of Use of Virility Products***

With the development and marketing of Viagra, use of virility tonics is booming in many places in the world. Japan is no exception. It is unclear whether the development of such new virility products will replace products containing parts of endangered wild animals. What is clear is that the debut of Viagra popularised and expanded the virility market in general, pushing up demand also for other conventional products. Especially in Japan the industry is making use of this trend and advertising a variety of unique virility products, while the media tends to follow up and eventually accelerate such a trend. For example, JWCS was informed that in March 1999 a virility product made of a tiger penis tablet was presented and tested during a popular program on a local TV company in Kyushu (south-west Japan).

Such products are now being marketed widely, increasing accessibility for customers. A typical example of such marketing strategy is the aforementioned mail-order system. Also it should be noted that such products are offered by companies with nation-wide marketing networks. These trends will probably contribute to new and popularized uses of tiger products in Japan.

The development of extended marketing system is observed not only for virility products using tiger penis but also for tiger bone wine. In August 1998, JWCS located three internet websites advertising or offering tiger bone wine on-line.

Also in April 1997 and August 1998, JWCS observed tiger bone wine on sale at a Chinese pharmacy in a major department store in Ikebukuro, Tokyo. Not only those interested but also many people who are not particularly interested in buying traditional Chinese medicine come to such department stores. Generally speaking, offering products on sale in department stores help huge number of people to purchase that product easily. This pharmacy in a large Japanese department store sells large-size and small-size bottles of tiger bone wine.

JWCS was told that they had a stock which would last for another 1-1.5 years at current sales level. Also, at the Beijing branch of the same Chinese medicine company foreign tourists including Japanese casually buy tiger products as souvenirs. This may also contribute to prevailing demand for tiger products among the Japanese.

In September 1997 JWCS was told at one Chinese pharmacy that there were many young people among their customers, and it is possible that more young people are using tiger bone wine recently.

Increasing demand for tiger products reflects other cases where high consumer demand for popularised wildlife products in Japan- such as ivory and pet animals has severely affected the status of many wildlife species.

### **Section 3 : Necessity of Immediate Legislative Regulation in Japan**

As discussed above, it is clear that a significant amount of tiger products such as tiger bone, tiger bone tablet and wine, tiger penis, tiger penis tablet and wine, are being marketed widely in Japan. It is suspected that some of these products are imported illegally.

In addition to the constant and persistent demand for tiger products among Korean and Chinese communities as well as some portions of the Japanese population, the recent virility boom and improved marketing strategies appear to be increasing demand significantly for tiger products.

The above findings underline the fact that Japan is one of the major consumer countries of tiger parts (bone and penis). Unless the demand in Japan is reduced and the practice

of mixing smuggled tiger parts/products with legal ones is completely stopped in Japan, it is impossible to prevent illegal international trade (and illegal killing) in range states.

The government of Japan regulates domestic trade in tiger parts and products under the Law for Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (LCES), but the regulated items are limited to tiger fur, skin, teeth, claws, and products made of these parts ("The Government Ordinance for Implementation of LCES" 2-2). However, the government has little knowledge nor statistical information regarding the current situation in domestic marketing of tiger bone, penis and products made from these parts.

Therefore, JWCS calls for the following actions to be taken by the Japanese government.

### **Recommendations**

The government of Japan should:

- 1) recognise tiger bone, penis and products made from these parts as items to be regulated under LCES;
- 2) identify and supervise closely the dealers who may deal in tiger bone, penis and products made from these parts including traditional Chinese pharmacies, food stuff dealers, health food dealers and virility dealers etc. and report their findings regularly to the CITES Standing Committee;
- 3) make a census of the total amount of all domestic stocks of tiger bone, penis and products made from these parts, and report the findings to the CITES Standing Committee; and
- 4) require those who deal in tiger bone, penis and products made from these parts, such as Chinese pharmacies, food stuff dealers, health food dealers and virility dealers, to develop and deal in substitutes, and report the process to the CITES Standing Committee.





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**Trade of Tiger Parts and Medicines in Japan**  
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**Japan Wildlife Conservation Society (JWCS)**

**JWCS** is an organization that was established to study the philosophy needed for real conservation of wildlife and recommend the practical theory and solution for specific issues both domestically and internationally.

Under the objective, **JWCS** is conducting study, investigation, lobbying and campaign for public awareness.

**Tiger Conservation Fund (TCF)** is one of the **JWCS** projects. **TCF** has a membership system to support NGOs devoted to save tigers in range states.

It also carries out awareness campaigns in Japan.

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