

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

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Sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 27 November – 1 December 2017

IDENTIFICATION MATERIAL RELATED TO TIGER SKIN:  
RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA / NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

This information document has been submitted by India in relation to agenda item 44.1 on *Identification of specimens in trade: Tiger skins*.\*

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\* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

## RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA/NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

a) Photographic images of tigers are accumulating rapidly across India as a result of camera trap surveys, general photography, forensic work and other activities by State agencies. These images are systematically collected and compiled in a retrievable and useful manner, and are of immense assistance to the protection, management and rigorous monitoring of wild tiger populations in India. The National Tiger Conservation Authority has established the NATIONAL REPOSITORY OF CAMERA TRAP PHOTOGRAPHS OF TIGERS (NRCTPT) under its direct control with facilitation for instant sharing of information with States and other participants (Details of the NRCTPT protocol is available at [http://projecttiger.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/Protocol\\_Camera\\_trap.pdf](http://projecttiger.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/Protocol_Camera_trap.pdf).)

Intensive camera trapping has been now mandated as the main methodology for annual monitoring of tiger populations in key source populations and tiger reserves (see Phase IV protocol at [http://projecttiger.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/Protocol\\_Phase\\_IV\\_Monitoring\\_r.pdf](http://projecttiger.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/Protocol_Phase_IV_Monitoring_r.pdf)). Additional tiger photographs may be made available by individual reserve or through any other ad hoc camera trapping efforts as well as from photographs of dead tigers, skin seizures and photographs of wild tigers obtained by tourists, forest officials and other individuals. All statistical information about tiger populations in the country will be derived from these individual identifications based on rigorous analysis conducted by the NTCA utilizing the NRCTPT.

### National Focal Point for India:

#### **Designation:**

Inspector General of Forests (Project Tiger)

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b) As mentioned above at S. No. a, India has a **National Repository of Camera Trap photographs of Tigers (NRCTPT)** which is maintained at NTCAs **Tiger Cell**, at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.

National Focal Point for India: As above at S. no. a.

c) The National Tiger Conservation Authority has already established a **Tiger Cell** at the Wildlife Institute of India, located at Dehradun, wherein the following experts are engaged in maintaining data obtained from annual monitoring of tigers in source areas besides other ad hoc sources as mentioned earlier, and are responsible for archiving the same in the NRCTPT;

- i. Wildlife Biologist : 01
- ii. Conservation Ecologist : 01
- iii. Conservation Geneticist : 01
- iv. GIS specialist : 01

The National Tiger Conservation Authority incurs an annual expenditure of US \$ 57000 on remuneration besides around US \$ 35000-40000 on material support to the Tiger Cell.

2 important case studies highlighting utility of the NRCTPT are briefly presented.






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## **CASE STUDY 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

On January 11 and 12, 2013, a major haul of wildlife contraband which inter alia included 7 tiger skins was seized in Gorkha district of Nepal. In light of seizures of tiger body parts, a team of officers from the National Tiger Conservation Authority and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau was constituted to look into the possible Indian linkages. The team went to Nepal and obtained images of the 7 tiger skins, which were compared with the image database of the NRCTPT. Out of the 7 tigers, a confirmed match was obtained in respect of one tiger skin which matched with tigress T 13 of Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh.


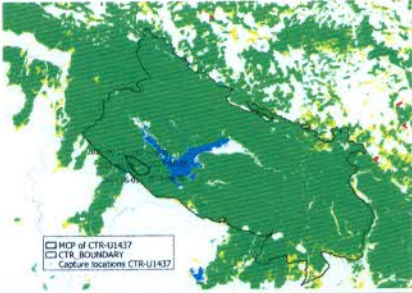

Female T 13 was one of the important females operating in Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh. She was photo-captured during 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. Two of her cubs were photo-captured on 28-2-2012. Detail year wise GPS locations of T 13 breeding female's was available and compared with the seized image. Based on camera trap locations, it was observed that she was operating on both sides of the Pench river i.e. part of both Karmajhiri and Gumtara range of Pench Tiger Reserve. Her operating area was mostly at the fringes of Pench Tiger Reserve and possibility of her movement outside the tiger reserve was not overruled.

1. Seizure Location	Nuwakote, Gorkha, Nepal; 11.1.13
2. Seized skin photograph	
3. Area of Operation of tiger	Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, India
4. Capture history	
2009	
2010	
2011	
2012	

## CASE STUDY 2

### INTRODUCTION

On December 26, 2015, two poachers from the Bawaria community, a community historically associated with poaching in different parts of India, were caught by Nepalese authorities in Sunsari region along with a tiger skin. Under aegis of the bilateral understanding between India and Nepal, the seized skin image was shared with officials in India who analysed and compared the image with those of existing tigers in the NRCTPT at the Tiger Cell. A confirmed match was obtained in the database with tigress id **Kalagarh14\_U1437**, which had its territory in the south western region of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. Imagery analysis details of the said seizure is presented in the following table;

1. Seizure Location	Sunsari, Nepal; 26.12.15
2. Seized skin photograph	
3. Area of Operation of tiger	<p style="text-align: center;">Corbett Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand</p> 
4. Capture History	
2015	
2015	