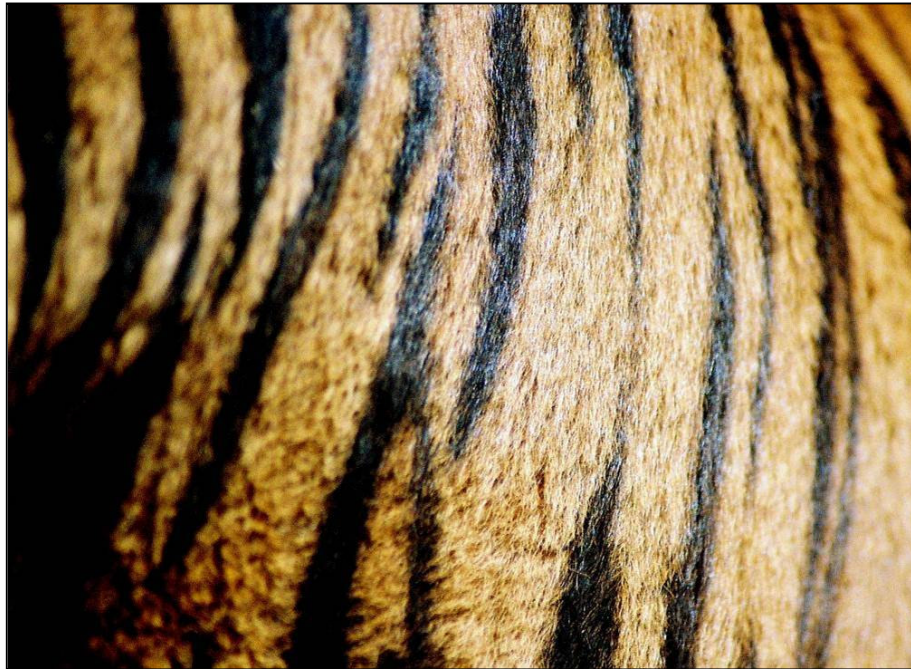


# AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN TIGER PARTS IN SINGAPORE





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# AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN TIGER PARTS IN SINGAPORE

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by  
**ACRES**  
(ANIMAL CONCERNS RESEARCH AND EDUCATION SOCIETY)

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ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society) is a local charity, founded in 2001 by Singaporeans. ACRES aims to:

- Foster respect and compassion for all animals.
- Improve the living conditions and welfare of animals in captivity.
- Educate people on lifestyle choices which do not involve the abuse of animals and which are environment-friendly.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Singapore has been recognised as playing a role in the trade of tiger products from neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, for both domestic trade and international re-exports<sup>1</sup>.
2. To strengthen efforts to conserve populations of tigers and other Appendix I Asian big cat species and combat illegal trade in live specimens and parts and derivatives thereof, Resolution Conf. 12.5: On Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix I Asian Big Cat species was adopted by the CITES Conference of the Parties. In the Resolution, it is stated that three subspecies of tiger, *Panthera tigris*, have become extinct within the last 50 years and noting with concern that, despite inclusion of Asian big cat species in Appendix I, illegal trade in specimens of nearly all these species has escalated and further threatens their long-term survival in the wild.
3. Under Singapore's Endangered Species (Import And Export) Act, any person who has in his possession or under his control, or who sells, offers or exposes or advertises for sale, or displays to the public any scheduled species which has been imported or introduced from the sea in contravention of subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 for each such scheduled species (but not to exceed in the aggregate \$500,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both. Under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) (Prohibition of Sale) Notification, the domestic sale of tiger specimens is prohibited. Any person who sells, offers or exposes for sale or displays to the public any tiger parts and products, commits an offence. The offender shall be liable to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 for each species (but not to exceed in the aggregate \$100,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 year or to both.
4. **Anyone who advertises for sale any tiger parts contravenes the above Act, even if the products turn out to be not authentic. By making a claim that the product is from tigers, the dealer is potentially driving up the demand for tiger parts which directly contravenes the spirit of CITES and the local legislation meant to enforce CITES.**

5. In 2003, ACRES, in collaboration with The New Paper, conducted undercover investigations into the illegal trade in tiger parts in Singapore. The investigations revealed that alleged tiger parts, including tiger bones, tiger paws and tiger penises, were on sale at Traditional Chinese Medicine stores in Chinatown.
6. Between 2008 and 2009, ACRES received three tip-offs regarding the sale of alleged tiger parts in Singapore. ACRES investigations confirmed alleged tiger parts being sold as lucky charms in all three cases. Enforcement action by the Agri-food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) followed.
7. ACRES embarked on the 2009 - 2010 investigation to determine the current levels of tiger parts trade in Singapore. 134 jewellery and antique shops in Singapore were surveyed between December 2009 and February 2010.
8. At fifty nine shops, alleged tiger parts such as tiger claws, tiger teeth and tiger skin were offered for sale.
9. At fifty two shops, the alleged tiger parts were openly on sale.
10. Twenty eight shopkeepers mentioned that an order for more tiger parts could be placed with them, and the delivery time ranged from one week to three months or more.
11. One of the shopkeepers mentioned to the investigator on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009 that he would be getting more stock of tiger products soon. After being given a contact number, the shopkeeper called the investigator three weeks later, informing the investigator that he had bought more tiger teeth. A second visit to the shop was made on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010, and the shopkeeper showed the investigator two alleged raw tiger teeth, mentioning that he had brought them in from Thailand.
12. One shopkeeper stated that he had to stock up on tiger parts due to the demand during the Chinese New Year, because 2010 is the Year of Tiger. He said: "It is selling very fast, for these few days, a lot of people looking for such stuff....had six pieces (of tiger teeth) for the past two weeks (he had only two teeth left), just stocked up for Chinese New Year..."



13. Thirteen shopkeepers recognised that it is difficult to find or source tiger parts because tigers are rare to find.
14. Seven shopkeepers recognised that tigers are protected animals, that it is illegal to sell tiger parts, and that tiger parts are customs-controlled items.
15. Three shopkeepers stated that they cannot openly display and sell tiger parts in Singapore.
16. The alleged tiger parts were claimed to originate from Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, China, Myanmar, Indonesia, Lao and Cambodia.
17. The investigation findings showed the presence of an illegal trade in alleged tiger parts in Singapore and that there is an immediate need for continued serious efforts to curb this illegal trade.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This report is based on an investigation into the illegal tiger parts trade in Singapore conducted by undercover investigators from ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society) between December 2009 and February 2010.

In 2003, ACRES, in collaboration with The New Paper, conducted undercover investigations into the illegal trade in tiger parts in Singapore. The investigations revealed that alleged tiger parts, including tiger bones, tiger paws and tiger penises, were on sale at Traditional Chinese Medicine stores in Chinatown.

Three shops were found to be selling alleged tiger parts and video evidence was obtained in each case.

Between 2008 and 2009, ACRES received three tip-offs regarding the sale of alleged tiger parts in Singapore. ACRES investigations confirmed alleged tiger parts being sold as lucky charms in all three cases. Enforcement action by the Agri-food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) followed.

Six years had passed since the 2003 investigation by ACRES, and this 2009 - 2010 investigation was undertaken to determine the current level of the illegal trade in tiger parts for the purpose of jewellery and lucky charms in Singapore.

## CHAPTER 2. TRADE IN TIGER PARTS

Tiger parts have been used for various purposes such as traditional medicine, jewellery, lucky charms and novelties in Asia<sup>1</sup>.

Tiger parts, such as claws and teeth, are sold as jewellery, either as a raw piece or inlaid with gold or silver. The claws and teeth are also sold as lucky charms, as some people believe that they ward off evil and bring good luck and power (anon. trader Singapore pers. comm. to ACRES investigator, Dec 2008).

Pieces of tiger skin are also made into amulets as religious lucky charms believed to bring authority, power and protection to the person possessing the piece (anon. trader Singapore pers. comm. to ACRES investigator, Feb 2010).

In common with all instances of illegal wildlife trade, the trade in tiger parts greatly impacts wild populations, posing significant threats to the survival of these endangered species.

Wild tiger populations are at their lowest level ever in the past twenty years, with possibly as few as 3,200 individuals remaining in the wild<sup>2</sup>.

Most tiger parts may be obtained from tigers poached from the wild in their habitat countries including Malaysia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Lao, China, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand.

It is possible that some of the tiger parts on sale could be fake, either obtained from another animal or made of synthetic materials.



**Tiger claw with skin and paw pads for sale in Little India**

Although all commercial tiger trade has been banned since 1987 by CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), there has been an approximate fifty per cent decrease in wild tiger populations since the ban<sup>3</sup>.

Singapore has been recognised by TRAFFIC as playing a role in the trade of tiger products from neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, for both domestic trade and international re-exports<sup>1</sup>.

In particular, it has been reported that tiger parts are smuggled in from Batam, Indonesia, to Singapore by boat and plane, and also by individuals carrying tiger skins in bags<sup>1</sup>.

In 1999, interview surveys with traditional medicine practitioners and pharmacists were conducted in range and non-range consumer states to assess the continued illegal trade in tiger products, despite bans on the trade. The percentage of the traditional medicine community estimated still to be trading in tiger medicines was highest in Singapore (thirty one per cent)<sup>4</sup>, compared to Taiwan and Canada.

## **CHAPTER 3. CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE: CITES**

CITES is an international agreement to ensure that trade does not threaten wildlife species with extinction.

The international trade in tigers and their parts is regulated by CITES, which Singapore is party to.

All six tiger species (Siberian, South China, Indo-Chinese, Sumatran, Malayan and Bengal tigers) are listed on Appendix I of CITES, meaning no commercial trade is allowed.

### **3.1. CITES Resolution Conf. 12.5 (revised CoP14): On Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix I Asian Big Cat species<sup>5</sup>**

To strengthen efforts to conserve populations of tigers and other Appendix I Asian big cat species and combat illegal trade in live specimens and parts and derivatives thereof, the above resolution was adopted by the CITES Conference of the Parties.

Due to the significant decline in tiger populations, there are proposed revisions to the above resolution at the Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010.

Resolution Conf. 12.5 states “CONSCIOUS that three subspecies of tiger, *Panthera tigris*, have become extinct within the last 50 years and noting with concern that, despite inclusion of Asian big cat species in Appendix I, illegal trade in specimens of nearly all these species has escalated and further threatens their long-term survival in the wild;”

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention (includes proposed amendments)

URGES:

- a) all Parties and non-Parties, especially range and consumer States of Asian big cat species, to adopt comprehensive legislation and enforcement controls which clearly define the administrative responsibilities of the various government agencies responsible for regulating trade within and outside of protected areas and in outlets for parts and derivatives such as in wildlife markets and shops, etc., as a matter of urgency;
- b) all Parties seeking to improve their legislation prohibiting international commercial trade in specimens of tiger and other Asian big cat species, and products labelled as, or claiming to contain, their parts and derivatives, 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 such parts, derivatives and products, as provided for in Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev.);
- c) all Parties, especially range and consumer States, to introduce innovative enforcement methods and, as a matter of priority, strengthen enforcement efforts in key border regions, and develop or improve implementation of regional enforcement networks;
- d) all range States to implement systems for the recording of information relating to illegal trade in Asian big cats and that this information is shared with other entities as appropriate to ensure coordinated investigations and enforcement;
- e) all range States to ensure enforcement units and personnel receive relevant and effective support in antipoaching operations; the gathering and use of intelligence; targeting offenders; wildlife crime investigative techniques; collecting evidence; inter-agency liaison and co-operation; and preparing cases for prosecution; and in doing so should consider the guidance provided at Annexes 1, 2 and 3;
- f) those Parties and non-Parties in whose territory tigers and other Asian big cat species are bred in captivity to ensure that they are not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives and that adequate management practices and controls are in place to prevent parts and derivatives from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities;
- g) those Parties with intensive operations breeding tigers on a commercial scale shall implement measures to restrict the captive

- population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers, taking account of the interpretations in Annex 4;
- h) those Parties and non-Parties in whose countries there exist stocks of parts and derivatives of tiger and other Asian big cat species (such as tiger bone stocks), but not including pre-Convention specimens, to consolidate and ensure adequate control of such stocks, and where possible destroy the same, with the exception of those used for educational and scientific purposes;
  - i) range and non-range States of the tiger and other Asian big cat species to support and participate in international conservation programmes, such as the Global Tiger Forum, and the Snow Leopard Network, as well as the CITES Tiger Enforcement Task Force with the aim of improving coordinated international cooperation and action in conservation and trade control;
  - j) all range and consumer States that are not party to CITES to accede to the Convention at the earliest possible date in order to improve control of international trade in parts and derivatives of tiger and other Asian big cat species; and

INSTRUCTS range States and, where appropriate, non-range States to provide detailed reports to each meeting of the Standing Committee and Conference of Parties on measures taken to comply with this Resolution;

RECOMMENDS that (relevant for the consumer states)

- c) all range and consumer States take measures to increase awareness of wildlife crime and illicit wildlife trade among their enforcement, prosecution and judicial authorities;
- d) the enforcement agencies in range and consumer States of the tiger and other Asian big cat species establish cooperative bilateral and multilateral arrangements, especially for the management of shared wildlife species and protected habitats with common boundaries, in order to achieve more effective control of illegal international trade in specimens of Asian big cat species;
- e) Parties and non-Parties convene regional workshops on law enforcement needs associated with illegal cross-border movement of specimens of Asian big cat species, including the extent of the trade, smuggling routes, methods and final consumer markets for live specimens and parts and derivatives, with technical assistance from the CITES Secretariat and, where available, financial support from interested governments and organizations.

## CHAPTER 4. THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK IN SINGAPORE

### 4.1. Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act

The Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act of Singapore is the national legislation that gives effect to CITES controls on import and export of wildlife and wildlife products.

The relevant section for the purpose of this investigation is:

#### Section 4 - Restriction on import, export, etc., of scheduled species

- (1) Any person who imports, exports, re-exports or introduces from the sea any scheduled species without a permit shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 for each such scheduled species (but not to exceed in the aggregate \$500,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.
- (2) Any person who has in his possession or under his control, or who sells, offers or exposes or advertises for sale, or displays to the public any scheduled species which has been imported or introduced from the sea in contravention of subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$50,000 for each such scheduled species (but not to exceed in the aggregate \$500,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.
- (3) Any person who sells, offers or exposes or advertises for sale, or displays to the public such scheduled species as the Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, specify shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 for each such scheduled species (but not to exceed in the aggregate \$100,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or to both.



All six species of tigers are listed in the Schedule.

The provisions of this Act can apply to products and derivatives as well.

**It should be noted that anyone who advertises for sale any tiger parts contravenes this Act, even if the tiger parts turn out to be not authentic. By making a claim that the product is from tigers, the dealer is potentially driving up the demand for tiger parts which directly contravenes the spirit of CITES and the local legislation meant to enforce CITES.**

Section 2 (Interpretation) of the Endangered Species (Import and export) Act 2006 defines “advertise” as follows:

“Advertise”, in relation to a scheduled species, means to describe, make reference to or allude in any way, by any means or in any form, to that scheduled species —

- (a) whether directly or indirectly;
- (b) whether orally, in writing in any language, diagrammatically, pictorially, by the use of symbols or photographs, or in any combination thereof; and
- (c) whether by the common name or the scientific name of that scheduled species or otherwise;

Under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) (Prohibition of Sale) Notification, the domestic sale of tiger specimens is prohibited. Any person who sells, offers or exposes for sale or displays to the public any tiger parts and products, commits an offence. The offender shall be liable to a fine not exceeding \$10,000 for each species (but not to exceed in the aggregate \$100,000) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 1 year or to both.

## **CHAPTER 5. INVESTIGATION METHODOLOGY**

### **5.1. Design**

Eight undercover investigators, working in pairs, asked shopkeepers at jewellery and antique shops whether they had any tiger parts for sale.

### **5.2. Reliability**

The study aimed to be scientifically reliable through the use of one standardised set of questions to guide the investigators in their interviews (Appendix I).

However, it was not always possible to ask all questions and sometimes it was possible to obtain more information, depending on how forthcoming with information the respondents were.

### **5.3. Sample**

134 jewellery and antique shops were surveyed in locations where clusters of jewellery shops were situated. The individual shops were then surveyed opportunistically in each cluster location. The shops were located in the following six clusters:

- Ang Mo Kio
- Bugis
- Chinatown
- Geylang
- Lavendar
- Little India

#### **5.4. Definitions and parameters**

1. When the terms “tiger claw/s”, “tiger nail/s”, “tiger tooth/teeth” and “tiger skin” are referred to in this report, they are based on the claims of the shopkeepers and the parts were taken to be authentic. It was not within the scope of the study to verify the authenticity of the tiger parts.
2. When a shop is categorised as selling tiger parts, this refers to a shop whose shopkeeper(s) offered alleged tiger parts for sale or said they stocked such products.
3. The term “shopkeeper” is used to mean any person who served the investigators at the shop.

## CHAPTER 6. RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

### 6.1. Alleged tiger parts on sale and prevalence

At fifty nine shops, alleged tiger parts were offered for sale (video evidence is available for all shops).

Of the fifty nine shops offering alleged tiger parts:

- Fifty two shops openly displayed the tiger parts.
- Two shops offered tiger claws, tiger tooth/teeth and tiger skin.
- Ten shops offered tiger claws only.
- Sixteen shops offered tiger tooth/teeth only.
- Seven shops offered tiger skin only.
- Twenty shops offered tiger claws and tooth/teeth only.
- Two shops offered tiger claws and skin only.
- Two shops offered tiger tooth/teeth and skin only.

### 6.2. Number of shops who could supply more alleged tiger parts and the time frame needed

Twenty eight shops mentioned that an order for more tiger parts could be placed. The time taken to deliver the order ranged from one week to three months or more.

### 6.3. Number of pieces of alleged tiger parts on sale

<b>Tiger part</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>
Tiger claws	159
Tiger teeth	303
Pieces of tiger skin	38

#### 6.4. Claimed origin of alleged tiger parts on sale

Country	No. of shops
Thailand	16
India	11
China	7
Indonesia	5
Sri Lanka	3
Myanmar	2
Vietnam	1
Bangladesh	1
Africa	1
Lao	1
Cambodia	1
Unknown	5

*Some shops may have more than one country of origin*

#### 6.5. Claimed authenticity of the alleged tiger parts

Claimed authenticity of the product	No. of shops
Real	49
May be real	5
Unknown	5

#### 6.6. Price range of alleged tiger parts (per finished piece)

Item description	Price range
Tiger claw set in gold	S\$209 to S\$4,800
Tiger claw set in silver	S\$150 to S\$450
Tiger claw not set in gold (carved or raw)	S\$20 to S\$529
Tiger tooth set in gold	S\$237 - S\$1,012
Tiger tooth not set in gold	S\$3 - S\$800
Tiger skin (pieces of varying size)	S\$30 - S\$350

## 6.7. Description of alleged tiger claw set in gold pendant

The alleged tiger claws were set in gold with two claws facing away from each other. Occasionally there were single claws set in gold.

Usually they were adorned with coloured glass gem stones or elephant hair.

The claws varied in colour, some were almost black in colour, others a dark brown or cream colour. Some were slightly chipped, or had grain marks along the claw. For some of the claws, the sheath inside was still visible.



**Tiger teeth (white) and tiger claws set in gold.**

The claws were usually displayed in wall-mounted glass cabinets at the back of the shop or in glass cabinets as a front display. They were visible to the investigators.

The claws found during the investigation came in various sizes, ranging from two centimetres to fifteen centimetres in length.

## 6.8. Description of alleged tiger tooth/teeth set in gold pendant

The alleged tiger teeth were set in gold pendants in a similar design to the claws. There were a variety of sizes available.

The teeth were distinguished from claws by the shop keepers as being brighter white in colour. The teeth were set in gold in pairs facing away from each other and were adorned with elephant hair strands and/or coloured glass gem stones.

The claws found during the investigation came in various sizes, ranging from two centimetres to ten centimetres in length.

## 6.9. Description of alleged tiger skin offered in pieces

Pieces of alleged tiger skin of different colours, ranging from dark brown with black stripes to cream with black stripes, were offered for sale.

Cut pieces of alleged tiger skin ranged from approximately four centimetres to ten centimetres in length.



**Tiger skin was offered in pieces of varying lengths.**

## 6.10. Products from other animals found on sale

- Fox claws
- Bear tooth
- Seal tooth
- Wild boar tusk
- Turtle/tortoise shells
- Elephant ivory and bones
- Unidentified animal horns
- Fish bone
- Whale teeth
- Mammoth tusk
- Snake skins

*The identification of these products is based on the claims of the shopkeepers.*



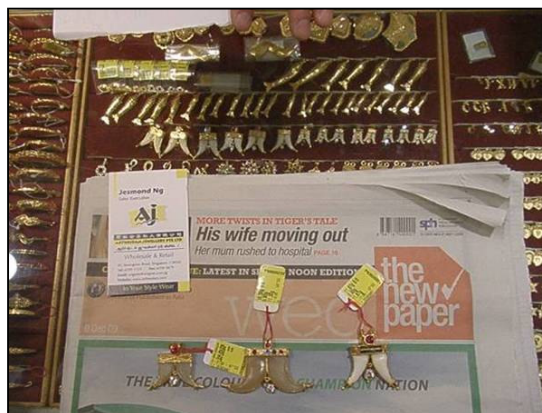
**A product claimed to be whale tooth offered for sale.**

## CHAPTER 7. DISCUSSION

### 7.1. Overall

The fact that fifty nine shops offered tiger parts for sale in Singapore and that fifty two shops openly displayed these alleged tiger parts, raises serious concerns.

This illegal trade clearly goes against the spirit of CITES. Recognising the demand for tiger parts and the declining wild populations, CITES Resolution Conf. 12.5 recommends that the consumer States of specimens from the tiger and other Asian big cat species carry out appropriate education and awareness campaigns to eliminate illegal trade in and use of Asian big cat skins as trophies, ornaments and items of clothing or for the production of other materials.



**Tiger claws and teeth openly on display in Little India.**

There is undoubtedly an urgent need to tighten our border controls to prevent the continued smuggling of these products into Singapore. There is also a need to prosecute traders and shopkeepers who continue to sell these products.

A deterrent sentence should be meted out to send a strong message that Singapore does not tolerate the illegal trading of tiger parts.

**It should be noted that anyone who advertises for sale any tiger part(s) contravenes the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act, even if the product(s) turns out to be not authentic. By making a claim that the product is from tigers, the dealer is potentially driving up the demand for tiger parts which directly contravenes the spirit of CITES and the local legislation meant to enforce CITES.**



## 7.2. Demand for tiger parts in Singapore

One shopkeeper revealed that he has sold a lot of tiger claws and pieces in Singapore.

One shopkeeper stated that he had to stock up on tiger parts due to the demand during the Chinese New Year, because 2010 is the Year of Tiger. He said: "It is selling very fast, for these few days, a lot of people looking for such stuff....had six pieces (of tiger teeth) for the past two weeks (he had only two teeth left), just stocked up for Chinese New Year..."



**Tiger teeth offered for sale by a shopkeeper.**

One shopkeeper stated: "...last time I got many; many people buy, now only one... this is about six years old (tiger tooth)."

One shopkeeper stated: "...all of a sudden, there will be so many customers at least four, five come and ask for this, other times, we don't have many. One or two customers come, and we sold to them already..."

## 7.3. Ease of ordering and importing tiger parts

The apparent ease with which these products are being illegally imported into Singapore raises serious concerns.

Twenty eight shops mentioned that an order for more tiger parts could be placed. The time taken to deliver the order ranged from one week to three months or more.

One of the shopkeepers mentioned to the investigator on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009 that he would be getting more stock of tiger products soon. After being given a contact number, the shopkeeper called the investigator three weeks later, informing the investigator that he had bought more tiger teeth. A second visit to the shop was made on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010,

and the shopkeeper showed the investigator two alleged raw tiger teeth, mentioning that he had brought them in from Thailand.

Two shopkeepers, who did not have any tiger products to offer for sale at the time of investigation, mentioned that they could order tiger products. One of them mentioned that he had currently sold out of tiger products.

One shopkeeper mentioned that: “Tiger is a preserved animal, you cannot show that you are carrying them... They bring into Singapore, we cannot ask them how they bring in, if we leak out the information, they will be caught.”

One shopkeeper said: “When you bring out of Singapore, say it is just a talisman, don’t say it is really a tiger part.”

One shopkeeper mentioned: “Put it (tiger skin) inside wallet, if you want to take full piece, then you cannot. Small one you put inside, no body will see. If you take full piece, they will check you.”

#### **7.4. Recognition of illegality of trade by shopkeepers**

Seven shopkeepers recognised that it is illegal to sell tiger parts and that tiger parts are customs-controlled items.

Seven shopkeepers produced the alleged tiger parts from another part of the shop, or from under the counter, or from a safe. Three of these six shopkeepers mentioned that they cannot display the alleged tiger parts openly.

One shopkeeper said: “This one (tiger skin) is 100 per cent real, I cannot show out. If you want, I can sell you...” She also mentioned: “Can sell in Singapore, but cannot show open, if you want I show you.”

One shopkeeper mentioned: “This one (tiger claw and teeth), now government not giving approval, can get fined \$5,000.”

## 7.5. Recognition of tigers as protected and endangered species

Thirteen shopkeepers recognised that it is difficult to find tiger parts to sell.

One shopkeeper said: "...there is a lot of animal protection, it is all controlled, that is why it is not easy... even the suppliers find it difficult to get... this species is all controlled these days. Those days it was easy, not now, because of extinction."

One shopkeeper mentioned: "They go to Lao and Cambodia and get it...People cut so many, one animal just got two teeth, ...people want tiger skin, then no more tigers."

When asked why tiger skin has to be hidden, one shopkeeper explained: "Real tigers no more already, a lot of people go and shoot them..."

## 7.6. Countries of origin of tiger parts

The investigation revealed that Thailand, India and China were reported by the shopkeepers to be the most common source of imported tiger parts.

One shopkeeper mentioned: "These are mostly from China. They have everything you want."

One shopkeeper mentioned: "These are mostly from the guys who come from India and sometimes Africa, they walk by, come in and say we have tiger claw, do you want? Then we get it from them."

## 7.7. Claimed effects of using tiger parts

The shopkeepers claimed that the tiger claws and teeth can be carried or worn, either raw or fixed in gold, to bring authority and protection.



**Tiger skin pieces with prayers are sold in amulets, believed to bring authority and protection.**

## **CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The results from this 2009-2010 investigation clearly highlight the presence of an illegal trade in alleged tiger parts in Singapore and that there is an immediate need for continued serious efforts to curb this illegal trade.

Even if the tiger parts turn out to be not authentic, by making a claim that the product is from tigers, the dealer is potentially driving up the demand for tiger parts which directly contravenes the spirit of CITES and the local legislation meant to enforce CITES.

ACRES will continue our efforts to monitor the illegal trade in tiger parts in Singapore and also in create awareness about the illegality of this trade and the threats to tigers.

The investigation has generated video evidence that can be used to build cases against these traders. Recognising that more orders could easily be made for these alleged tiger products, we urge the AVA to hand out severe sentences to deter future imports of tiger products and to tighten border controls to prevent the further illegal import of these products into Singapore.

We also urge the AVA to hand out severe sentences to anyone found selling or advertising tiger parts for sale.

## REFERENCE LIST

1. Chris R. Shepherd and Nolan Magnus, 2004. Nowhere to hide: The trade in Sumatran tiger. A TRAFFIC South-east Asia report.
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3. Douglas F. Williamson and Leigh A. Henry, July 2008. Paper Tigers? The role of the U.S Captive Tiger Population in the trade in tiger parts, TRAFFIC North America Publication.
4. Kristin Nowell, 2000. Far from a cure: The tiger trade revisited, a TRAFFIC International network report.
5. CITES CoP 15 Doc. 43.2: Proposed Revision of Resolution Conf. 12.5 on conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix I Asian big cat species: <http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/15/doc/E15-43-02.pdf>

## **APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. Do you have any animal teeth or nail to use as pendant?
2. What is this product? Which animal is it from?
3. Is it real? How do you tell it is real?
4. How much is it?
5. Where do you get the product from?
6. Is it illegal to wear it, can the product be brought out of Singapore?
7. How old is it?
8. Do you have more stock?
9. Will you be able to order more if we need other sizes?
10. Is it selling very quickly? How often do you have to replenish your stock?