



June 24, 2009

**Open Letter to Participants in the 58th Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee
From the 40 Member Organizations of the International Tiger Coalition**

Re: Response to Notification to the Parties Number 2008/059 on Tiger Breeding Operations

In 2007, the CITES Parties agreed by consensus that “*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; tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives.*” (Decision 14.69)

In 2008, the CITES Standing Committee decided to ask relevant Parties to report on implementation of Decision 14.69. To this end, the Standing Committee established a working group to assist the CITES Secretariat in developing language for a Notification to the Parties requesting reports, with specific content, from relevant Parties.

Notification number 2008/059, issued on October 8, 2008, asked relevant Parties to report on their implementation of Decision 14.69, specifically:

- a) the establishment of a national individual animal registration process incorporating a marking system;
- b) the segregation of sexes to prevent further breeding;
- c) the development of a strategic plan for the phasing-out of intensive breeding operations on a commercial scale or their conversion to operations devoted solely to the conservation of tigers; and,
- d) the development of a policy with regard to what will happen to tigers currently in intensive breeding operations.

The undersigned 40 members of the International Tiger Coalition (ITC) are concerned that no country to which this Notification applies has responded meaningfully, i.e. with the information requested by the Standing Committee.

The only Party to respond at all was China. The ITC welcomes the fact that China responded. However, Chinese authorities did not report specifically on their implementation of Decision 14.69 and did not address the four aforementioned issues specified in the Notification. Furthermore, the ITC is disappointed that other relevant Parties did not respond to the Notification in any form.

The ITC urges the Standing Committee to mandate the CITES Secretariat to take all appropriate measures to verify progress by relevant Parties to implement Decision 14.69, and to take appropriate steps if reports are not forthcoming within 90 days of the 58th Standing Committee meeting (SC58). Measures should include sending a delegation to relevant countries to assess their actions to implement the Decision and reporting to the next Standing Committee meeting, directly

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before the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The ITC also calls for donors to support such missions.

CITES Parties have endorsed the view that tiger farming for commercial purposes is a threat to the survival of wild tigers and needs to be stopped. We urge the Standing Committee, the CITES Secretariat and all relevant Parties to ensure full implementation of Decision 14.69 and full reporting on progress towards doing so as requested under the Notification. The CITES Parties were unanimous at CoP14 in their concerns for the future of wild tigers. That future requires a serious and timely response to this critical issue.

We thank you for your consideration,

INTERNATIONAL TIGER COALITION

American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine
AMUR
Animal Welfare Institute
Animals Asia Foundation
Association of Zoos & Aquariums
Big Cat Rescue
Born Free Foundation
Born Free USA
British and Irish Association of Zoos & Aquariums
Care for the Wild International
Conservation International
Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation
Education for Nature – Vietnam
Environmental Investigation Agency
FREELAND
Global Tiger Patrol
Humane Society International
Humane Society of the United States
International Fund for Animal Welfare
Phoenix Fund
ProFauna Indonesia
Save The Tiger Fund
Species Survival Network
The Fund For The Tiger
Tigris Foundation
Tour Operators for Tigers
TRAFFIC
21st Century Tiger
WildAid
WildCat Conservation Legal Aid Society
Wildlife Alliance

Wildlife Conservation Nepal
Wildlife Conservation Society
Wildlife Trust of India
Wildlife Watch Group
World Association of Zoos & Aquariums
World Society for the Protection of Animals
World Wildlife Fund
Zoological Society of London