

*Supplies Last: The Sale of Tiger and Other Endangered Species Medicines in North America.*

TRAFFIC's report was published in January 1998 and summarized in *TRAFFIC North America* (June 1998). Environment Canada officers visited the same 24 stores TRAFFIC visited in a few days in late 1997. TRAFFIC found that 58 percent of the shops (15 of 24 shops) offered to sell pharmaceuticals containing or claiming to contain CITES Appendix I target species (rhino, tiger, musk, leopard, and bear).

The difference in results may be because of the difference in methods of investigation, the investigators themselves, the number of outlets visited, and the length of the period of investigation. The officers also believe that the pharmaceuticals found were old and imported long before the inspection period. TRAFFIC North America has no access to the techniques used to age these

medicines, but has speculated that illegally imported domestic stocks of rhino and tiger medicines have been stockpiled in North America and elsewhere. These medicines have been illegal to manufacture, possess, or sell in China—once the primary manufacturing country—for about five years.

As found in TRAFFIC's earlier investigations and, in most cases, in the Environment Canada inspections, the shop proprietors indicated that they were familiar with regulations concerning the sale of products containing endangered species. TRAFFIC believes that this suggests that consumer demand, rather than retailers' ignorance of the law, keeps these endangered species medicines on shelves.

TRAFFIC continues to recommend that collaborative public outreach efforts to change consumption of traditional Chinese medicines be initiated in North America. The U.S. pilot project between World Wildlife Fund and the American College of Traditional Chinese Medicine in San Francisco (funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's "Save the Tiger Fund") is one example of such an effort. This project has begun to produce consumer awareness materials that can be used elsewhere (see box page 5). The Toronto-based cooperative effort between World Wildlife Fund-Canada, local practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine, and representatives of the Asian community is in its early stages.

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## RHINO-TIGER LABELING ACT PASSED

On 30 October 1998, President Clinton signed into law the Rhinoceros and Tiger Product Labeling Act, an amendment of the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994, which gives the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service the power to keep products claiming to contain rhino and tiger parts off store shelves. The new act 1) prohibits the import, export, and sale of any product for human consumption or application containing, or labeled to

contain, any substance derived from any species of rhino or tiger; 2) carries a penalty of up to six months in prison and fines of up to US\$12,000 (CA\$18,548; MX\$120,100) per violation; and 3) provides for the development and implementation of an educational outreach program in the United States for the conservation of rhinos and tigers.

(U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service press release, 6 November 1998)

TRAFFIC North America is part of the worldwide TRAFFIC Network, a joint program of WWF and IUCN, established to monitor trade in wild plants and animals in cooperation with the CITES Secretariat.

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