

THE HORN AND BONE DILEMMA IN TAIWAN - THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

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Centuries of ignorant, selfish and barbaric practices in many parts of the world has resulted in the severe perturbances to the precarious balance of ecology and alarming depletion in many animal species. Many international conservation groups have sprung up to promote conservationism, set standards, regulate and monitor related activities. However, while the general goal of conservation is a global consensus, the responsibilities, blames and regulations are subjects of debate, influenced often by various interest groups to varying degrees according to their powers of influence. People in developing nations, whose traditions, lifestyles and dependence on natural resources are different from those of the powerful industrial nations, have become targets for criticisms. In the past few years a certain sector, the traditional Chinese medicines practitioners and in particular those in Taiwan, have been singled out as the prime offenders because a few animal-based traditional Chinese medical drugs involved the used of body parts from animals on the endangered wildlife species in both CITES appendices I and II and because Taiwan's economy is flourishing but vulnerable. In their zeal, wildlife enthusiasts often base their accusations on hearsay, innuendoes and distorted interpretations and channel their view through international media, which thrive on sensationalism.

Like many age-old professions, Chinese medicinal practice is shrouded in traditions often incomprehensible to and unappreciable by people outside of the profession. It is doubtful that international observers who spend short stays in Taiwan could appreciate the intricacies of the practice. The present study examined some of the findings that formed the basis of certain damaging propaganda materials and offer explanations, alternative views and future prospects.

The daunting task of conservation calls for international cooperation. The emphasis is not to fix a blame for the past but to set a course for the future.

Key Words: Wildlife conservation, Rhinoceros horn, Tiger bone; Chinese medicinal practice; Explanations; Past blames; Future hopes.

INTRODUCTION

Centuries of killing and using body parts of animals for various purposes, among them me-

dicinal and ornamental, have resulted in the alarming depletion of certain species. Belated realization of threats to the balance of ecology and the regrettable and possibly irreversible extinction of these species have spawned organizations and movements aimed at wildlife conservation. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is one such organization. A list of endangered species is drawn up and revised periodically. Hunting, trading and consumption of animals on this list are prohibited. Failure to comply with acceptable practices of wildlife conservation could result in economic sanctions by the international community, as provided for by the Pelly amendment.

However, while admittedly this cause is sensible, justified, demanding and deserving of international cooperation, a few overzealous campaigners are a little too quick at levying damaging accusations at certain sectors foreign to them without taking the patience and care to understand the backgrounds surrounding their findings and observations. Many such accusations are based on hearsay, innuendoes and distorted interpretations. A case in point is the sweeping accusation or at least insinuation of Orientals as wanton and barbaric gluttons and practitioners of traditional Chinese medicines as cold-blooded and deliberate decimators of these endangered species for their rare and coveted body parts.¹⁻³

The fact is more than two thousand drugs owing their origins in various kinds of plants, animals and minerals are encompassed under the umbrella of traditional Chinese medicine. While body parts from endangered species such as the rhinocero horn, tiger bones and bear gall bladder are indeed used in some formulations, they occupy only a fraction of the vast numbers of medicines from natural sources. Indeed, herbs provide the vast majority, accounting for the fact that they are sometimes known as herbal medicines.

How guilty are the practitioners of traditional Chinese medicines of the charge that they are responsible for the poaching, killing and trading of rhino and tiger parts? Even an ordinary citizen of Taiwan is unlikely to be able to render a fair judgment since the practice, although in the process of being organized and modernized, is still shrouded deeply in tradition likely incomprehensible to and unappreciable by outsiders, let alone international observers.

The present study represents an attempt at collection and analysis of relevant data and interpretation from professionals within the practice of traditional Chinese medicines.

METHODS

Medicinal reports, sanctioned information and investigative reports concerning the statuses of rhinocero horn and tiger bone uses in Taiwan by international environmental groups were collected. First hand information, opinions, criticisms were obtained from both domestic and international conservation groups during visits and face to face discussions.

To obtain views from the other side, Chinese medicinal store operators, wholesales and retail dealers, Chinese medicinal practitioners, Officers of the Association of Chinese Medicinal Stores and Chinese Physicians and the relevant departments of our government were visited. Surveys were carried out on the Chinese medicinal stores were by our students.

The relevant information and data were then organized and analyzed.

RESULTS

Rhinoceros horn as an aphrodisiac in Chinese medicine?

As recorded in Chinese medicine books, rhino horn is regarded as having antipyretic and anticonvulsant properties. Traditionally, it has been used to treat meningitis. In recent years, rhino horn has been said to enhance sexual potency. "Time" magazine published a story in its September 20, 1993 issue in which it was mentioned that the Chinese people used rhino horn as an aphrodisiac.⁴

The truth is although certain aphrodisiacs are listed in Chinese medicinal literature, rhino horn is not among them. Exhaustive search of Chinese medicine books failed to yield any related information.⁵⁻¹² In addition, not only no reputable practitioner of traditional Chinese medicines in Taiwan is aware of such effects being attributed to rhino horn, they are enraged upon hearing such claims. Rhino horn is in fact considered in the category of "cold" drugs, or those capable of reducing body temperature. It is commonly used as an antipyretic. However, overdosing could precipitate undesirable effects among which is diarrhea.

Thus it seems that the misunderstanding that rhino horn enhances sexual potency has been perpetuated by international media, causing people around the world to believe that people in Taiwan like to eat rhino horn and is the main cause for the extinction of rhinos in the world. Such accusation has little factual basis.

The stock and consumption of rhinocero horn in Taiwan

In November 1992, the United Kingdom's Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), produced a film entitled "Made in Diewan" based on a report by TRAFFIC (Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce) and without ever bothering to come to Taiwan to corroborate findings in the report. In the film, it blamed Taiwan as a major killer of rhinos. The condemnation of "People in Taiwan stockpiling ten tons of rhino horn and are the killers of rhinos" has since stuck.

Is this justified? Our investigation revealed that the report done by the TRAFFIC team, "The Horns of a Dilemma: The Market for Rhino Horn in Taiwan" was compiled by a foreign conservationist and two domestic zoologists.¹³ The purpose of the survey was to understand the market of rhino horn in Taiwan. The researchers hoped that the use, sale, and trade of rhino horns could be placed under the control of the ROC government and the discreet and sustainable use of the species could be maintained. However, none of the researchers were familiar with Chinese medicine. In the survey, they announced that Taiwan had a stock of rhino horn estimated at between 3,863 kilograms to 9,321 kilograms, or the equivalent of ten tons.

There were two major errors in that survey:

Firstly the survey covered the period between January 20 to February 20, 1991. Twenty-seven students carried out the survey through telephone or face-to-face interviews. The interviewers only asked whether the Chinese medicine store owners sold rhino horn but did not verify it. "Yeses" or "nos" were then entered based on the answers given by the store owners. The interviewers did not double check if the dealers had the real rhino horn in their stores or just substitutes or both. This was one of the major errors in the survey.

In the Chinese medicinal community, because some Chinese drugs are precious and expensive, store owners do not routinely stock all the medicines. Instead, they help each other out. If

a customer wants a drug that a store does not have, the store owner will send for it from another store. The practice is common, the deliveries are frequent and usually quick.

Before the total ban of rhino horn in 1992, the sale of rhino horn was done in this fashion. Under this system although maybe only one shop in one district had rhino horn, the neighboring stores would say they had it if customers asked for it when in fact what they meant was they could secure it.

When the survey was done, the interviewers were not aware of this practice. Both the number of stores offering rhino horns and the estimated sale volumes were therefore unduly exaggerated.

A second error in this survey was the actual number of Chinese medicine stores in Taiwan. According to this survey, there were 13,633 Chinese medicine stores. At the same time, another study done by the Chinese Medicine Stores Association showed that there were 8,212 stores.

What accounted for the difference? The TRAFFIC researchers first checked with the Department of Health in the Taiwan Provincial Government and were told that there were 5,663 licensed shops. Later the researchers were informed by the ROC's Chinese Medicine Store Association that roughly 8,000 Chinese medicine stores were applying to be licensed. Then the researchers added these two figures up and arrived at the number of 13,663.

The real fact was that the figure of 8,000 released by the ROC's Chinese Medicine Stores Association included the 5,663 stores with the license and the others without. In fact even those 5,663 licensed stores were always operating under the constant threat of having their licenses revoked if and when their principal owners passed away.

It has been a tradition that Chinese medicine stores are family businesses being passed on from fathers to sons. However, the government in Taiwan stopped issuing practicing licenses to this traditional Chinese medicinal community from 1967 to March 1994. During this period of time, if a store owner died, his son would not be able to legally inherit his father's practicing license. The store would either be closed down or become an unlicensed store. This is why the ROC's Chinese Medicine Store Association said that 8,000 medicine stores were all in the process of petitioning to have their stores permanently licensed.

Because the researchers were not familiar with this peculiar system regulating practices in the Chinese medicine field, they miscalculated the number of Chinese medicine stores in Taiwan.

Upon reading TRAFFIC's report claiming that Taiwan had ten tons of rhino horn in stock we wrote an article to point out the mistake. This article was published in United Daily News, one of the biggest local newspapers, on Nov. 28, 1992.¹⁴ Unfortunately it aroused little interests. Later on, we discussed these overlooked facts with domestic researchers. They understood and agreed.

Taiwan imports 2,000 kilograms of tiger bone annually for the production of medicinal wine?

On December 2, 1992, Samuel LaBudde of the Earth Island Institute (EII), an environmental conservation organization based in the United States, held a press conference in Taiwan. Under the title of "Taiwan Fails the Rhinos and Is Pushing Tigers Toward Extinction" Labudde condemned Taiwan for its role in the tiger trade. He claimed that according to the Taiwan's trade magazine, one local winery imported 2,000 kilograms of tiger bones for the production of 100,000 bottles of wine each year.¹⁵

After learning of the news, our office contacted Mr. Labudde and requested further details concerning the report published in a Taiwan's trade magazine. We reminded Mr. Labudde that the ROC government banned the import of tiger bone in 1985. If a local winery or medicinal wine producer still imported tiger bone, the information should be turned over to the authorities for proper actions. Mr. Labudde promised to fax us the report but never followed up on it.

Our own research indicated that CAT NEWS Sept., 1992¹⁶ had mentioned that in the TRAF-FIC (International) Bulletin Oct-Nov 1979 issue of Taiwan Trade Trends, it was mentioned that The Taiwan Tobacco and Wine Monopoly Bureau had requested The Central Trust of China to import 2,000 kilograms of tiger bone for the production of wine.¹⁷ In this report, it also mentioned that the bones of other animals like dogs and cats were also used as substitutes.

It is regrettable that Mr. Samuel LaBudde used the figure of 15 years ago to condemn Taiwan's wildlife protection activities and chose the media to announce his findings, misleading thus the international community into thinking that such activities, the importation of tiger bones for the production of wine, are current and continuing. While this is sensational and headlines creating, it is not fair. His sources of information should have been more current and his forum more professional.

What is tiger bone wine? There are three types formulations that called for the use of the wine. Formulation A includes 14 Chinese drugs with tiger bone being the only animal-based drug. Formulation B includes 7 drugs. Of these 5 are plants, the rest are Tigris Os (tiger bone), and Amydae Carapax (turtle shell). Formulation C includes 39 or 46 drugs. The animal-based drugs are Tigris Os (tiger bone), Cervi Cornu Parvum (deer antler), Moschus (musk), and Agkistrodon. Tiger bone wine in Taiwan is made from formulation A. All three are compound formulations. Without the tiger bone, the wine is still effective. Chinese medicinal doctors use the name just to emphasize its effects. Since the name has caused such furors, the ROC government has banned the reference to tiger and rhino components in the trade names by all Chinese medicines and pharmaceutical manufactures, effective January, 1995.

The trade of rhinoceros horn is still rampant in Taiwan?

Another incident also served to cast doubts on the accuracy of the information used by wildlife conservation groups, as EIA. In June 1993, Jay Fang, Secretary-general of the Green Consumer's Foundation, A Taipei-based environmental protection group, informed our office that the EIA would send a team to Taiwan to compile a report for the use of rhino horn in Taiwan. They wished to visit our office for an interview and requested the arrangement of a tour of local Chinese medicine stores. I had high expectations of their visit because Taiwan has long been misunderstood on this issue and hoped that they would make a fair report. On July 10, 1993, EIA, Steven R. Galster, Rebecca Chan, Jay Fang, and a photographer came to our office. In a seven-hour interview, the essence of information supplied by our office was as follows:

* There were three kinds of rhino horns on Taiwan's market. These were "fire rhino horn" from Asian species, "water rhino horn" from African species, and the inexpensive powdered "rhino horn". The powdered "rhino horn", also the most common one, actually came from water buffalo horn.

* The "real rhino horn" was as expensive as gold. If a customer wanted the "real rhino horn", the store owner would grind it right in front of him. If a customer bought the bottled "rhino horn", the likelihood was it was actually buffalo horn.

* In November 1992, based on a TRAFFIC's report called "The Market for Rhino Horn in Taiwan", the EIA produced a film. In this film, EIA attacked Taiwan as the killer of rhinos. Actually, there were some major errors in the TRAPPIC's report, which made the result rather unreliable.

* In 1988, mainland China purchased, at high prices, most of rhino horns in Asian countries, including Taiwan. For this part, Jay Fang of the Green Consumers' Foundation also agreed and said that he wrote a story revealing the fact that six to ten tons of rhino horn were sold to mainland China. His report was published in China Times Express, a local newspaper, on October 1992.

* The rumor that rhino can be used as aphrodisiac was totally unfounded. Traditionally it has been used to reduce fever, treat meningitis, and stroke. Today the use of the very expensive rhino horn as an antipyretic has been totally superseded by the inexpensive and effective antipyretics in Western medicines. The consumption of rhino horn was very little in recent years.

However, EIA's film's dominant sentiments and messages turned out to be completely different. In the film, I was seen holding the rhino horn, giving the audiences the impression that I was a Chinese drug store dealer and was selling rhino horn. The teaching slides used in our classes were mistakenly used to depict the product sold in Chinese medicine stores. The film also covered the trade of rhino horn in mainland China and Hong Kong. Some parts shot on The Mainland was edited into the Taiwan section, which led the audiences to believe that the trading occurred in Taiwan. There was only shot, that of a woman selling bottled rhino horn, that was actually shot in Taiwan.

Upon seeing the film, I was so indignant I wrote a letter to the Standing Committee of CITES which was convening in Brussels, Belgium in September 6, 1993, to clarify the matters.

Later Allan Thornton, Chairman of the EIA wrote to Mr. Jay Fang and myself respectively. In the letter, he argued that it was mentioned in the commentaries in the film that the rhino horn shown in Taiwan was not for sale. I disagreed with his arrangements, feeling that the rhino horn shown in the picture was not for sale should have been clarified more emphatically. I also asked my legal counsel to protest to EIA concerning the incorrectness of the film. But to-date no responses has been received.

People in Taiwan are still killing tigers?

On October 31, 1993, The EII bought spaces in the New York Times, U.S. News and World Report, and Los Angeles Times to run a picture of a tiger being killed in Taiwan. In the advertisements, it said that Taiwan has become a giant black hole pushing endangered species toward extinction and that on this island existed the biggest market for Asian and African tigers. The Clinton government was going to impose trade sanctions against Taiwan before the deadline of November 7 so as to stop the extinction of tigers before 2000.¹⁸

The truth of the matter was this picture was taken by Ming-te Tsai (蔡明德), a photographer for China Times, on November 25, 1984. A Taiwan businessman was killing a tiger in Peihe Town, Tainan County, southern Taiwan. Photographer Tsai pointed out that he only agreed the Asia Week to publish this picture in its issue of March 8, 1987. Mr. Tsai had protested to EII that they infringed on Tsai's copyright to use his picture without permission. The EII had used this old picture taken ten years before to attack Taiwan. It was really misleading.

Restaurants in Taiwan are selling tiger penis soup?

On December 1, 1992, Mr. Samuel LaBudde of EII held a press conference in Taiwan to condemn that one local restaurant was selling tiger penis soup.¹⁵ The EII also ran an advertisement on The New York Times etc. on October 31, 1993. It was advertised that a bowl of tiger penis soup was being sold for US\$320 in Taiwan.¹⁸ A phony tiger penis picture with dramatic barbs was printed in the Time magazine on March, 28, 1994.¹⁹ In it was mentioned the tiger is on the brink of extinction because the Asians turn tiger penises into soup in the hope of boosting flagging libidos.

While it is true that many restaurants in Hong Kong, mainland China, and Taiwan have tiger penis soup on their menus more often than not the "tiger penises" are not genuine. The vast majority of these so-called "tiger penises" are actually fabricated from the penises and tendons of buffaloes or other animals. These counterfeits all have dramatic barbs cut with scissors by the creators. The wholesale price of this kind of "tiger penis" US\$8 or 15 each.

What does a real tiger penis look like? People can take a pair of binoculars to the zoo to observe a tiger penis. The long barbs on the penis are hard to see.

We have tried hard to obtain pictures of real tiger penis but without success. The slides used in our show classroom are listed as "phony tiger penises". None of the Chinese medicine store operators in Taiwan has ever seen the real tiger penis. We are that the EII EIA could find the tiger penis during their short stay in Taiwan.

I wrote a report published in the January 1, 1993 edition of Minton Medical Journal (明通醫藥), a Taiwan-based medicine magazine.²⁰ In the report, I mentioned that "is easy to distinguish a real tiger penis from a phony one. The forgeries have dramatic barbs and some are ridiculously long. EII's Mr. Samuel LaBudde and EIA's Dr. Rosalind Reeve are biologists and specialists on tigers. It is surprising that could not tell the difference between the genuine and the fake. Perhaps the combination of lure of media attention and the zeal to further their causes at all costs befuddled their professional acumen.

Similarly many Chinese dishes have wildlife names on their menus such as lion heads and phoenix claws. However, these are mostly metaphoric and not figurative.

With increasing powerful influence, international wildlife conservation groups should exercise greater care in verifying the accuracy of their sources of information.

EIA's claim that 50 percent of Taiwan's Chinese medicine stores were still selling rhinoceros horn (report on March 1994)

On February 3, 1994, Mr. Peter Knights and Ms. Rebecca Chen of the EIA accompanied by Mr. Jay Fang of the Green Consumer's Foundation paid us a visit. They claimed that with undercover method, they checked 40 Chinese medicine store in Keelung, Taichung, Tainan, and Kaohsiung and found that half of them were still selling rhino horn but they refused to provide the names of those stores. The EIA also refused to give the list to the Council of Agriculture.

Later, I double-checked the information with the chairmen of the Chinese medicine store association in those four cities. None of them believed the high rate of 50 percent. They said that even before that ROC government totally banned the use of rhino horn in Taiwan in 1992, less than 50 percent of stores had rhino horn. With the total ban the number should have been much lower. The four chairmen felt that it might be possible 10 percent of stores carried "bottled rhino horn", which was ground from water buffalo horn. They thought that the EIA people misin-

formed. On their requests, I sent fax messages to Chairman Allan Thornton, Mr. Peter Knights, and Ms. Rebecca Chen of the EIA, as well as copy to the Chairman Murray Hosking of the CITES on February 24, March 3 and 4, this year, to ask for the list of the stores selling rhino horn. I have to-date not received such list.

In reputable medical research, all conclusions must be substantiated by creditable evidence. It is surprising that The EIA has repeatedly levied its accusations on Taiwan on flimsy or no evidence. While we welcome any foreign group to come to Taiwan to carry out serious research on the practices of Chinese medicinal stores as related to the endangerment of endangered wildlife species, the least they could do is to forward their lists of visited Chinese medicinal store to the concerned government offices such as The Council of Agriculture (COA), Department of Health (DOH) or para-governmental associations such as The Association of ROC's Traditional Chinese Medicinal Stores. Such lists would at least in part corroborate their claims. We urge all foreign parties to afford this courtesy.

When the Standing Committee of CITES convened in Geneva on March 21 to 25, 1994, the EIA attacked Taiwan again. It contented that 50 percent of Chinese medicine stores in Taiwan were still selling rhino horn and an ROC diplomat stationed in South Africa was involved in the smuggling of rhino horn.²¹

An ROC diplomat stationed in South Africa was involved in the smuggling of rhinoceros horn?

On March 21, 1994, a film was shown during the convention of The Standing Committee of the CITES held in Geneva. In the film, a South African conservation policeman accused a diplomat from the ROC of abusing his diplomatic privileges to smuggle rhino horn. The film was shot by Mr. Allan Thorton of the EIA on March 15, six days before the CITES convention. With his covered, the "policeman" claimed that 95 percent of rhino horns poached was shipped to Taiwan. An ROC diplomat was involved in the smuggling.

According to Shu-hui Huang (洪淑惠), a Taiwan reporter on her overseas assignment on the CITES convention, reported, in United Evening News, March 23, 1994 that the EIA said that the smuggling mentioned by the South African policeman had been done during the previous three months.²¹

If the accusation made by the South African policeman had been true, the issue should have been headline news items on the South African newspaper's front pages. A representative from South Africa also attending the CITES convention said that since the policeman interviewed had his face covered, he professional identity could not be verified. Because of this, he was not sure about the correctness of his accusation. On the following day, The South African government denied the accusations. Director Lategan of the Endangered Species Protection Unites (ESPU) also said that no ROC's diplomat was involved in any rhino horn smuggling cases.

DISCUSSION

Two popular sayings in Chinese might be translated as "Mountains exist between professions" and "Off by the width of a hair, missed by a thousand miles". These two phrases serve to remind people that it is hard to understand the ins and outs within a profession unless one is in it and that one should be very careful when dealing with the issues with which one is not familiar.

A case in point is the harsh accusations leveled by overzealous wildlife conservationists at practitioners of traditional Chinese Medicines because of their use of body parts of certain endangered species including the rhinoceros horn, tiger parts, bear gallbladder. Chinese medicine is a centuries-old tradition. People outside of this profession are not likely to appreciate its complexity and intricacies, for instance the exotic origins and strange names of some drugs. As a rule, international observers and "fact-finders" only spend short stays in Taiwan. The correctness of the information collected and the credibility of their interpretation are in doubt, not to mention that many already had preconceived notions before they came to Taiwan and are often consequently biased in their manipulations of their findings. With international concern over ecological imbalance and decimation of certain species, the international community is quick to jump to conclusions. Regrettably the image of Taiwan has really suffered. The local Chinese Medicinal community feels particularly regrettable.

In Chinese medicine, the name of a drug is often general and descriptive. The preparation itself may include several ingredients with diversified origins. Thirteen substances listed in Chinese medicine books come from rare or endangered species. Because of these names, the Chinese medicinal field has become a target for criticism. This is really unfortunate. It is said the international wildlife conservation organizations are going to condemn Chinese medicine again for its use of pangolin (*Manidis squama*) in medicine. They pointed out that the use of its hard scales in Chinese medicine has contributed to the extinction of the species.

This again is a misunderstanding. Before 1950, people in Taiwan could easily find Formosan pangolins in the mountains. During the 1950s to 1970s, businessmen poached a lot of them to make bags and belts out of their leather. At that time more than 10,000 pangolins were killed each month. Only a small part of the hard scales was sent to Chinese medicine store for medicine, and the rest were all thrown away as trash. At the same time rapid urbanization encroached on the habitat of pangolins. The increased use of pesticides results in the decimation of the ant population, the major source of food for the pangolins, contributing thus to the depletion of the pangolin population.

We absolutely agree that wildlife, especially those rare and endangered species, needs to be protected. To arrive at an acceptable balance between the protection of endangered species and traditional Chinese medicine requiring efforts by all parties concerned. Research to clarify the issues and problems and desirable solutions are in order. Therapeutically acceptable substitutes for endangered animals parts are desirable.

Actually, the Chinese people's ways of living have been deeply influenced by Buddhism. Under this philosophy of mercy, people are encouraged to respect the lives of animals. We absolutely agree with the concepts promoted by wildlife conservation groups. However, in the past few years, Taiwan's Chinese medicine circles have been singled out as the target and scapegoat as if the damage resulting from centuries of ignorant and barbaric practices by many people in many nations has been single-handedly created by a single sector. In their haste and zeal, the EII and EIA have lashed out at The Chinese medicinal practitioners.

It is the responsibility for all the people in the world to protect endangered species. This concept has become a global consensus. It is true that many of the past practices were ignorant and barbaric. That however is not confined to Asian people, many species in Europe, North America and Africa also face extinction if no measures are taken to reverse the trends. It is true that some of the Chinese drugs come from endangered species. However, like many other practices, it is evolving. Future research is aimed at replacing these drugs with equivalent substitutes. Medical

practice is one of compassion, its practitioners should not have to operate under the shadow of dubious practices of the past. The task facing conservation enthusiasts is not to fix a blame for the past but set a course for the future.

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台灣犀牛角虎骨事件 被國際保育團體扭曲真相之探研

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保育是世界的潮流，在地球已逐漸形成一個地球村的情況下，保育是國際非常重視的重要工作。中藥有二千多種，廣泛地包括各種天然的動物植物礦物，犀角、虎骨、熊膽都是見諸於處方的中藥，這幾年在國際保育上，台灣犀牛角虎骨問題引起軒然大波，一向默默無聞純樸憨厚的中藥商，頓時成了國內外媒體的焦點。一個治病救人的行業，突然變成禍國殃民的大罪人，爲了犀牛角虎骨問題，美國祭出培利修正案來打擊台灣。

中國古代有兩句諺語：「隔行如隔山」、「失之毫厘，差之千里」，來警惕做事做學問必需專業專注，謹慎小心，不可草率。保育是國際合作的工作，東西文化差異很大，許多觀念、認知、資料的引述，有沒有犯錯？在國際保育界一味追殺攻伐中，卻未見認真的檢討。就我們這幾年來國內外保育專家時時會談中，我們發現台灣被玩得太冤枉了。

保育野生動物是偉大的情操，神聖令人敬佩的工作，但保育人士絕對沒有「說謊，誣陷別人」的特權，我們希望國際保育團體應該省思某些激進派如 EIA, EII 這只爲達到攻擊傷害的目的，一再扭曲真相，睜著眼睛說瞎話的行爲對不對？這種沒有信譽的保育團體信口雌黃，不加求證，不思分辨？這種彎曲作法是否應該在太陽光下公開來檢討？

許多被國際保育團體及媒體扭曲的誤寫真相，是今天台灣被送上刑場的主因，諸如 TRAFFIC 台灣犀牛角調查中藥店 10 噸的存量，中醫用犀牛角來壯陽，台灣人大量吃犀角粉、虎骨，台灣是犀牛老虎的終結者，台灣酒廠 1992 年進口 2 噸虎骨的證據，1993 年 EIA 錄影帶拍到台灣賣犀角的證據，1993 年 EII 在英美刊登廣告台灣殺虎的證據，把台灣十年前殺虎的相片拿到國際媒體攻擊台灣，荒謬的虎鞭湯，1994 年 EIA 密探台灣中藥店賣犀角的證據，EIA 指控我駐斐外交人員涉入犀牛角走私等等，許多扭曲的指控，對台灣的國際形象造成無可挽回的巨大傷害。

對於這些被扭曲的攻擊證據，有需加以深入探討，本文拿出具體證據、反駁、公諸於世。

關鍵詞：保育、犀牛角、虎骨、扭曲、誤導。