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**Thai Customs Department Welcomed the Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP,**

**Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the UK**

**On 12 February 2018 at 14.30 hrs., Mr. Kulit Sombatsiri, Director-General of Thai Customs and Thai Customs Executives welcomed the Right Honourable Boris Johnson MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom and his delegation to discuss the suppression of illegal wildlife trade, flowing the actions under the London Declaration endorsed by many countries to , act as deterrents, eradicate the market for illegal wildlife products, strengthen law enforcement, as well as ensure effective legal frameworks, at the Thai Customs Department, Bangkok, Thailand.**

“The Thai Customs Department focuses and maintains a strict control policy over prohibited and restricted goods especially specimens listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). In addition, close cooperation with various agencies both at international and national levels is enhanced to exchange information on the illegal wildlife trade. At the international level, Thai Customs collaborates with the World Customs Organisation (WCO), INTERPOL, UNODC, UNEP, WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and Pacific (RILO A/P), WCO Regional Office for Capacity Building for Asia and Pacific (ROCB A/P) and foreign Customs Attaché. At the national level, we work closely with the Department of National Parks, the Wildlife and Plant Conservation and the Fishery Department. In handling with live specimens under CITES, the Department of National Parks, the Wildlife and Plant Conservation ,the Fishery Department and the Department of Agriculture are the key responsible agencies while the Department of National Parks, the Wildlife and Plant Conservation and the Thai Customs Department are dealt with dead specimens and carcasses.” said Mr. Kulit Sombatsiri, Director-General of Customs.

The wildlife trafficking in Thailand is undertaken by various syndicates, both in Thailand and foreign countries, using Thailand as a transit route to facilitate and allocate illicit CITES specimens to destination countries. Those syndicates often use a courier from the ASEAN countries to smuggle those specimens to the destination countries. In case of consignments, false declaration is the most common ways to smuggle CITES specimens. The illicit items are declared as local products such as fish maws, nuts, stones or edible items which are reasonable to export. The trends of wildlife trafficking includes various smuggling patterns: travelling a direct route from departure countries to destination countries; departing from nearby cities instead of the

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source cities; traveling indirect route/transit, traveling to neighboring countries and then to Thailand; and using Thailand as a transit country to the destination countries. In the transit country, the couriers often change transportation or smuggling route to avoid detection.

According to the seizure report of Thai Customs, the source, transit and destination countries are as follows:

**Source Countries**: Ethiopia, Cote d’Ivorie, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Benin, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Mozambique, Angola, Zambia, Cameroon, Ghana, Niger, Togo and Burkina Faso;

**Transit Countries**: United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Turkey, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand

**Destination Countries**: Viet Nam, Cambodia, LAO PDR, Thailand and China.

**Seizure Statistics on CITES Specimens: Thai Customs Department**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Specimens | Fiscal Year 2017\* | | Fiscal Year 2018\* | |
|  | **No. of Cases** | **Quantity** | **No. of Cases** | **Quantity** |
| Ivory Tusks | 6 | 510 pieces | 2 | 77 pieces |
| Rhinoceros Horns | 4 | 49 pieces | 2 | 22 pieces |
| Turtles/Tortoises (Live/Dead/Shells) | 4 | 236 turtles/tortoises | 1 | 307 turtles/tortoises |
| Pangolins (Live/Dead/Scales) | 5 | 136 Pangolins  4,416 kgs. | 1 | 15 kgs. |
| Others (Otters, Birds, etc.) | 21 | 13,766 items | 7 | 87 items |
| Total | 40 |  | 12 |  |

\*Fiscal year of Thailand runs from 1 October to 30 September.