

TRAFFIC Recommendations on the Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices at the 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Proposal # Proponent	Species covered by the proposal	Proposal	RECOMMENDATION
# 32 China and USA	<p><i>Batagur borneoensis</i>, <i>B. trivittata</i>, <i>Cuora aurocapitata</i>, <i>C. flavomarginata</i>, <i>C. galbinifrons</i>, <i>C. mccordi</i>, <i>C. mouhotii</i>, <i>C. pani</i>, <i>C. trifasciata</i>, <i>C. yunnanensis</i>, <i>C. zhoui</i>, <i>Cyclemys</i> spp., <i>Geoemyda</i> <i>japonica</i>, <i>G. spengleri</i>, <i>Hardella</i> <i>thurjii</i>, <i>Heosemys annandalii</i>, <i>H. depressa</i>, <i>Mauremys</i> <i>annamensis</i>, <i>M. japonica</i>, <i>M. nigricans</i>, <i>Melanochelys trijuga</i>, <i>Morenia</i> <i>petersi</i>, <i>Orlitia borneensis</i>, <i>Sacalia</i> <i>bealei</i>, <i>S. quadriocellata</i> and <i>Vijayachelys</i> <i>silvatica</i></p> <p>Freshwater box turtles</p>	<p>Inclusion of <i>Cyclemys</i> spp., <i>Geoemyda</i> <i>japonica</i>, <i>G. spengleri</i>, <i>Hardella thurjii</i>, <i>Mauremys japonica</i>, <i>M. nigricans</i>, <i>Melanochelys trijuga</i>, <i>Morenia petersi</i>, <i>Sacalia</i> <i>bealei</i>, <i>S. quadriocellata</i> and <i>Vijayachelys</i> <i>silvatica</i> in Appendix II.</p>	<p>The proposal would have the effect of listing essentially all valid Asian species of Geoemydidae in CITES except for two farmed species (<i>Mauremys reevesii</i> and <i>M. sinensis</i>) The proponents appear to take a family-level approach in making a case for this proposal, rather than a species-by-species approach. However, the criteria for listing species in the Appendices are designed to be applied to individual species and there are no criteria to judge a whole family or sub-set of a family of species. The following recommendations are therefore made after examining the species in this proposal individually.</p> <p><i>Cyclemys</i> spp.: The <i>Cyclemys</i> complex is a poorly known group, with low levels of reported trade, likely due to their not being CITES listed. <i>Cyclemys dentata</i> is very heavily traded from South-East Asia to supply demand for meat in China. Many species within this group are range-restricted. Species identification is a major obstacle for enforcement agencies regulating the trade. CITES-listed species of other genera, such as <i>Notochelys platynota</i> and <i>Heosemys spinosa</i> are known to be illegally exported from South-East Asia to China, falsely declared as <i>Cyclemys</i> spp to avoid CITES restrictions. ACCEPT</p> <p>Ryukyu Black-breasted Leaf Turtle <i>Geoemyda japonica</i>: A range-restricted species threatened largely by habitat loss and fragmentation, and to a lesser extent, by illegal collection to meet international demand for the pet trade. ACCEPT</p> <p>Black-breasted Hill Turtle <i>Geoemyda spengleri</i>: Collection of this species both for food and for the pet trade appears to have caused a significant decline in some populations. ACCEPT</p> <p>Crowned River Turtle <i>Hardella thurjii</i>: This species occurs widely in the Indian sub-continent. It is common or fairly common in Bangladesh but populations appear to have declined in India, probably because of the long-standing heavy exploitation for food). International demand exists, including consumption in mainland China, trade in dried meat between India and Bangladesh, and medicinal use in Taiwan. Hatchlings have been exported from Bangladesh for the pet trade. ACCEPT</p> <p>Japanese Pond Turtle <i>Mauremys japonica</i>: Endemic to Japan, this species is threatened by land use changes and competition with introduced species. Some populations are known to be in decline or depleted. Small numbers of captive-bred specimens have appeared in the international pet trade but there is no evidence this trade is significant. REJECT</p> <p>Red-necked Pond Turtle <i>Mauremys nigricans</i>: In great demand for the international pet trade, wild populations appear to have crashed in recent decades, and biologists in southern China have not located wild animals for several years. ACCEPT</p> <p>Indian Black Turtle <i>Melanochelys trijuga</i>: The species is widespread in South and South-East Asia, though some populations appear to be threatened by trade and habitat degradation. It is traded internationally as live animals and plastrons, mainly to meet demand in China There is also evidence of trade between India and Bangladesh in dried meat. . . ACCEPT</p>

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			<p>Indian Eyed Turtle <i>Morenia petersi</i>: This species has a restricted range in northeast India, Bangladesh and probably Nepal. It is heavily exploited to meet international demand for food in south China, and as a result populations have declined. ACCEPT</p> <p>Beal's Eyed Turtle <i>Sacalia bealei</i>: Assessed by IUCN as Critically Endangered, this species is reportedly uncommon and declining in its restricted range. The species was formerly common in trade, but is now rarely seen. ACCEPT</p> <p>Four-eyed Turtle <i>Sacalia quadriocellata</i>: Illegal trade is a threat to this species in its restricted range within China, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Trade from Lao PDR and Viet Nam is largely to supply international demand. ACCEPT</p> <p>Cochin Forest Cane Turtle <i>Vijayachelys silvatica</i>: Generally rare and infrequently encountered, although highly cryptic and seasonal in appearance. Local indigenous communities consider the species not uncommon and not declining. While a few specimens have appeared in the European pet trade since the late 20th century, there is no evidence this trade is significant. REJECT</p> <p>A zero quota on wild specimens for commercial purposes for <i>Batagur borneoensis</i>, <i>B. trivittata</i>, <i>Cuora aurocapitata</i>, <i>C. flavomarginata</i>, <i>C. galbinifrons</i>, <i>C. mccordi</i>, <i>C. mouhotii</i>, <i>C. pani</i>, <i>C. trifasciata</i>, <i>C. yunnanensis</i>, <i>C. zhoui</i>, <i>Heosemys annandalii</i>, <i>H. depressa</i>, <i>Mauremys annamensis</i>, and <i>Orlitia borneensis</i></p> <p>A zero quota for wild-caught specimens is proposed for 15 geoemydid species currently listed in Appendix II. Almost all are categorized by IUCN as Critically Endangered. Most have restricted ranges in China and South-East Asia, some extremely so. They are widely used for food; some, particularly the rare or attractively marked <i>Cuora</i>, are also subject to intense demand for the pet trade. Legal trade reported to CITES has been mainly at low to moderate levels.</p> <p>Given all are either Critically Endangered or Endangered, and the majority are highly threatened by over-exploitation, proposals to include most of these species in Appendix I would have been far more effective and practical given many of the species are found in range States with low levels of wildlife law enforcement that are known to be experiencing high levels of laundering of wild-caught specimens through captive-breeding facilities (but with little capacity to regulate captive-breeding production, monitor wild populations and effectively manage quotas). It is not clear whether the zero quota is intended to cover ranched specimens or if a zero quota on these species could be effectively monitored or enforceable.</p> <p>REJECT</p>