

Deletion of Thylacine *Thylacinus cynocephalus* from Appendix I

Proponent: Australia

Summary: The Thylacine *Thylacinus cynocephalus*, the sole modern representative of the family Thylacinidae, was the largest recent carnivorous marsupial, doglike in appearance. In modern times the species has only been recorded on the island of Tasmania, Australia. Prehistoric records indicate it once occurred widely in mainland Australia and on New Guinea, but died out here probably around 2000 years ago, possibly as a result of introduction of dogs (dingoes) by Aboriginal people. On Tasmania the Thylacine was widespread until the late 19th century although probably never very abundant. By the start of the 20th century the population had collapsed, almost certainly largely as a result of persecution under a bounty system (it was regarded as a threat to sheep), although disease and competition from domestic or feral dogs may also have played a part. The last recorded specimen was captured alive in 1933 and died in Hobart Zoo, Tasmania in 1936. It has been classified as Extinct by IUCN since 1982.

The Thylacine was included in CITES Appendix I in 1975, when the Convention first entered into force.

In the highly unlikely event of the species being rediscovered, it would be covered by Australian legislation that prohibits the export of native mammal species for commercial purposes and requires a permit for export for non-commercial purposes.

Analysis: *Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP15)* notes in Annex 4 (Precautionary measures) that no species listed in Appendix I shall be removed from the Appendices unless it has been first transferred to Appendix II, with monitoring of any impact of trade on the species for at least two intervals between meetings of the Conference of the Parties (para. A. 1). It also notes: 'Species that are regarded as possibly extinct should not be deleted from Appendix I if they may be affected by trade in the event of their rediscovery; these species should be annotated in the Appendices as 'possibly extinct' (para. D).

It is not evident that either of these two apply in this case. Para. A 1 clearly applies to extant species as there can be no impact of trade on an extinct species, With regard to para. D, the species is regarded as extinct rather than possibly extinct. In the highly unlikely event of its rediscovery, commercial export would be prohibited by Australian legislation.

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
Australia	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Range</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> </p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>IUCN Global Category</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> </p> <p style="text-align: center;">Extinct</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Classified as Extinct since 1982 (McKnight, 2008; Thornback and Jenkins, 1982).</i></p>

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
Biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I	
<p>A) Small wild population (i) Population or habitat decline; (ii) small sub-populations; (iii) concentrated geographically during one or more life-history phases; (iv) large population fluctuations; (v) high vulnerability</p>	
<p>Extinct.</p> <p>The species is considered to be extinct. Since 1937 there have been many systematic searches for the Thylacine in areas where it was last seen alive and in remote, seldom visited areas where it was most likely to persist. No authentic evidence of its survival has ever been produced.</p>	
Trade criteria for inclusion in Appendix I	
<u>The species is or may be affected by trade</u>	
	<p><i>Very limited "trade"/ movement of specimens, bodies, hair and bones for scientific or "Circus or travelling exhibition" purposes has been reported in the CITES trade database.</i></p>
Precautionary Measures	
<p>The Australian Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999) regulates trade in CITES listed and Australian native wildlife and their products. Export of live Australian native mammals is strictly prohibited for commercial purposes but may be allowed for specific non-commercial purposes (e.g. for research, education or exhibition). As an Australian native mammal an Australian native export permit would be required for the export of <i>Thylacinus cynocephalus</i> even if it were removed from the CITES Appendices.</p> <p>If the species was rediscovered, any take from the wild would be strictly regulated by relevant Australian domestic environmental legislation.</p>	
Other information	
<u>Threats</u>	
<p>The main threatening process that led to its extinction in Tasmania was widespread and unrelenting hunting and trapping for bounties after white settlement. Bounties were offered in retribution for real but often exaggerated predation of livestock. In 1910 a distemper-like epidemic that affected large dasyurids (i.e. <i>Dasyurus</i>, <i>Sarcophilus</i>) was reported in Tasmania. Dasyurid populations recovered, but this additional pressure may have been sufficient to destroy whatever Thylacines</p>	

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
remained at the time.	

References:

- McKnight, M. (2008). *Thylacinus cynocephalus* In: IUCN 2012. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2012.2. <www.iucnredlist.org>. Downloaded on 22 October 2012
- Thornback, J and Jenkins. M. (1982). *The IUCN Mammal Red Data Book part 1*. IUCN, Cambridge, UK and Gland, Switzerland.