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A CIRCULAR DECREE OF THE STATE COUNCIL CONCERNING STRICT PROTECTION OF PRECIOUS AND RARE WILD ANIMALS

[Note]=(Promulgated on April 13, 1983)

Full Text

Ours is a country which has the largest varieties of wild animals in the world, accounting for over 10% of the world's total number of varieties of wild animals. Among these wild animals are giant panda, golden monkey, Taiwan monkey, takin, *Cervus albirostris*, *Muntiacus crinifrons*, Chinese river dolphin (*Lipotes vexillifer*), Chinese alligator, *Acipenser sinensis*, Chinese paddlefish, *Crossoptilon manchuricum*, jacana, and black-necked crane, and others --- a total of more than 100 species of precious and rare wild animals, well known to the world and found exclusively in our country. Besides those mentioned above, there are some wild animals, such as red-crowned crane, white crane, red ibis, *Ciconia nigra*, swan, yellow-ventraled horned jacana, green-tailed jacana, white-crowned long-tailed pheasant, gibbon, black-leaf monkey, tufted deer, snow leopard, and wild camel, which are species of precious and rare wild animals on the brink of extinction. Wild animals are valuable natural resources of our country, but for a long time, owing to various reasons, these natural resources have been faced with the danger of being exhausted. The protection and rational utilization of these natural resources are of great significance in maintaining ecological balance, carrying on scientific research, developing national economy, and promoting the development of culture, education, medicine, and public health. In the past few years, cases of hunting precious and rare wild animals, seriously destroying the habitats of these wild animals, and the illegal acts of exporting these animals and products made from them, have been frequently reported in various places.

This circular decree is hereby issued in order to check resolutely the aforesaid illegal acts, and strengthen the protection of and the administration concerning the precious and rare wild animals:

(1) The protection of precious and rare wild animals constitutes an important aspect in promoting socialist spiritual civilization and socialist material civilization, and is also a bounden duty of every citizen. The people's government at various levels should attach great importance to this task, strengthen their leadership, and give administrative orders to the departments concerned to adopt effective measures to carry out this task. It is imperative to step up publicity and educational work concerning the protection of precious and rare wild animals so as to form powerful public opinion in support of this task. The significance of this task should be made known to everybody, to every household, so that a new social mode will gradually form under which the protection of precious and rare wild animals is seen as a virtue and is concerned by the whole society. In order to do a good job in this respect, it is necessary to launch a publicity campaign for a period of time; while we do this, we should integrate our publicity campaign with another activity --- "a weekly publicity campaign for the protection of birds" ---and take the local specific conditions into consideration,

(2) Indiscriminate catching and wanton hunting of precious and rare wild animals must be checked resolutely. The provisions concerning the protection of precious and rare wild animals, promulgated by the State and by the provinces, the municipalities directly under the Central Government or the

autonomous regions, must be executed strictly. Those who have violated these provisions and are engaged in hunting precious and rare wild animals, in buying, selling, or smuggling out of the country these animals and products made from them illegally, must be thoroughly investigated and penalized according to law. Typical cases shall be dealt with promptly and severely, and be published in newspapers for the purpose of educating all cadres and the broad masses. At the same time, units and individuals that have done a good job in protecting precious and rare wild animals shall be commended and rewarded.

(3) The departments concerned in various places must further strengthen the control over the hunting occupation and over hunting rifles and hunting gear. Without the approval of the competent authorities under the State Council, no units are permitted to manufacture and sell hunting rifles and air guns. The provisions promulgated by the State concerning the prohibition of hunting in certain areas and hunting in certain seasons, and of the use of a particular kind of hunting gear and hunting method, must be strictly executed; those who have violated these provisions shall be penalized according to law.

(4) The exportation of precious and rare wild animals and products made from them is forbidden. In cases where such exports are necessary, the cases must be handled by strictly going through the procedures for examination and approval in accordance with the provisions promulgated by the State, and the said cases shall be examined and approved by the Office of the People's Republic of China for the Administration of the Import and Export of Species on the Brink of Extinction, which shall be responsible for issuing the export certificate.

(5) Scientific research on precious and rare wild animals shall be strengthened. Research work shall be conducted in a planned way into the resources survey and the artificial breeding and raising methods of such animals. In case that wild animals, which should be protected in accordance with the provisions promulgated by the State, have to be caught for the purpose of carrying on experiments in the domestication of wild animals, it is necessary to go through the prescribed procedures for examination and approval.

(6) Attention should be paid to the protection of the environment for the survival of precious and rare wild animals. The chief habitats and areas of breeding for precious and rare wild animals shall, in accordance with the provisions promulgated by the State, be designated as nature reserves or sanctuaries, the administration of which should be strengthened and the construction speeded up. With respect to the chief breeding places for those wild animals that are now on the brink of extinction, all production activities that might adversely affect the breeding and subsistence of the aforesaid animals shall be banned.

The circular decree, as defined above, is hereby made known to all citizens, who have the obligations to carry it out conscientiously.