

## Inclusion of Black Marsh Turtle *Siebenrockiella crassicollis* in Appendix II. Proponent: China and United States of America.

**Summary:** The Black Marsh Turtle, *Siebenrockiella crassicollis* is a small to medium-sized (carapace length about 17 cm) freshwater turtle found in Indonesia, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and possibly Lao PDR. It lays three or four clutches of one or two eggs annually. In common with other turtle species, this species takes a long time to reach maturity, has high juvenile mortality and long adult survivorship. It is classified by IUCN as Vulnerable. In most countries for which there is any information, *S. crassicollis* is considered threatened due to exploitation for domestic and international trade, although in Thailand the species is regarded as stable or suffering only modest decline. Most international trade appears to be for food markets. Official records report 135 000 animals exported from Malaysia in the first ten months of 1999. The proponents seek inclusion of *Siebenrockiella crassicollis* in Appendix II in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24, Annex 2a criteria A and Bi) on the grounds that if international trade is not strictly regulated, the species will meet the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I in the next five years and that harvesting of specimens from the wild for international trade will exceed, over an extended period, the level that can be continued in perpetuity.

**Analysis** Following Resolution Conf. 9.24, the available evidence suggests that the Black Marsh Turtle meets the criteria for inclusion in Appendix II on the basis that international trade is known, inferred or projected to be unsustainable. Populations may be depleted and harvest, much of which appears to be for international trade, is unlikely to be sustainable. Available trade information, which is almost certainly incomplete, indicates that such trade is substantial.

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
<b><u>Taxonomy</u></b>	
Synonyms: <i>Emys crassicollis</i> . <i>Siebenrockiella</i> is a replacement name for <i>Bellia</i> .	
<b><u>Range</u></b>	
Indonesia (Sumatra, Java and Borneo), Cambodia, Peninsular Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam.	<i>Stuart and Timmins (2000) list S. crassicollis as an unconfirmed but suspected species in Lao PDR.</i>
<b><u>IUCN Global Category</u></b>	
VU A1 cd+2cd	

### Biological and trade criteria for inclusion in Appendix II

#### **A) Trade regulation needed to prevent future inclusion in Appendix I**

Where there is available information, the species is considered endangered due to exploitation for domestic and international trade within its range States, with the exception of Thailand where it is not uncommon and is stable or in modest decline.

The species is considered 'endangered' in Cambodia and Viet Nam, mainly due to direct exploitation, and 'vulnerable' in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand due to both exploitation and habitat loss (Rhodin, 2002). It is reportedly very rare in Shan State, Myanmar (CITES Management Authority of Myanmar, 2002).

#### **B) Harvesting for international trade has, or may have, detrimental impact on population (i) exceeds sustainable yield; (ii) reduces population to potentially threatened level**

The species may lay three or four clutches of one or two eggs per nesting season.

Current levels of harvest are thought to be unsustainable, compromising the viability of surviving populations.

Records from the Directorate General of Fisheries of Indonesia show that exports of freshwater turtles and tortoises amounted to 423 100 animals weighing 670 653 kg in 1997, and 396 710 animals weighing 828 032 kg in 1998, of which it is thought that *S. crassicollis* comprised the greatest volume.

Like other freshwater turtles, this species takes a long time to reach maturity, has high juvenile mortality, and long adult survivorship (TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, 2002). Given the wide geographic distribution and extensive area of actual and potentially suitable habitat, it is not possible to make an assessment of the impact of international trade on natural populations. However, annual removal of a large number of mainly adult animals from the wild is unlikely to be sustainable for a species with modest annual reproductive output. (TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, 2002).

Over 50 000 wild-caught specimens were reported

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
<p><i>S. crassicolis</i> is exported in large numbers from Sumatra, Indonesia, with 400 specimens found in a single shipment in 1999.</p> <p>Reports from Malaysia's Department of Wildlife and National Parks indicate that 135 121 wild-caught specimens of <i>S. crassicolis</i> were exported from Peninsula Malaysia between January and October 1999.</p> <p>It is likely that there is illegal international trade in this species from most range States.</p>	<p>exported from Kuala Lumpur alone during 2000 (Rhodin, 2002). Turtles exported from Malaysia are primarily shipped to China, Hong Kong SAR and Taiwan POC.</p> <p>China issued permits for the import of up to 284 370 individuals of live <i>S. crassicolis</i> during 2000, the largest number for any turtle species (Endangered Species Import &amp; Export Management Office, China, 2002). The actual number of turtles imported under these permits will probably have been less as not all permits are fully used (TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, 2002).</p> <p>Chen <i>et al.</i> (2000) describes <i>S. crassicolis</i> as abundant in the traditional Chinese medicine markets of Taiwan POC. A shipment of 7 544 turtles confiscated in Hong Kong SAR on 11 Dec. 2001 contained 2 974 <i>S. crassicolis</i>, which was the most numerous species in the shipment.</p> <p>In North Sumatra and Riau, Indonesia, during September 1999 prices ranged from Rupiah 5 000 to 10 000 per kg, (USD 0.56 to 1.12 per kg) (Shepherd, 2000), being either the lowest or second-lowest price per kg of the various turtle species traded.</p>

## Other information

### Threats

Capture for local and international trade is the main threat to the species throughout its range. Other threats include habitat destruction and accidental catch by fishermen.

### Conservation, management and legislation

Although it appears that wild animals cannot be hunted with traps, sold, commercialised or transported in Cambodia, there is legal export of turtles, restricted by an annual quota and by the size of individual turtles.

In Indonesia, the species is not protected under national legislation. In Malaysia, the situation is unclear and legislation varies in different parts of the country.

Myanmar law prohibits commercial exploitation of natural resources, including tortoises and freshwater turtles. All native turtles are protected under the Protection of Wildlife, Wild Plants and Conservation Law, 1994. Permits are not issued for their collection and penalties are awarded to those engaged in turtle trading.

Taking, keeping or killing a wild animal is prohibited in Singapore. Import, export and movement of all types of animals is prohibited except under licence.

In Thailand, *S. crassicolis* is specifically protected from exploitation under the Wild Animal Reservations Act B.E. 2535 (WARPA).

In Viet Nam, the export of all wild animals including native turtle species is prohibited.

The species undoubtedly occurs in a number of protected areas. No specific population monitoring for this species has been identified. A Turtle Conservation and Ecology project was started in Viet Nam in 1998, which receives and translocates turtles confiscated from

*Legislation in Cambodia is unclear.*

*Legislation to protect chelonians in Myanmar is not effectively enforced (CITES Management Authority of Myanmar, 2002).*

*For information on recent import restrictions to China, see Conservation, Management And Legislation section of the analysis of CoP 12 Prop. 20, to include Platysternon megacephalum in Appendix II.*

Supporting Statement (SS)	Additional information
<p>the wildlife trade.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Similar species</u></b></p> <p><i>Siebenrockiella crassicollis</i> resembles juvenile <i>Orlitia borneensis</i> (TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, 2002). <i>Orlitia borneensis</i> has been proposed for inclusion in Appendix II (CoP 12 Prop. 27).</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Captive Breeding</u></b></p> <p><i>Shi et al. (2002) note reports that Siebenrockiella crassicollis is captive-bred in China. However, van Dijk (2002) observes that the species has received minimal attention from both commercial operations and hobbyists, due to its low trade value and relatively unattractive appearance. He observed fewer than ten adults and no juveniles during an extensive visit to a large turtle farm in Tunchan, Hainan, in October 2001.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Other comments</u></b></p> <p>The Republic of Indonesia strongly supports this proposal.</p>

**Reviewers:** N.T. Kalyar, TRAFFIC East Asia, TRAFFIC North America, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia – Indochina.

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