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Non-detriment finding for ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*)

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Competing interests: The authors declare no competing interests in relation to this non-detriment finding (NDF).

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Scientific name: *Lemur catta* Linnaeus, 1758

Common names: Ring-tailed lemur

Norwegian name: Ringhalelemur

Type of permit: CITES Appendix I; Norwegian CITES Regulation Annex 1, list A

Country of export: Norway (NO)

Country of import: Denmark (DK)

Purpose and source: The proposal concerns the export (purpose-of-transaction code Z – Zoo) of four live ring-tailed lemurs from Norway (KRISTIANSAND DYREPARK AS) to Denmark (Knuthenborg Safaripark). All four individuals are males and are bred in captivity (source code C). Two of the males are born in 2023, and the other two in 2024. The fathers of the four animals are unknown (undetermined, indeterminate) as all ring-tailed lemurs are kept together as a group (conspiracy), but all the potential fathers are born in captivity.

For Appendix I species (Norwegian Cites Regulation Annex 1, list A) it is required to establish that export will not be detrimental to the survival of that species, in compliance with CITES Article III. In the Norwegian CITES Regulation (Lovdata 2018), the criteria for export from Norway is described in Chapter 2, Section 5.

VKM has adopted the definition of detriment, cf. Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) suggested by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Scientific Authority:

1. Harvest that is not sustainable.
2. Harvest that harms the status of the species in the wild.
3. Removal from the wild that results in habitat loss or destruction, or that interferes with recovery efforts for a species.

Conclusion

VKM concludes that the export of four live individuals of ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*) from Norway to Denmark will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

The conclusion is based on the following:

- The four animals and their parents are all born in captivity and their transfer from a zoo in Norway to a zoo in Denmark will have no impact on the species in the wild.

1. Biological information

Distribution

Lemur catta is endemic to Madagascar. The species inhabits forested areas on the southern part of the island (LaFleur & Gould, 2020). Captive keeping of ring-tailed lemurs is common on Madagascar (Reuter et al., 2019). The species is also the most common primate in captivity throughout the world (LaFleur & Gould, 2020 and references therein).

Life history

Ring-tailed lemurs are polyandric and females may mate with several males during their annual oestrus (Mittermeier et al., 2010). The generation length is 12 years (LaFleur & Gould, 2020).

Role in the ecosystem

The species are herbivores foraging on fruits, leaves and flowers (and other plant parts) from a wide variety of plants (Mittermeier et al., 2010). The species is ecologically flexible compared to most other lemurs (LaFleur & Gould, 2020).

2. Population trend

The population trend is decreasing, with the eight remaining known populations with more than 100 individuals being restricted to isolated forest fragments (LaFleur & Gould, 2020).

3. Conservation status

The IUCN Red List of Threatened species (LaFleur & Gould, 2020): Endangered (EN) under criteria A4cd (assessed in 2018).

4. Threats

The main threat is habitat loss due to forest clearing and drought (LaFleur & Gould, 2020). Locally, hunting for meat and capture of live animals for pet keeping are factors contributing to population decline (LaFleur & Gould, 2020, Reuter et al., 2019).

5. Conservation and management measures:

International legislation

Lemur catta has been listed on CITES Appendix I since 1977 and under the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations Annex A since 2023 (UNEP, 2024).

Conservation measures

Of the eight remaining populations, two are found within National Parks and five are found within other protected areas (LaFleur & Gould, 2020).

6. Trade/use

Legal

International trade of captive bred *Lemur catta* recorded in the CITES Trade Database (trade.cites.org) for the period 2013-2023 includes 547 live animals traded for commercial purposes (purpose of transaction code T). Of these, 405 were recorded as exported from the Czech Republic.

Illegal

A considerable number of ring-tailed lemurs are traded as pets on Madagascar (Reuter et al., 2019).

References

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