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MEDIA RELEASE

IWMC denounces WWF for misconstruing China's proposed tiger and rhino trade reform process

12 November 2018, Lausanne - The IWMC World Conservation Trust (IWMC) today criticized the World Wildlife Fund for deliberately misrepresenting China's proposed policy reform of its trade in tiger and rhino horn, concerning domestic captive animals or historic stocks of already dead animals.

Following a statement today (12 November) in which State Council Executive Deputy Secretary-General Ding Xuedong plainly said that the proposed restricted legalization of trade in tiger and rhino products "should be implemented", the WWF welcomed the delay statement as if this represented a climb down. Or in the actual words of WWF "this move helps maintain the leadership role China has taken in tackling the illegal wildlife trade and reducing market demand". In response, IWMC accused WWF of exaggerating the significance of a routine delay before implementing a controversial policy decision.

Eugene Lapointe, President of IWMC World Conservation Trust, said:

"Nothing that Deputy Secretary-General Ding Xuedong said today suggests that China is about to undo State Council of the People's Republic of China's decision to allow, under strict control in specific circumstances, the domestic use of tiger bone and rhino horn products."

Lapointe added that he, of course, hopes that China's proposed limited reform of the domestic and tiger and rhino horn trade under strict control does indeed mark the beginning of the unraveling of global prohibition in such trade. But, he added, just as much as nothing China has actually said today justifies what WWF implies, nothing China has said or proposed has gone as far I would like either. He added:

"WWF has gone in search of headlines and at the expense of a proper account of the true content of what Deputy Secretary-General Ding Xuedong actually said and meant today. That is very bad news for all of those people who would like to have a rational debate about how best to pursue conservation policies in the best interest of the preservation of endangered species."

— ENDS —

The International Wildlife Management Consortium (IWMC) World Conservation Trust is an international organization that promotes Sustainable Use as a conservation mechanism, for the protection of the sovereign rights of independent nations and for the respect of diverse cultures and traditions.

Eugene Lapointe, President of IWMC World Conservation Trust was Secretary General of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) from 1982 to 1990.

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