

Myanmar burns ivory, skins to fight illegal wildlife trade

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP) — Authorities in Myanmar destroyed an estimated \$1.3 million worth of confiscated ivory and other parts of endangered animals, days after a conservation group charged that the country’s ivory exports to China are increasing.

Myanmar’s Natural Resources Ministry said the items destroyed at a burning in the capital, Naypyitaw, included 277 pieces of ivory, 227 bones of elephants and other animals, 1,544 different horns, and 25 wildlife skins.

It said the parts were destroyed to raise public awareness about the illegal wildlife trade, to try to deter such activities, and to promote international cooperation in suppressing the crime.

A report issued by the Kenya-based group Save the Elephants said ivory going to China comes from both poaching within Myanmar as well as pieces originating in Africa.

China, the world’s largest ivory consumer, banned its domestic trade starting this year in what conservationists hope



UP IN FLAMES. Elephant ivory is displayed during a destruction ceremony of confiscated elephant ivory and wildlife parts in Naypyitaw, Myanmar. Myanmar destroyed confiscated elephant ivory and various parts of other wildlife in the capital of Naypyitaw to raise public awareness about the illegal wildlife trade and to try to deter such activities. (AP Photo/Aung Shine Oo)

stomach ailments, as well as being fashioned into beads for necklaces, bracelets, and pendants.

Myanmar officials say there has been an increase in recent years in the poaching of domestic elephants. From 2010 until now, 108 elephants have been killed, Nyi Nyi Kyaw, director general of Myanmar’s Forest Department, said at the burning, according to a statement. Myanmar’s population of wild elephants has been estimated at 2,000.

By weight, the main animal parts destroyed were elephant ivory, followed by deer and antelope antlers, tiger bones, and bear skins. Gallbladders of bears and pythons, used for traditional Asian medicines, were also destroyed.

Treated water at Fukushima nuclear plant still radioactive

By Mari Yamaguchi
The Associated Press

TOKYO — The operator of Japan’s wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant now admits much of the radioactive water stored at the plant isn’t clean enough and needs further treatment if it is to be released into the ocean.

Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) and the government said treatment of the water removed all radioactive elements except tritium, which experts say is safe in small amounts.

They called it “tritium water,” but it actually wasn’t.

TEPCO said studies found the water still contains other elements, including radioactive iodine, cesium, and strontium. It said more than 80 percent of the 900,000 tons of water stored in large, densely packed tanks contains radioactivity exceeding limits for release into the environment.

TEPCO general manager Junichi Matsumoto said radioactive elements remained, especially earlier in the crisis when plant workers had to deal with large amounts of contaminated water leaking from the wrecked reactors and could not afford time to stop the treatment machines to change filters frequently.

“We had to prioritize processing large amounts of water as quickly as possible to reduce the overall risk,” Matsumoto said.

About 161,000 tons of the treated water has 10 to 100 times the limit for release into the environment, and another 65,200 tons has up to nearly 20,000 times the limit, TEPCO said.

Matsumoto said the plant will treat the water further to ensure contamination levels are reduced to allowable limits.

He was responding to growing public criticism and distrust about the status of the water.

More than seven-and-a-half years since a massive March 2011 earthquake and

tsunami destroyed three reactors at the plant, Japan has yet to reach a consensus on what to do with the radioactive water. Fishermen and residents oppose its release into the ocean. Nuclear experts have recommended the controlled release of the water into the Pacific Ocean as the only realistic option.

The release option faced harsh criticism at town meetings in Fukushima and Tokyo in late August, when TEPCO and government officials provided little explanation of the water contamination, which had been reported in local media days earlier.

TEPCO only says it has the capacity to

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CONTESTED HISTORIES

Art and Artifacts from the Allen Hendershott Eaton Collection

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OREGON NIKKEI ENDOWMENT

While conducting research for a book about art and craft objects created by Japanese Americans during World War II, author Allen Hendershott Eaton amassed a significant collection of such camp artifacts. More than 60 years later, in 2015, a controversial attempt by a private party to auction the artifacts was averted by Japanese American community leaders and activists. Ultimately, the Eaton Collection was transferred to the Japanese American National Museum for safekeeping and conservation, and JANM is now pleased to be travelling the artifacts.

The display includes physical or digital representation of every item in the collection—more than 400 individual photographs, sculptures, paintings and watercolors, jewelry items, vases, beads, nameplates, and other items handmade by Japanese Americans while enduring incarceration in the WWII camps. View items from the collection and help JANM gather more information about each object.

Visit janm.org/contested-histories for more information about the Eaton Collection, the pop-up display, and travel schedule.



Chair constructed by Yorozu Homma while incarcerated at Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming during World War II. Japanese American National Museum, Allen Hendershott Eaton Collection (2015.100.57).