





THE GLOBAL DONKEY SKIN TRADE: ITS IMPACTS IN AFRICA AND A CALL TO ACTION TO SUPPORT A PAN AFRICAN 15 YEAR MORATORIUM ON THE TRADE

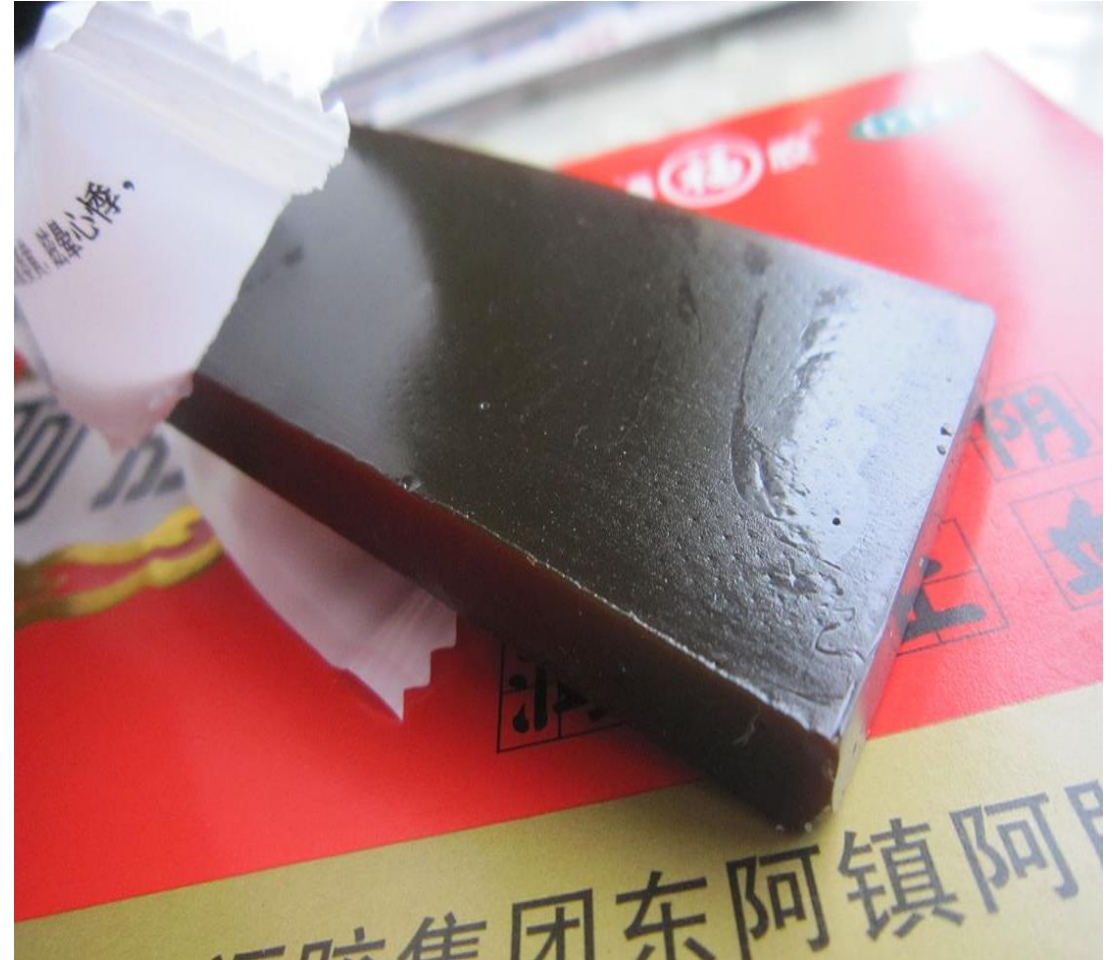
**7th Africa Animal Welfare Conference
Kigali, Rwanda**

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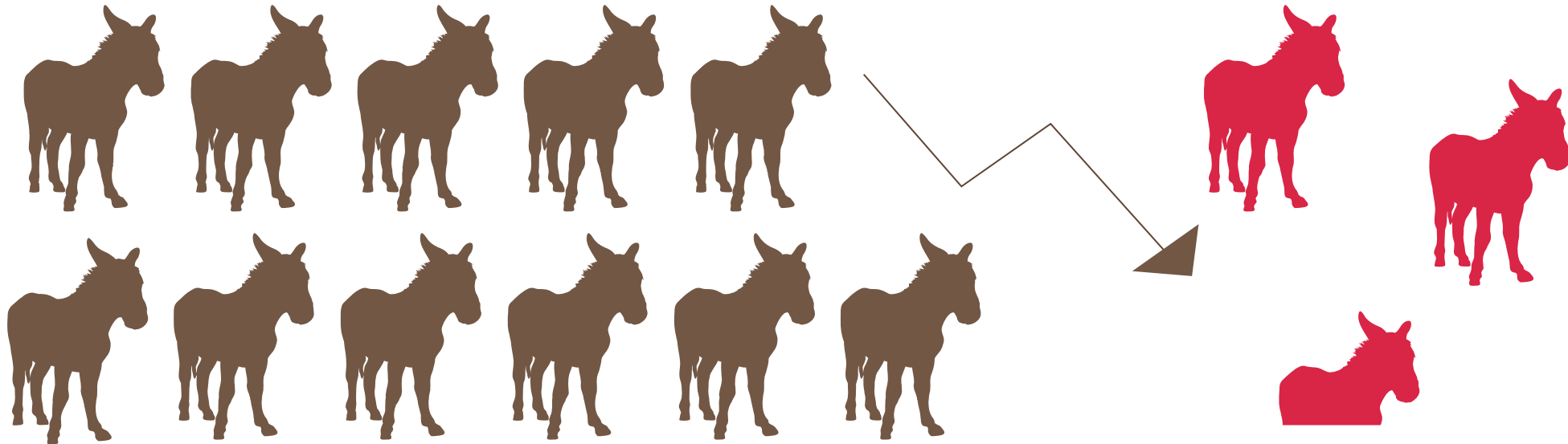
What is Ejiao?

- Traditional remedy used in China for hundreds of years
- Bought mainly by women as a blood tonic
- Usually dissolved in hot water and consumed as a drink
- Clever marketing has seen renewed interest and demand for the product





CHINESE DONKEY POPULATION



1992=11M

2017=2.6M

Sourcing Donkey Skins for China



Updated Annual Slaughter Figures

- TDS will very shortly be publishing updated figures around the number of donkeys slaughtered annually to meet demand for ejiao.

Country	Max Annual Production (Chinese Customs figures 2018)	Known in-country official slaughter figures (if above Chinese figures)	Likely actual/additional annual export (based on in-country intel)		TOTAL
Nigeria	1.9 million				1,900,000
Benin	300,000				300,000
Mauritania	150,000				150,000
Ghana	300,000				300,000
Egypt	x	10,000	20,000		30,000
Kenya	700,000				700,000
Tanzania	300 tons	60,000			60,000
Botswana	x		30,000		30,000
South Africa	x	10,500	20,000		30,500
Brazil	79,000				79,000
Peru	400,000	x			400,000
Mexico	x	x	50,000		50,000
Kyrgyzstan	300,000	x	X		300,000



Nation hunts self-sufficiency in donkey hide

By Wang Cong Source:Global Times Published: 2018/1/2 21:08:39



• China Daily Global / 2021-02 / 25 / Page010

Immunity-boosting products gain in popularity

By CHENG YU | China Daily Global | Updated: 2021-02-25 00:00



*" (A) spokesperson (for Dong-E Ejiao) pointed out that the demand for ejiao has expanded exponentially in recent years, buoyed by an increasingly health-sensitive and aging Chinese population, which in turn drove up demand for donkey hides to a point that exceeded domestic supply. **In 2016 alone, China had to import 3.5 million donkey hides, according to the statement.**"*

Dong'e Ejiao Co Ltd also launched a product believed to enhance immunity. It uses low temperature vacuum continuous drying technology to turn traditional ejiao blocks into individually packaged ejiao in small bags.

Behind the moves are also the country's efforts to support the healthy growth of new consumption and business models in order to boost consumption amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Impacts of the global donkey skin trade in Africa

- **Livelihoods - community impact;**
- **Animal welfare;**
- **Biosecurity;**
- **Wildlife trade.**

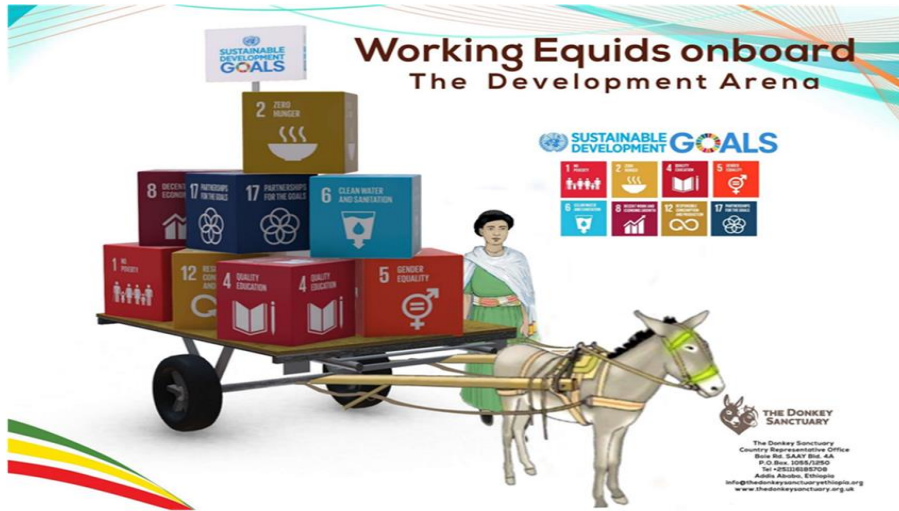


Livelihoods – Community Impact

- Across the African continent, small holder farmers depend on donkeys for the heavy lifting needed for cultivating land, transporting hay and silage and hauling water and firewood;
- Studies show that an estimated 10 million people in East Africa rely on donkeys to support their livelihoods where each donkey generates an estimated average monthly income of \$110 for the families that use them.
- **All this, reflected in the contribution of donkeys to the sustainable development goals as presented in the next slide, is put at risk by the donkey theft, illegal bush slaughter that accompanies the skin trade.**



Working equids deliver sustainable development



Working Animals: An accelerator to the 2030 Agenda

UN Environment:

‘The unsustainable extraction of a resource, whether it’s donkeys, plants, trees or minerals, can have adverse effects on the environment and communities in distant lands.

In the case of donkeys, a valuable mode of all-weather, carbon neutral transport is removed from those most in need of transport in remote rural settings.’



<https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/warning-10th-mass-species-extinction-cards>

**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**



Research to measure the socioeconomic impact

- TDS is currently developing research to measure the socioeconomic impact of the trade on communities, with a view to publish next year.
- The presentation from my colleague will demonstrate the importance of the donkey for livelihoods and the need to include donkeys and indeed working equids in national, regional and continental animal welfare strategies.



Animal Welfare

Poor transport over long distances

Money driving numbers – indiscriminate use of donkeys

Unskilled labour – poor handling and bad slaughter

Inhumane practices – slaughtered carcasses piled up next to donkeys penned next to slaughterhouses



Major biosecurity risk

- Lack of hygiene at every stage
- Millions of untreated skins from many sources to China – wildlife markets closed but this is not banned
- The donkey trade is regarded as a risk for the stress that compromises the immunity of the animals, and hence a constraint to their health, as well as being a risk for the spread of transboundary equine diseases.



Disease Outbreak

- In January 2019, reports of disease in donkeys, resulting in large numbers of deaths, (some 60,000+) came from across West Africa. Nigeria reported 2929 cases of equine influenza in just one month. Almost 270 of these donkeys died and in some cases the mortality rate of infected donkeys was almost 40 percent.



- This outbreak (the first recorded instance of equine influenza in Nigeria) was attributed to the illegal movement of donkeys into Nigeria from a neighbouring country (likely to have been Niger).
- World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) said probably linked to skin trade



Waste “disposal”

- Serious, multiple instances of environmental pollution
- Rivers affected / water supply compromised
- Untreated waste attracts carrion birds, rodents, feral/wild dogs
- Water abstraction requirements for slaughterhouse operations



TABLE: Illegal wildlife products advertised online alongside donkey skins and hides

▪ Abalone	▪ Lion parts
▪ African Grey parrots	▪ Pangolin scales
▪ Agarwood	▪ Rhino horns & live rhinos
▪ Elephant ivory	▪ Sea cucumbers
▪ Fish maw	▪ Seahorses
▪ Hardwoods, including rosewood	▪ Shark fins
	▪ Tigers and tiger parts

Online trade in donkey skins and hides converges with cybercrime, narcotics, money laundering, and global wildlife trafficking

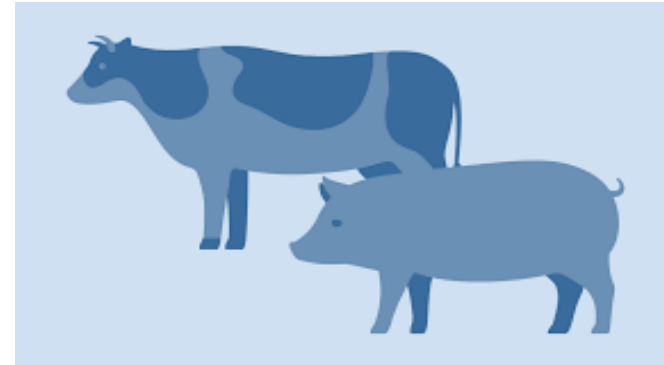
Implications of Covid on Trade:

- Poaching continuing at high levels
- Traffickers are continuing to trade
- Stockpiling where trade / shipping is an obstacle
- Increasing evidence of trade on online sales platforms
- Convergences of criminality around donkey skin trade (**see above**)
- Trend towards re-classification of wildlife as livestock creates threats to wild populations



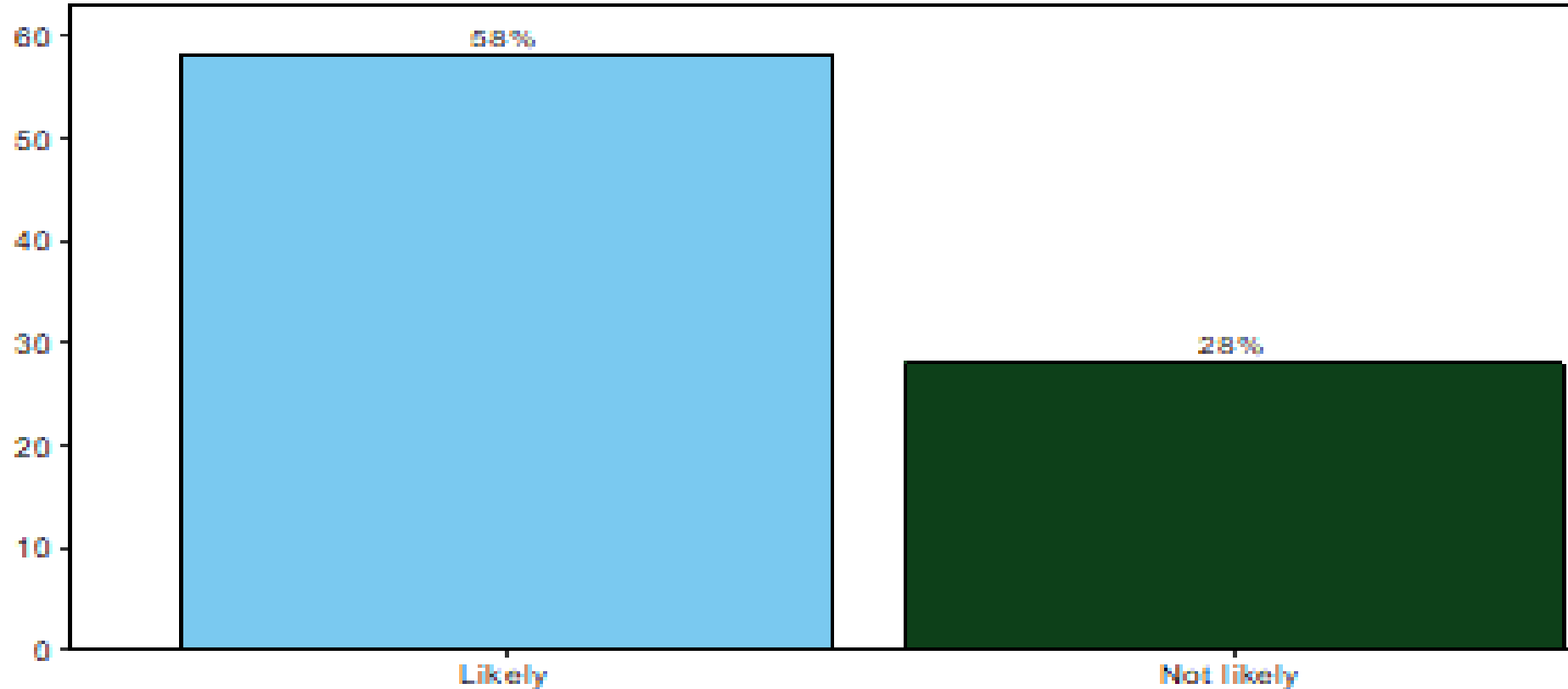
Alternatives to the global donkey skin trade

Promoting humane alternatives



Trends to alternatives

If available at an affordable price, how likely would you be to use or consume ejiiao products produced by cellular agriculture?



YouGov study commissioned by TDS 2020

National governments, regional bodies and critical stakeholders take a stand against the skin trade

- At the outset, research done by the DS clearly shows that donkey farming to the scale implied by the Chinese demand is not possible (the DS study is available for participants);
- We call on national governments, regional bodies and all stakeholders to support and implement resolutions and expert advice coming out of The Pan-African Donkey Conference (PADco) held in December 2022 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



Dar es Salaam Declaration

- The conference ended with the 'Dar es Salaam Declaration on Donkeys in Africa Now and in the Future' that among other pertinent calls, urges the AUC to propose to the AU Committee of Heads of State to endorse the proposal of implementing a ban on donkey slaughter for skins and other donkey derived products, for export, for at least the next 15 years.





Thankyou

References

