

TRADE IN NIGHT MONKEYS *AOTUS* SPP. IN THE BRAZIL – COLOMBIA – PERU TRI-BORDER AREA: INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE REGULATIONS ARE INEFFECTIVELY ENFORCED

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This study describes significant levels of trade in two or possibly three species of night monkeys (*Aotus nancymaae*, *A. vociferans* and *A. nigriceps*) from the Brazil–Colombia–Peru tri-border area. All three countries are Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and there is no documented trade in night monkeys among these three countries in the CITES trade database. However, interviews with 43 traders/collectors in 11 communities in the three countries suggest that for the period 2007–2008, approximately 4000 night monkeys were traded, representing a monetary value of over USD 100000 for the traders and intermediaries. The interviewees indicated that the animals were sold to a biomedical laboratory in the tri-border area on the Colombian side of the border. The international nature of the trade and the large volume of night monkeys being traded indicate a violation of, and a failure to adhere to, international trade regulations. In order to conserve these important species, we suggest cooperative action from environmental and conservation authorities and the respective CITES Management Authorities in Colombia, Peru and Brazil to curb the trade, and urge the Colombian authorities to investigate the illegal importation of night monkeys by a biomedical laboratory in the border area.

Keywords: CITES, Primate Conservation, Amazonia, Biomedical Research

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank Animals Defenders International (ADI-UK) for funding this research. AMM PhD was funded by a Russell E. Train fellowship (WWF-US) and the Overseas Research Students Award Scheme, UK. Also we thank to the Procuraduria Ambiental (Colombia) for providing hard copies of legal documents and the Colombian, Peruvian and Brazilian informants for their collaboration.