



# Species Survival Network

CITES COP15 2010 • Doha, Qatar



2008 Dr. Peter Janzen



Habitat in Southern Zagros Range, Iran /  
Dr. Mozafar Sharifi



Specimens on sale in Ukraine /  
Dr. Mozafar Sharifi

## Kaiser's Spotted Newt *Neurergus kaiseri*

**CoP15 Prop. 14** (Islamic Republic of Iran) Inclusion in Appendix I: a) in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14), Annex 1, Criteria A ii), iii) and v) owing to observed small fluctuating populations highly vulnerable to both intrinsic and extrinsic factors; b) in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14), Annex 1, Criteria B i), iii) and iv) owing to a very restricted (far less than 100 km<sup>2</sup>) and fragmented area of occupancy; and c) in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14), Annex 1, Criterion C ii) owing to a marked decline in the population size, inferred from habitat loss due to the expansion of warm water from Lake Dez Dam, which contains cyprinoids fish, to some *Neurergus kaiseri* streams and extremely high levels of harvesting for national and international trade.

### **SSN VIEW: SUPPORT Adoption of Proposal**

#### **KAISER'S SPOTTED NEWT IS A CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SPECIES.**

Kaiser's spotted newt is a colorful mountain salamander found in just four highland streams in the southern Zagros Mountains in Lorestan Province of southern Iran, with an area of occupancy of less than 10 km<sup>2</sup>. The species is classified as Critically Endangered by IUCN (2009) due to a population decline of more than 80% between 2001 and 2005. The total population is estimated to number fewer than 1,000 mature individuals (Sharifi et al. 2008). The species is considered endangered and protected by law in Iran.

#### **KAISER'S SPOTTED NEWT IS THREATENED BY ILLEGAL COLLECTION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PET TRADE.**

Illegal collection of Kaiser's spotted newt for the national and international pet trade is one of the main threats to the survival of this species. Adults are collected by poachers at the beginning of the breeding season before they have had a chance to breed. Consequently, few adults remain in the wild to contribute to future generations.

Wild-caught specimens of Kaiser's spotted newt are offered for sale in North America, Europe and Japan and can be purchased on the internet for as much as US\$320 each. In December 2004, 50 specimens (about 5% of the known

wild population) were offered on a Canadian website (TRAFFIC North America, 2006). Regular shipments of wild-caught specimens have been made in successive years to North America and Europe by a dealer in Ukraine (<http://www.bion.com.ua/stocklist/>). According to the proposal, this dealer exported 200 specimens in 2005, and they were expecting to have approximately 250 more available by January 2006. A wholesale trader in France offers specimens for 135 euro each (<http://www.lafermetropicale.com/>). A German trader has been offering this species every year since 2005 (<http://www.tropenparadies.org/>) and has announced that wild-caught adults and captive-bred juveniles will be available for sale in 2010. The first captive-bred animals were offered for sale in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 at lower prices (around 50 to 100 euro) compared with wild caught animals (100 to 150 euro).

The species is also traded domestically; specimens have been observed for sale in Tehran pet shops. But the main concern is illegal collection and export for the international pet trade. Kaiser's spotted newt currently has no international protection to ensure that such trade does not lead to further endangerment of the species.

Other threats to the species include introduction of exotic fish into one of the streams in its habitat, fragmentation of populations and, potentially, climate change.

#### **KAISER'S SPOTTED NEWT QUALIFIES FOR LISTING IN APPENDIX I.**

*Neurergus kaiseri* meets the following criteria for listing on Appendix I in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14), Annex 1):

- Criterion A ii), iii) and v) owing to observed small fluctuating populations highly vulnerable to both intrinsic and extrinsic factors;
- Criterion B i), iii) and iv) owing to a very restricted (far less than 100 km<sup>2</sup>) and fragmented area of occupancy; and
- Criterion C ii) owing to a marked decline in the population size, inferred from habitat loss and unsustainable levels of collection for national and international trade.

**Kaiser's spotted newt meets the criteria for listing on CITES Appendix I. The species is likely to become extinct if international trade is not stopped. Listing of this species on CITES Appendix I is urgently needed to prevent continued imports by consuming countries of this Critically Endangered species for the pet trade. SSN strongly urges Parties to support this proposal.**