

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

Summary record of the sixth session of Committee II

7 March 2013: 9h15 - 12h05

Chair: R. Gabel (United States of America)  
Secretariat: J. Scanlon  
J. Barzdo  
J. Blanc  
B. Janse van Rensburg  
Rapporteurs: J. Caldwell  
P. Cremona  
A. Mathur  
R. Parry-Jones

***Interpretation and implementation of the Convention***

Species trade and conservation

53. Elephants

53.1 Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants

The Secretariat introduced document CoP16 Doc. 53.1, giving an introduction to the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme and acknowledging the funding received from the European Union. The Chair of the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group reported that the latest population estimates had been released very recently. She expressed concern regarding a decline in the quality of data in the African Elephant Database from eastern and southern Africa and stressed that, although the African Elephant Action Plan adopted by the Parties at CoP15 gave important guidance, there were inadequate resources for its effective implementation. The Secretariat highlighted the increase in illegal killing since 2005 and noted that recent evidence suggested the African elephant population was very likely to be in net decline. It also reported that China was the only destination country of those analysed where trends in household consumption expenditure were strongly related to levels of illegal killing of elephants.

Ireland, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and Croatia, stated that the European Union had agreed to continue funding the MIKE programme until the end of 2014 and encouraged Parties to provide funding to ensure its sustainability.

Kenya, supported by Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Swaziland, stressed the influence of consumer demand on illegal killing, stating that range States were not in a position to control this demand and therefore the cooperation of consumer countries was necessary; Chad and Kenya appealed to consumer countries to ban the use of ivory. Chad noted that an agreement had been signed with Cameroon to cooperate on enforcement measures and that both countries had met with the Central African Republic to discuss future actions. The Democratic Republic of the Congo noted that poachers were now part of highly organized international criminal syndicates that necessitated a coordinated international response in the form of a task force. Swaziland conceded that consumer demand could not be eliminated, but

might be reduced to sustainable levels, and appealed to Parties to seriously consider how this could be achieved.

India expressed the need to establish a self-sustaining funding mechanism for the MIKE programme in Asia. Botswana and South Africa highlighted the need to address the issue of human-elephant conflict where elephant populations were increasing and South Africa emphasized the important role of the African Elephant Action Plan. Pakistan commented that there were many factors influencing the rise in poaching.

Viet Nam acknowledged that it was a key transit country for illegal ivory, and described a number of training activities for enforcement agencies that had taken place. China expressed their view that range States are in the best position to take action over the illegal killing of elephants. It acknowledged that many of these States are developing countries and lack sufficient resources and capacity, and called upon developed countries to provide support. It recommended that range States with increasing poaching levels regularly report to the Standing Committee on their enforcement measures. The International Ranger Federation appealed to Parties to provide it with information on the killing of rangers in the line of duty and drew especial attention to the poor families of murdered rangers, who were termed the forgotten victims of elephant poaching.

Document CoP16 Doc. 53.1 was noted.

#### 53.2 Monitoring of illegal trade in ivory and other elephant specimens

The Secretariat introduced document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.1 (*Report of the Secretariat*) and its annexes. TRAFFIC introduced the report in document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.2 (Rev. 1) (*ETIS report of TRAFFIC*).

The United States supported the adoption of the draft decisions in Annex 2 of document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.1. It agreed with the Secretariat's comments in document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.2 (Rev. 1) and supported draft decision 16 A contained in those comments. And it noted that the strategies and recommendations laid out in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP15) and the *Action plan for control of trade in elephant ivory* in Decision 13.26 (Rev. CoP15) were failing to produce positive results. The United States and Ireland, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and Croatia, proposed a number of additional decisions, which they read aloud.

Cameroon, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, the Philippines and South Africa supported the draft decisions in Annex 2 of the *Report of the Secretariat*. Kenya also in principle supported the additional decisions proposed by the United States and Ireland, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and Croatia. Cameroon and Kenya supported the formation of a task force as earlier proposed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Kenya called upon countries that had seized more than 800kg of ivory to provide samples for DNA analysis to determine the source of the ivory, and noted the need for a decision to prioritize elements of the African Elephant Action Plan.

Cameroon, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, the Philippines and Thailand all underscored the efforts they had made to combat the illegal ivory trade. The Democratic Republic of the Congo invited TRAFFIC to contact them while gathering data relating to ETIS.

Swaziland emphasised the fact that the resources of range States were stretched to the limit, and called upon consumer States to assist further in the global efforts to protect elephants. The United Republic of Tanzania echoed the need for financial assistance to the range States, and Thailand reiterated the need for a global cooperative effort to address the situation. China lamented the current focus on consumer states in Asia and encouraged those countries that had not made seizures to step up enforcement intensity.

WWF International noted that the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Thailand had been repeatedly identified as not meeting their obligations to regulate ivory trade. It called on Thailand to provide further details of its intention to close the domestic ivory market. Humane Society International called upon the major ivory consumer countries to close their markets.

The Chair formed a drafting group comprising Ireland, Kenya, the Philippines and the United States, together with the Secretariat, to prepare a revised set of draft decisions for consideration

by the Committee. Ireland, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and Croatia, proposed Germany to participate in the Ivory Enforcement Task Force.

53.3 Proposed new resolution concerning the *African Elephant Action Plan* and *African Elephant Fund*

Nigeria introduced document CoP16 Doc 53.3 (Rev. 2). It suggested some amendments to the draft resolution in the document, based on comments received. Bahrain, Burkina Faso and Liberia expressed support for the draft resolution.

Ireland, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and Croatia, stated that if the draft resolution were approved, Parties might also consider prioritizing their actions under the African Elephant Action Plan within their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans to facilitate access to funding sources such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

UNEP confirmed that it was serving as the Secretariat for administering the African Elephant Fund, detailing concrete arrangements made to date to support the Fund, and noting the agreements signed with Benin, Malawi and Nigeria, and the recent transfer of funds to Nigeria.

The Secretary-General expressed the full support of the Secretariat for the African Elephant Action Plan and the African Elephant Fund, describing measures taken to minimize programme costs. However, he believed that the draft resolution would place an excessive burden on the limited budget and staff of the Secretariat. He reported that the Secretariat had taken advantage of opportunities to promote the African Elephant Fund but raising funds for it was not part of the role of the Secretariat. He advised Parties to approach donor sources, such as the GEF, themselves.

The Chair asked Nigeria to confer with the Secretariat regarding the draft resolution and to consider whether, based on the comments from UNEP, it would agree to withdraw the draft decision in Annex 2. Nigeria agreed to report back to the Committee at a later session.

The meeting was adjourned at 12h05.