

# Conf. 17.4

## Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species

RECOGNIZING that poaching and illegal trade are decimating some wildlife populations and driving numerous CITES-listed species toward extinction;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that wildlife trafficking contributes to damage to ecosystems and rural livelihoods, including those based on ecotourism, undermines good governance and the rule of law and, in some cases, threatens national stability and security and requires enhanced regional cooperation and coordination in response;

CONSCIOUS that enforcement interventions play a critical role in stemming illegal trade in specimens of species included in CITES Appendices, but bearing in mind that, without a complementary effort to address the persistent market demand that drives this trade, enforcement action alone may not be sufficient to eliminate this threat;

RECALLING that Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP18)<sup>1</sup> on *Trade in elephant specimens* urges relevant Parties to “engage in public awareness campaigns, including: supply and demand reduction; drawing attention to existing or new regulations concerning the sale and purchase of ivory;”

RECALLING also that Decision 16.85 on Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.) recommends that “all Parties implicated in the illegal trade of rhinoceros horn as a range or consumer State, where applicable, should: a) develop and implement long-term demand reduction strategies or programmes and immediate actions aimed at reducing the illegal movement and consumption of rhino horn products;”

RECALLING also Resolution Conf. 10.19 (Rev. CoP14) on *Traditional medicines*, which recommends that the Parties “work closely with groups of traditional-medicine practitioners and consumers in developing public education and awareness programmes towards the elimination of illegal use of endangered species, and developing awareness of the need to avoid over-exploitation of other wild species”;

WELCOMING the historic resolution on tackling wildlife trafficking adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2015 that “urges Member States to engage actively in efforts to raise awareness about and address the problems and risks associated with the supply and transit of and demand for illegal wildlife products and to reduce the demand using targeted strategies in order to influence consumer behaviour;”

ACKNOWLEDGING that demand-reduction interventions can effectively complement and support law enforcement efforts;

RECOGNIZING that wildlife trafficking via e-commerce is a growing and significant threat that calls for new approaches to reduce demand for illegally traded wildlife;

NOTING the need for well-targeted, evidence-based, species-specific, country-specific demand-reduction campaigns to more effectively bring about behaviour changes;

NOTING that legal and sustainable trade can be vital to rural livelihoods and consequently important to *in situ* conservation and that demand reduction campaigns must distinguish between legal and sustainable, and illegal trade;

RECOGNIZING the demand reduction initiatives by many countries, organizations and inter-governmental bodies, including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) demand reduction workshop organized by the governments of the United States of America and Viet Nam and the

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<sup>1</sup> Corrected by the Secretariat after the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

workshop on demand-side strategies for curbing illegal trade in ivory in Hangzhou, China, organized by the government of China and the CITES Secretariat;

#### THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. URGES Parties where there is a significant market for illegally traded wildlife products to:
  - a) develop strategies to reduce the demand for illegal products of wild animals and plants through demand reduction campaigns and to enhance, as appropriate, policy, legislation and law enforcement in this regard;
  - b) conduct in-depth and regular research on the demand for specimens of illegally traded CITES-listed species, where possible, using standard methodologies to understand the drivers and dynamics of the demand and to provide solid information for use in demand-reduction campaigns;
  - c) actively develop and implement well-targeted, species-specific, evidence-based campaigns by engaging key consumer groups and targeting the motivations for the demand, including the speculative nature of the demand, and develop specific messaging approaches and methods for target audiences;
  - d) create greater awareness of the broader consequences and impacts of illegal harvest and illegal trade of wildlife and plants, particularly on wild populations and the ecosystems in which they exist, as well as raise awareness of broader impacts of wildlife trafficking on livelihoods and sustainable development; and
  - e) strengthen legal and enforcement deterrents by creating greater awareness of laws prohibiting trade in illegal wildlife products and any associated penalties;
2. ENCOURAGES Parties to involve all stakeholders when conducting demand reduction campaigns, including, for example, relevant government agencies, health, public awareness and education sectors, the business sector, online retailers, social media platforms, traditional medicine practitioners and their associations, consumer groups, key influencers and opinion leaders who can most effectively reach out to consumers;
3. ENCOURAGES Parties, when appropriate, to collaborate with and provide full support to relevant demand reduction campaigns undertaken by the United Nations agencies and partners as well as non-governmental organizations;
4. RECOMMENDS that Parties convene workshops to design and develop targeted solutions for particular species or types of trade, including the development of communications and marketing strategies and campaigns aimed at eliminating demand for illegal wildlife and illegal wildlife products of CITES-listed species among key consumer groups; and
5. INVITES Parties, and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations interested in furthering these efforts to share best practices and provide technical support and assistance, if requested.