

CITES CoP16
Briefing to the Permanent Missions and NGOs in Geneva
15 February 2013

Elephants

Discussions will be initiated on Wednesday 6 March 2013 in Committee II

8 items on the CoP16 agenda that deal with elephants

1. Status assessments

- The Parties will have the most up to date information available on the status of elephants and the illegal trade in ivory
- End of 2000s:
 - Africa:
 - Between 470,000 and 660,000 elephants in Africa (38 range States)
 - Predominantly found in East and southern Africa – 3 countries have well over half of all these elephants – Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.
 - Massive losses in Central and West Africa
 - Current major threat is poaching; longer term major threat is habitat loss and fragmentation; human demographic pressure; Human-Elephant conflicts
 - Asia:
 - Between 39,500 and 43,500 Asian elephants (13 range States)
 - Main threat habitat loss under influence of rapidly expanding human populations; rampant Human-Elephant conflicts (hundreds of elephants and humans are killed every year)

53.1 Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE)

- CITES Secretariat-led programme to monitor the illegal killing of elephants in Africa and Asia in a sample of MIKE sites
- Poaching levels seemed to decline from 2002 (when MIKE started) until 2006, but steadily increasing since then
- 2011 saw highest levels of poaching ever recorded by MIKE, and new data for 2012 indicates that poaching levels are still not declining – similar levels as in 2011 (2012: slight decrease in Central and South Africa; but slight increase in East and West Africa)
- 36 MIKE sites in Africa contain 230,000 elephants (40% of all elephants). In 2006, we lost some 5,000 elephant in these sites due to poaching. In 2011, this figure has more than tripled -

17,000 elephants were killed, or 7.4% of the population. Growth rates (about 5%) can no longer compensate for this level of illegal killing, and populations are thus declining.

- Continental-wide loss perhaps 25,000 poached elephants in 2011.
- Drivers of poaching are: Demand for ivory in Asia, particularly China; Poor governance at national level; And at local level poverty/livelihood security and adequate/inadequate protection of National Parks where elephants occur

53.2 Monitoring of illegal trade in ivory and other elephant specimens

53.2.2 ETIS report of TRAFFIC

- ETIS documents ivory seizures around the world, and analyses trends (18,000 records accumulated since the early 90s; collectively some 300 tons confiscated since 1996)
- 2011 saw highest level of illegal trade in ivory 16 years, increase started from 2007 onwards
- Organized crime syndicates increasingly involved – witnessed by large ivory seizures (containers) of more than 800 kg. These require organization, funding, networking and considerable planning. 8 such cases 2009; 9 in 2010; and 17 in 2011; aware of many cases again in 2012.
- Most illegal ivory leaves Africa via ports in South Africa, Kenya and Tanzania; Transit countries include the Philippines, Malaysia and Viet Nam; destinations seem mostly China and Thailand.
- But other countries are concerned – Cameroun, Congo, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda

TRUE CONSERVATION CRISIS FOR AFRICAN ELEPHANTS AS WITNESSED IN SPIKE IN ELEPHANT POACHING AND ILLEGAL TRADE IN IVORY

ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT AND TARGETED CONSERVATION ACTIONS REQUIRED ALONG THE ENTIRE IVORY TRADE CHAIN (SOURCE, TRANSIT, DESTINATION)

53.2.1 Report of the Secretariat

- Documents crisis and gives examples
- Takes account of results of MIKE and ETIS and proposes for adoption at CoP16 actions incl.
 - CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force
 - Controlled delivery
 - Anti-money-laundering and asset recovery manual
 - Forensic research of ivory
 - Exchange law enforcement officers between source, transit and destination countries

2. CITES elephant conservation and management issues

26. Draft revision of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Trade in elephant specimens*

- The Resolution is the main overarching guiding text for dealing with trade in elephants under CITES – raw and worked ivory, trophies, live animals, etc.
- Remained more or less unchanged for 12 years. Proposal for revision prepared by the Secretariat on basis of work conducted by Standing Committee.
- Contains improved and often strengthened recommendations, e.g. for:
 - marking ivory
 - controlling domestic and international trade in ivory
 - elephant hunting trophies
 - traceability of ivory and other elephant products
 - MIKE and ETIS monitoring
 - Resource mobilization and capacity building

36. Decision-making mechanism for a process of trade in ivory

- Abundant elephant populations can produce significant amounts of ivory through natural mortality; southern African countries with large elephant populations want to find a lasting solution for trading their accumulated ivory stocks to Asia in a secure, sustainable and CITES controlled manner, and in ways that should not negatively affect elephants elsewhere
- Discussions on such mechanism started not so long ago in the Standing Committee.
- Paper on the table from the Standing Committee that outlines a way forward and suggests continuing discussions on criteria and conditions for such trade beyond CoP16. Outputs could be presented in three years time at CoP17.

37. Proposal to amend Decision 14.77 on a Decision-making mechanism for a future trade in elephant ivory

- Proposal from a number of African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Liberia, CAR, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya) with their views on how best to proceed with the discussion on this trade mechanism.

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

- Proposal concerning the *African elephant action plan* and African Elephant Fund (from Nigeria and Rwanda)

- *Action plan*: consensus by African elephant range States (2010); priorities incl. anti-poaching, habitat, Human-Elephant Conflicts
- African Elephant Fund: UNEP-based; guided by steering committee (2011); fund allocation initiated
 - 640,000 USD (China, France, Germany, Netherlands, South Africa, United Kingdom)
- UNEP will probably announce at CoP16 dedicated support for managing and operating the Fund, which should boost the implementation of the Action plan
- Proposal from Nigeria and Rwanda is for the CITES Secretariat to become permanent fund raiser for AEF.

Listing Proposals

- Proposal 11 - United Republic of Tanzania – **WITHDRAWN**
 - ✓ Transfer population from Appendix I to Appendix II for:
 - ✓ trade in hunting trophies; raw hides; live animals
 - ✓ trade in registered raw ivory [one-off sale of 101,005.25 kg to China and Japan - excluding seized ivory and ivory of unknown origin]
- Proposal 12 - Burkina Faso and Kenya
 - ✓ No further proposals re. trade in elephant ivory until CoP18 (2019) – de facto meaning that there should not be such proposals at the next CoP in 2016.

73. Resolution Conf. 10.9 on *Consideration of proposals for the transfer of African elephant populations from Appendix I to Appendix II (Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone)*

- Proposals to downlist elephant populations are subject to stringent reviews, including by a Panel of experts
- A number of African countries propose to review the mandate of this Panel, and make it more difficult for countries to submit elephant downlisting proposals.