

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



Sixty-second meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 23-27 July 2012

Regional matters

Reports of regional representatives

AFRICA

This document has been submitted by Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt and Uganda as the Regional Representatives for Africa[†].

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Regional Representatives: Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt and Uganda.

Alternate Representatives: Namibia, Mali, Niger and Ethiopia respectively.

2. INTRODUCTION

This Regional Report covers the period from the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee (August 2011) to the 62nd meeting in July 2012. The report includes only input provided by Parties present at the 62nd meeting.

The report highlights those activities implemented in the region by the Parties either collectively or by the individual Parties on matters of CITES implementation over the period under review. For ease of reference, the report is presented into subsections reporting on activities that involved the whole Africa region and the rest reporting on activities in each of the four sub-regions.

The regional representatives to the Standing Committee participating in the present meeting have sought sub-regional reports from observer Parties also attending the 62nd meeting to input into this report.

3. KEY ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED AT SUB-REGIONAL LEVEL

3.1 GENERAL

All Parties in the sub-region that are range States for the African elephant participated in the 4th meeting of the African elephant range States held in Nairobi, Kenya 26 – 27 April 2012. The meeting was organized by the Secretariat's programme for Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) with financial support from the European Union. The meeting was attended by 60 representatives from 33 of the 38 African elephant range States with the exception of Angola, Cameroon, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Swaziland the only range States that were not represented at the meeting.

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[†] The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.

The meeting received an update on MIKE Phase II implementation, the future of MIKE programme and the joint CITES-MIKE/IUCN/TRAFFIC report to the 62nd meeting of the Standing Committee. The fourth African elephant meeting was preceded by concurrent meetings of all four MIKE Sub-regional Steering Committees also held in Nairobi on 25th April 2012. Feedback from the Sub-regional Steering Committee meetings indicated high levels of illegal killing of elephants across the continent.

3.2 EAST AFRICA

The sub-region continued to strengthen the cooperation in law enforcement to combat illegal ivory trade resulting in significant ivory seizures with the most recent seizure of close to 500kg of ivory recorded at Entebbe International Airport in June 2012. Unfortunately, the ivory traffickers were not got and are still on the run. Uganda Government through the Uganda Wildlife Authority worked with Uganda Customs, Interpol Lyon and Interpol Regional Bureau Harare in ensuring that samples from the contraband are sent to the Centre for Biology, University of Washington, Seattle for DNA analysis with the view to possible identification of the origin of the ivory.

Parties from the sub-region; Kenya, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania that are member States to the Lusaka Agreement and in cooperation with the rest of the Agreement member States, (Zambia, Republic of Congo) participated in meetings of the Governing Council of the Agreement held in Dar es Salaam Tanzania in November 2011 and discussed issues of joint law enforcement to combat illegal wildlife trade across the region.

Uganda has continued to work with customs and other law enforcement agencies in the country to combat wildlife crime. In December 2011, Uganda with support from the Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF) organized an interagency sensitization workshop in the western part of the country to enlist the support of various law enforcement agencies in combating wildlife crime. The workshop was well attended by representatives from Police, Customs, Judiciary as well as other intelligence organs and participants requested for similar workshops in all parts of the country.

Similarly, Kenya organized an interagency workshop for two days 24th to 25th November 2011 at the Baobab Resort Hotel, Mombasa for law enforcement officers from Customs, Kenya Airports Authority, Kenya Ports Authority, Port Police and Kenya Wildlife Service. Twenty two (22) participants drawn from these institutions attended.

Following the continuous reports regarding cases of smuggling of wild animals and or their products through some of Uganda's ports of entry/exist, Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) embarked on training Uganda Revenue Authority's customs staff, the Police Officers stationed at customs ports and the Forwarding and Clearing Agents. The training commenced on 25th June 2012 and ended on 29th June 2012 covering Busia and Malaba customs. In total, 44 customs staff, 18 police officers and 125 clearing agents were trained/sensitized in management of wildlife shipments. The training and sensitization continues to other ports of entry/exit in the coming months of August 2012.

A round table on how to prevent and combat illegal trade in endangered species was held in Dar-es Salaam, on 26 January 2012. The meeting was organized by the Minister for Trade of Sweden and the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism of the United Republic of Tanzania and attended by officials from the Wildlife Division, Customs and Interpol.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism of the United Republic of Tanzania in collaboration with International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) organized a three-days workshop on the Prevention of Illegal Wildlife Trade which took place in Arusha from 7th to 10th February 2012. The workshop was attended by officials from the Wildlife Division.

The United Republic of Tanzania participated in the SADC Special Technical Preparatory Meeting on CITES Cop 16 held at Birchwood Conference Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa on 17 April 2012.

3.3 SOUTHERN AFRICA

This Regional Report for Southern Africa covers the period from the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee through Jun 2012. It includes key summaries of key events reported by Botswana, Malawi and South Africa, regional meetings attended by Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Southern African region has over time developed and integrated her approach to sustainable wildlife utilization programs and have similar processes and legislature that regulate wildlife conservation. Research studies in the region are also useful tools that are widely adaptable to country specific issues and these have resulted in a number of collaborative efforts and management decisions that contributes towards conservation of species. The regional collaboration is also boosted by regular meetings with NGO's in preparation for CITES meetings and other CITES related issues.

Overview of Major Developments

Botswana

Botswana would like to notify the Standing Committee that the government of Botswana has submitted the Wildlife Conservation and National Parks Act for review. The revision of the Wildlife Conservation Policy (to be considered in the current session of Parliament) and the revised Act (likely to be considered before CoP16) have like in many countries of the world taken longer than anticipated. The government of Botswana take serious interest in the protection of species at risk within her borders, as demonstrated by management decisions and resource allocation, and internationally, and we are still committed to our responsibilities to the CITES process.

Botswana continues her interest in the conservation and sustainable utilization of the African Elephant. The government of Botswana has contributed **USD \$ 20,000.00** towards the study on decision – making mechanism for authorized ivory trade and has demonstrated strategy support in the allocation of resources from the African Elephant Fund (AEF) towards vulnerable elephant populations. Botswana has also made contribution to the dating of ivory and DNA analysis from elephant tusks for the development of a reliable and exact method for the geographic origin of ivory by providing samples to the German Research project. This is also exemplified in the use of financial resource accrued from the 2008 ivory sale for elephant conservation and community (*within or in the periphery of the elephant range in Botswana*) projects within the country; whereas support was given to other countries within the region to receive funding that has been graciously given by different donors to the AEF. By so doing, we have reduced the burden of elephant funding in the region and maximized financial benefits for other states. Malawi has greatly benefited from this strategy position.

The CITES Management Authority has conducted training for law enforcement agencies; 29th June 2012 & 15th February 2012, Customs (Botswana Unified Revenue Services) and Botswana Police Services respectively. These training sessions were conducted during regular institutional refreshment courses conducted for the in service officers. During such sessions emphasis on intelligence exchange is of major importance and discussions lead to identification of loopholes and improvement of administrative decision making mechanism.

Malawi

Malawi conducted CITES Awareness and Capacity Building from the 24th to 25th November 2011, and drew a total of thirty two (32) participants from the Judiciary, Malawi Police Service, Malawi Revenue Authority, Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW). This was made possible with co-funding from CITES Secretariat and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife. The total cost of the workshop was **USD \$ 15, 039.00**. The grant total grant from CITES Secretariat was **USD \$ 6,751.00** with the rest (**USD \$ 8, 288.00**) coming from Malawi Government through DNPW.

South Africa

A training session for CITES Management Authorities of South Africa took place from 31 November – 4 December 2011. The training session was presented by the Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa. The Scientific Authority of South Africa worked together with TRAFFIC East and Southern Africa to develop a species identification tool for law enforcement officers. The tool, which focuses on priority South African taxa listed in the CITES Appendices will be available on a CD and also through the Internet. The tool provides decision trees for CITES species, has links to relevant legislation, allows photos to be uploaded and links to other sites with further identification materials, and enables the enforcement officer to send messages to an expert. The tool has been approved for use in South Africa and training is taking place. The Scientific Authority of South Africa has worked with scientists and other stakeholders to undertake NDFs on 16 species, including 12 critically endangered cycad species, cheetah, leopard, white rhino and hippopotamus. The interim findings (NDFs) will be published for public comment.

In 2011, 448 rhinos were illegally killed in South Africa; and during the same period a total of 232 arrests were made. In a recent conviction, poachers were given a 25 year jail sentence each. Cooperation and collaboration with other rhino range States remains essential as well as the finalization of agreements on issues relating to wildlife trafficking and increased compliance monitoring and enforcement between South Africa, the People's Republic of China and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Activities of the regional Representatives

Botswana

In preparation for the Standing Committee 62, Botswana contacted all members of the region through email and telephone in an effort to coordinate submission of reports to the CITES Secretariat. However response from other members has been very slow.

Moreover, Botswana will host a regional workshop towards the end of this year which will among other things focus on COP16 preparations.

Regional Cooperation

The region has cooperated with the ETIS & MIKE programs by submission of elephant trade and carcass data regularly through regional offices and provide regional cooperation platform for elephant conservation. Southern Africa has had four regional meetings to discuss issues that relate to anti poaching and illegal ivory trade during the MIKE Phase II and has come to the conclusion that the one off sale of Ivory Stockpile has not influenced the level of illegal killings in the region and beyond. The region also benefitted from capacity building workshops conducted by the MIKE – SSO. These were conducted as follows:

- Training Workshop on MIST GIS on the **18th -28th September 2011** in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- The final training workshop was held from the **25th – 30th March** in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Botswana

Botswana has provided information as a contribution to the Periodic review for Lion (*Panthera leo*) coordinated by Kenya and Namibia.

Malawi

Requests for information and clarifications by committees or Secretariat are received in good time but capacity to effectively provide feedback is not that adequate. This creates delays but will be sorted out in due course. We have thus not provided feedback to the African Lion (*Panthera leo*) and the deadlines are long gone past.

South Africa

South Africa submitted information as a contribution to the Periodic review for Lion (*Panthera leo*) coordinated by Kenya and Namibia. Registration of operations breeding/Artificial propagation Appendix-I animal/plant species for commercial purposes: The process to register nurseries artificially propagating *Encephalartos species* is ongoing. South Africa has not submitted a request to register an Appendix I captive breeding operation.

Meetings and Workshops

The region held and participated with different representations at the following meetings/workshops:

- Three SADC CITES COP16 preparatory meetings were held in South Africa; on the 24 – 26 October 2011, 2 – 4 April and 16 – 19 April 2012.
- 1st African Elephant Fund Steering Committee meeting held in South Africa, Kruger National Park from 12-15 December 2011.
- The 10th Meeting of the African Wildlife Consultative Forum in Swaziland from 10 – 14 October 2011.

Problems faced by the Regional Representatives

The major problem that arose in this period was the regional understanding and practice in relation to the endorsement in block 11a of species in trade with export quotas. The challenge was overcome through regional dialogue and engagement with USFWS over the exports that were already affected by the practice from the region.

3.4 CENTRAL AFRICA

The Central African sub-regional workshop on Wildlife trafficking and dismantling transnational illicit networks (Libreville Gabon, 3-5 April 2012) was held and the Secretariat also participated. The regional workshop on Wildlife trafficking and dismantling transnational illicit networks was organized by the Embassies of the United States of America in Gabon and the Central African Republic, in collaboration with the Government of Gabon. Participants in this workshop committed to establishing a wildlife enforcement network to broaden anti-poaching and anti-wildlife trafficking efforts in the central.

The Secretariat was therefore particularly delighted to join officials from eight central African countries, in November 2011, in Douala, Cameroon, when they agreed on an action plan for strengthening enforcement of national wildlife laws in the region. The countries concerned were Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

3.5 WESTERN AFRICA

3.6 NORTH AFRICA

Regarding compliance and enforcement in Egypt, the Environmental Protection Law 4/1994 was amended by Law 9/2009, where all protected species including those on CITES appendices as well as IUCN Red List are included. The new law has been sent to relevant authorities for implementation. Meanwhile progress is being made to separate the Natural Conservation Sector from Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency into an independent agency with its own conservation fund.

Public awareness campaigns are being conducted at all levels to inform the relevant people and organizations of the new law. Meanwhile, several raids were made at several souvenir shops that sell illegal wildlife products. During the period under review, national parks rangers undertook regular patrols and arrested criminals and confiscated vehicles and equipment used in wildlife related crime.

Rescue and captive breeding centres were regularly inspected to ensure that endangered species were being taken care of, and were not being used for commercial purposes.

Egypt's National reports were sent to CITES Secretariat including the 2009 and 2010 reports.

Capacity building was undertaken where nationals of Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria attended several workshops including those organized by OIE in Kenya. More conferences and seminars have been conducted dealing with wildlife management and law enforcement.

North African countries are still suffering from the impacts of Arab Spring in the region where insecurity largely as a result of absence of law enforcement is causing problems especially in protected areas.

4. REGIONAL COOPERATION

Cooperation on wildlife law Enforcement

Kenya continued participating in cooperative wildlife law enforcement activities to improve control of cross-border trade and combat illegal trade in wildlife specimens and especially in cooperation with the INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force.

5. MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Fourth African elephant meeting held in Gigiri Kenya 26 – 27 April 2012 convened by the CITES Secretariat under the MIKE Program and attended by 33 of the 38 African elephant Range States.

Various interagency sensitization workshops for law enforcement officers on illegal wildlife trade in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

6. PROBLEMS FACED BY THE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Communication with member States across the region continued to be a big challenge for the representatives and also the member States. As a result, it became very difficult for the representatives to compile this report before the present meeting thus the compilation during the meeting and therefore not reporting on all activities of the Parties represented in the region.

The representatives appeal to the Standing Committee to consider strategies for enhanced capacity building in the region especially on matters of communication.