

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

Forty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 22-25 April 2003

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

CONTROL OF INTERNAL IVORY TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP12) (Trade in elephant specimens) directs the Standing Committee to undertake a regular review of actions taken by consumer States to improve legislation and enforcement measures relating to internal trade in ivory and to report the results at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Secretariat is directed, within available resources, to identify those Parties with an ivory carving industry and internal ivory trade whose domestic measures do not allow them to control such trade. Decisions 12.36, 12.37, 12.38 and 12.39 also relate to this subject. Decision 12.39 specifically identifies Cameroon, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Japan, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda and the United States of America as Parties whose measures the Secretariat must assess. The Secretariat is further directed to report its findings, recommendations and progress to the Standing Committee.
3. No budget has been allocated to enable the Secretariat to undertake this work and it is likely that it will only be able to conduct 'desk research'. The Secretariat is working with TRAFFIC, particularly drawing upon information contained in ETIS, to identify relevant Parties, other than those named in Decision 12.39. It intends to contact those Parties and seek information from them relating to their measures to control the domestic ivory trade. The Secretariat will assess whether the information supplied indicates that the Parties can adequately control internal trade in ivory. Where legislative and regulatory measures appear adequate, the Secretariat, drawing upon ETIS and other relevant sources, will also attempt to assess whether such measures are implemented and enforced adequately.
4. The Secretariat also intends to prepare legislative guidance material (or provide examples of suitable law already in use by Parties), with appropriate technical enforcement advice, for Parties whose internal ivory trade controls are assessed as inadequate.
5. Decision 12.37 directs the Standing Committee, at its 50th meeting, to review the work conducted by the Secretariat and the Parties and to consider whether additional measures are appropriate, including recommendations in the case of non-compliance. The Secretariat believes, given its current resources, that unless additional funding is found for this work it will only be able, by the time of the 50th meeting of the Standing Committee, to assess a very small number of Parties. It is also aware that the likelihood of the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties being held in late 2004 or early 2005 means that there is restricted time during which work on this subject can be undertaken.

Recommendations

6. The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee note this interim report and that discussion on this subject be postponed to the Committee's 50th meeting. In the meantime, it recommends that regional representatives to the Standing Committee encourage those Parties in their regions that have internal trade in ivory to be prepared to respond to requests for information from the Secretariat and to do so as promptly as possible.