# CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
## OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA
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Fiftieth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 March 2004

Strategic and administrative matters

ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT IN DIALOGUE MEETINGS

1.  This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

2.  At its 49th meeting, the Standing Committee instructed the Secretariat to prepare a document for consideration at the 50th meeting detailing the terms of reference for the organization and conduct of dialogue meetings, including *inter alia* the timing, the selection of participants and the selection of the Chairman.

3.  In fact, a document was already prepared in 2002, at the fifth dialogue meeting of the African elephant range States (Santiago, October 2002) and presented at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Santiago, November 2002) containing the 'Proposed rules of procedure for future African elephant range State dialogues' in Annex 6 to document CoP12 Doc. 20.1 (see the Annex to the present document). The 'Background' section of that document also broadly indicates the terms of reference for such meetings.

4.  Dialogue meetings were established in CITES as a forum for range States of certain species to discuss the more contentious issues relating to trade in these species. Dialogue meetings have only been convened when proposals were submitted to amend the listing of these species in the Appendices with the aim to allow trade. Given their very nature, such meetings should not be too rigidly structured and must provide the opportunity for free and frank exchanges of views without the pressures that exist on delegations during meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

5.  The Secretariat is of the opinion that the attached document could be adapted to serve as the rules of procedure for future dialogue meetings for CITES-listed species.

6.  The Secretariat proposes that the Standing Committee request the Secretariat to prepare a generic, non-species related version of the document in Annex, and agrees that this will serve for future dialogue meetings.

Proposed rules of procedure for future African elephant range State dialogues
(from Annex 6 to document CoP12 Doc. 20.1)

## Background

Following the outcome of CoP9 in November 1994, and the decision to initiate a process of dialogue among the range States of the African elephant, the regional representatives for Africa on the Standing Committee proposed, in 1995, the establishment of a dialogue process to create an opportunity for range States of the African elephant to consult and negotiate in an atmosphere free of external pressure. It was acknowledged that opposing views in the CITES forum on conservation of the African elephant and trade in elephant specimens, were not conducive to building consensus or finding a solution. It was also noted that the views aired in the media often originated from non-governmental organizations and non-range States. It was therefore decided to create a unique opportunity for Governments to discuss such issues. UNEP (represented by the Secretariat of CITES) and IUCN were asked to facilitate this dialogue process. Informal rules for the conduct of what became known as the African elephant range States dialogue were agreed at the first meeting (Dakar, 1996).

## Rules of Procedure for Dialogues of African elephant range States

### Chairman

1.  The Secretary of the Dialogue shall propose a Chairman for each meeting.

### Vice-Chairmen

2.  Vice-Chairman representing the four sub-regions of Africa with extant elephant populations, namely West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa, shall be nominated by the representatives of each sub-region during each meeting.

### Representatives

3.  Government officials of range States[*] of the African elephant, who are designated to represent their countries, may participate in the meetings.

### Observers

4.  Countries that have contributed financially to the hosting of a meeting may be represented at that meeting by officials from their governments.

5.  The Secretary may invite, as appropriate, technical experts to attend a meeting.

### Agenda

6.  The Secretary shall distribute a provisional agenda in advance of the meeting to all representatives of range States who shall adopt an agenda at the start of each meeting.

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[*] ***Note from the Secretariat:*** *the term 'range States' is meant to refer to areas of natural distribution where 'wild' populations currently exist. The term includes areas of former range where the species has been re-introduced and currently exists in re-established 'wild' populations. The term does not include areas of former range where the species only exists currently in contained populations or as captive populations.*

<u>Majority</u>

7. All decisions shall preferably be based on the consensus at each meeting, or otherwise be adopted by a simple majority of the range States represented at each meeting. Consensus need not reflect unanimity.

<u>Adoption of the Rules of Procedure</u>

8. Representatives shall decide on the adoption of Rules of Procedure at the start of each meeting.

9. Any representative of a range State may propose an amendment to the Rules of Procedure.

<u>Secretary</u>

10. The CITES Secretariat, and IUCN in its technical advisory capacity, shall serve as the Secretary of the meetings. The role of the Secretary will be to convene, coordinate and facilitate the meetings.

<u>Media</u>

11. Participants should not communicate with the media (or non-governmental organizations outside the Dialogue) concerning the discussions taking place during meetings. Participants may agree to provide a media briefing at the end of each meeting, reflecting the outcome.

<u>Communiqué</u>

12. A communiqué from each meeting shall be drafted by the Secretary in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, and proposed for adoption by representatives. Such communiqués will serve as the official record of the outcome of meetings, and will be made available in the three working languages of the Convention. Communiqués will be formally presented at the following meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.