

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



Fifty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 14-18 July 2008

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Elephants

AFRICAN ELEPHANT ACTION PLAN AND AFRICAN ELEPHANT FUND

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP14, The Hague, 2007), Decisions 14.75, 14.76 and 14.79 concerning Elephant conservation were adopted as follows:

Directed to African elephant range States

14.75 The African elephant range States shall continue their constructive elephant dialogue aiming to develop joint conservation policies and exchange of management experience in order to improve the management of elephant populations.

The African elephant range States through the African elephant dialogue process shall develop an overall African elephant action plan for improved elephant management aiming at:

- a) *accessing and directing resources, towards strengthening enforcement capacity in African elephant range States to combat poaching and illegal trade in ivory;*
- b) *the implementation of the Action plan for the control of trade in elephant ivory; and*
- c) *enhancing capacity building, managing translocations, reducing human-elephant conflicts and enhancing community-conservation programmes and development programmes within or adjacent to the elephant range.*

The elephant range States will report to the Standing Committee on progress made under this decision with a view to providing the information necessary for the reviews referred to in Decision 14.78.

Directed to Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

14.76 Parties, trading countries, the ivory carving industry, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other donors are called upon to contribute significantly to the African Elephant Fund for the implementation of the African elephant action plan and the programme for Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) to ensure their establishment and maintenance.

Directed to the Secretariat

14.79 *The Secretariat shall establish an African Elephant Fund that will be applied to the implementation of the African elephant action plan.*

The Secretariat shall establish a steering committee consisting of representatives of the range States and donors to govern the African Elephant Fund and to support and advise African elephant range States on the implementation of the Action Plan.

The Steering Committee shall decide on the organization of the administration of the fund.

The Secretariat shall, as far as possible through MIKE funding, convene an African elephant meeting before 31 July 2008 and at later dates as necessary.

3. The Decisions on the development of an *African elephant action plan* and the establishment of an accompanying African Elephant Fund are complementary. The creation of the Fund requires an understanding of the activities that should be supported, hence an action plan. The development of a meaningful *African elephant action plan* needs to take the available resources into consideration, including those provided by an African Elephant Fund. The nature and scope of the action plan also greatly influence the best *modus operandi*, structure and scale of the associated Fund.
4. Although Decisions 14.75 or 14.79 do not require the Secretariat to report to the Standing Committee, the present document is submitted in order to indicate progress with the implementation of these interconnected Decisions. The Secretariat has also proposed that the action plan and the Fund be discussed at the African elephant meeting that it intends to organize from 23 to 25 June 2008 in Mombasa, Kenya, in accordance with Decision 14.79.

African Elephant Fund

5. For many years, the Parties have attempted to attract major long-term funding or establish funds to support African elephant conservation activities. None of these attempts has been successful. Between 1989 and 1992, for example, a continent-wide funding effort was organized but donors failed to fund elephant conservation action plans drawn up by 31 African elephant range States at the urging of donor countries and conservation organizations. In 1997, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 10.2 on *Elephants: Conditions for the disposal of ivory stocks and generating resources for conservation in African elephant range State*, which was revised at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2000 and is still in effect, but the conservation trust funds that it envisaged have never materialized. Further discussions by the Standing Committee on the establishment of trust funds for channelling funding to elephant conservation were equally fruitless (see e.g. document Doc. SC.40.5.2.3).
6. The results of CoP14 have created an unprecedented opportunity for establishing a new structure to attract funding for elephant conservation throughout Africa. As an initial step, the Secretariat is undertaking a study to explore possible sources and the extent to which funding is likely to become available for the creation of an African Elephant Fund. The study looks at potential donors and their expectations and requirements (particularly with reference to Decision 14.76). It also examines existing conservation funds and funding strategies that could serve as models for an African Elephant Fund and its effective management.
7. The Secretariat intends to present the results of its initial research to the African elephant meeting mentioned in paragraph 4 above, and will inform the Standing Committee about further developments.

African elephant action plan

8. In support of the implementation by African elephant range States of Decision 14.75, the Secretariat requested the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group to compile a draft *African elephant action plan* based on existing regional and national African elephant plans and strategies, and the provisions in paragraphs a) to c) of the Decision. The drafting process should be transparent, conducted in close

consultation with the African elephant range States, and provide opportunities for comments and input at all stages. To this effect, IUCN has been asked to explain the compilation process at the meeting mentioned in paragraph 4 above and to facilitate a dialogue on the action plan with the participants. The ensuing compilation and consultations should result in a broadly supported action plan that can be adopted by the African elephant range States. The Secretariat's approach had been proposed to the African elephant range States in a letter from the Secretary-General dated 23 January 2008, and received tacit support.

9. The Secretariat will provide an oral update to the Standing Committee about its work in support of the implementation of Decision 14.75, and in particular on the outcome of the discussions at the abovementioned meeting.

Recommendations

10. The Standing Committee is recommended to take note of this document. The Standing Committee could furthermore invite the African elephant range States to report on progress made under Decision 14.75.