

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

DECISION-MAKING MECHANISM FOR AUTHORIZING IVORY TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 14th meeting (The Hague, 2007), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 14.77 concerning Elephant conservation as follows:

Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee, assisted by the Secretariat, shall propose for approval at the latest at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties a decision-making mechanism for a process of trade in ivory under the auspices of the Conference of the Parties.

3. In order to initiate the implementation of this Decision, the Secretariat proposes that a study be undertaken on the development of a decision-making mechanism and process for future trade in elephant ivory for review by the Standing Committee. This study, which could be coordinated by the Secretariat and which would be subject to the availability of external funding, is proposed to cover the following issues:
 - a) examination of the various processes and decision-making mechanisms related to ivory trade that are or have been operating under the provisions of the Convention;
 - b) evaluation of multilateral trade regimes and associated controls, safeguards and monitoring methods for other high-value commodities, with the aim of identifying a mechanism that might apply to future trade in ivory;
 - c) basic principles that should govern future trade in ivory, and proposals on how an effective, objective and independent decision-making mechanism could operate; and
 - d) exploration of the conditions under which international trade in elephant ivory could take place.
4. The Secretariat could present the results of this study, with recommendations on possible ways forward, at the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee. In undertaking this study, it would consult organizations with specific expertise in the area of the establishment of multilateral trade regimes and the implementation of related trade controls.
5. The Standing Committee is recommended to endorse the actions outlined in paragraphs 3 and 4 above.