

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

Twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Santiago (Chile), 3-15 November 2002

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation issues

CONSERVATION OF AND TRADE IN RHINOCEROSSES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. All range States of rhinoceros species, and all other Parties where applicable, are strongly urged in Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev.), "to submit a report to the Secretariat, according to an agreed format, at least six months prior to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, detailing the following:
 - a) the status of captive and wild rhinoceros populations;
 - b) a summary of incidents of illegal hunting;
 - c) a summary of incidents of illegal trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives;
 - d) the status, type, and frequency of law enforcement activities and monitoring programmes for all major rhinoceros populations;
 - e) the status of development and implementation of national legislation and national conservation action plans; and
 - f) the status of marking, registration and control of rhinoceros horn stocks".
3. The Resolution furthermore directs the Secretariat "to develop a standard format for these reports, to evaluate the reports as well as any information it has received related to trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives, and to submit a written summary of these for consideration at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties". The present document is the report of the Secretariat in response to this directive.
4. With Notification to the Parties No. 2001/086 of 19 December 2001, the Secretariat reminded all Parties of the provision in the Resolution concerning reporting. The Secretariat also informed the Parties that it was of the opinion that no further elaboration of a standard report form is required, and that reports should be submitted containing the categories of information outlined in subparagraphs a) to f) of paragraph 1 above, which are included under STRONGLY URGES in the Resolution. The Parties were also requested to submit their reports to the Secretariat not later than 30 April 2002.
5. Only two rhinoceros range States had responded by this deadline, namely Namibia and South Africa. The Secretariat commends these countries for their informative reports. The reports reflect effective conservation management of the globally important rhinoceros populations of these countries, as evident from increases in population sizes and the number of subpopulations, their management as metapopulations, the ongoing refinement of conservation planning at national level, the considerable

investment in the monitoring and protection of their populations despite generally limited resources for conservation, the role of specialized protection units and also community programmes. Both countries also appear to have effective systems of controlling stocks of rhinoceros horns. In both cases, the incidence of illegal hunting and illegal trade appears to have been very low over the past few years. The Secretariat notes that a major part of the success that these countries have achieved appears to be due to the partnerships and cooperation that were established amongst the public sector, private sector and non-governmental organizations, and increasingly also community-based organizations, exemplified by the active redistribution of rhinoceroses to virtually all currently suitable areas in each country. Other countries that have not yet managed to reverse declines in their populations of the same or other species of rhinoceros may benefit from these examples and should consider consulting with the countries concerned.

6. Two other Parties that are not range States of rhinoceroses also responded, namely Canada and Spain. Canada reported on a total of seven cases of illegal import of, or domestic trade in rhinoceros specimens, primarily as small quantities of traditional Asian medicines claiming to contain rhinoceros horn. Spain reported on the status of its rhinoceros population in captivity, amounting to 30 individuals from two species (29 specimens of *Ceratotherium simum*, presumably all of the nominate subspecies, and one specimen of *Rhinoceros unicornis*), and the absence of incidents of illegal trade or stocks of horns.
7. In its report to the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 9.14, the Secretariat expressed doubt about the value of Resolutions such as this, in particular to the rhinoceros range States. The absence of reporting mechanisms meant that the status of implementation of the operative parts of the Resolution was particularly hard to evaluate and no role had been allocated to the Secretariat in this regard. The amendment of the Resolution at the 11th meeting addressed these deficiencies, but has not resulted in improved reporting. It can furthermore be argued that many of the provisions of this Resolution could equally apply to other species and should be incorporated in routine conservation management practices. The Secretariat seriously doubts the utility of Resolution Conf. 9.14, considering that it is not implemented by most Parties concerned and that, even if it were implemented, this would be unlikely to result in improved controls of trade in rhinoceros specimens or improved conservation of rhinoceroses. The Secretariat again recommends that this Resolution be repealed.