

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

Summary record of the eighth session of Committee II

18 March 2010: 14h15 - 17h00

Chairman: W. Dovey (New Zealand)
Secretariat: J. Barzdo
J. Sellar
M. Silva
Rapporteurs: L. Garrett
J. Gray
C. Lippai
J. Robinson

43. Asian big cats

43.2 Proposed revision of Resolution Conf. 12.5 on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* (continuation)

The World Bank drew attention to their Global Tiger Initiative (GTI), which was developed with partners and aimed to provide support and secure high-level political will from tiger range States to combat the threats against wild tigers. They stressed that some range States required additional resources and that trans-boundary action was required to eliminate illicit trade and demand. They noted the need for an institution at global, regional and national levels and offered their support. Referring to a summit on wildlife protection to be held in Russia in September 2010, which would bring together heads of Government, they hoped this would lead to improved conservation of tigers. They supported the proposed working group, and urged the European Union and its Member States to respond to requests for financial support, given that between USD 50-60 million would be needed per year.

India sought clarity on the relationship between the revision of Resolution Conf. 12.5 and Decision 14.69. The Secretariat replied that Decision 14.69 had been omitted from the lists in document CoP15 Doc. 19 because it relates to the present agenda item. But the Secretariat would expect it to continue in effect, depending on the result of discussions on this document.

Chile, Egypt, Japan, Pakistan and Species Management Specialists (SMS) had concerns regarding the amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.5 proposed in the present document, which, they felt, went beyond the competence of the Convention, and would impact sovereign rights over wildlife use. They were concerned that this could set a negative precedent for the future for other CITES Appendix-I species utilized domestically, and supported the statement previously made by China. SMS noted that the range States were unanimous on tiger protection strategies and that additional reporting requirements would be burdensome, and asked that the proposal be withdrawn.

The revision to Resolution Conf. 12.5 in document CoP15 Doc. 43.2 was supported by Ghana, Israel, Mali and Rwanda.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, reported the significant progress made during discussions with China and other range

States and that they were now close to agreement. They sought time for further consultations between the proponents, the range States and the Secretariat. This was agreed by the Chair.

The Environmental Investigation Agency welcomed the progress made and hoped that the discussions would include enforcement and deadlines for reporting. The International Fund for Animal Welfare highlighted the escalation of trade in tiger bone tonic during this Year of the Tiger and urged inclusion of additional text relating to efforts to reduce demand.

The Chair then postponed further consideration.

45. Rhinoceros

45.1 Report of the Secretariat

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 45.1 (Rev. 1), noting that it included a lengthy report from IUCN and TRAFFIC on the conservation status of African and Asian rhinoceroses. It reported that, whilst some populations continued to increase in number, some range States had come under considerable pressure as a result of recent poaching and illegal trade activities. It referred to the reports submitted by range States in documents CoP15 Inf. 32 (South Africa) and CoP15 Inf. 33 (Zimbabwe) and highlighted the recent visit to Zimbabwe by the Secretary-General, where meetings had been held with the Prime Minister, other Ministers and several other high-ranking officials in the Government. It was pleased to report the considerable political will shown by the Government of Zimbabwe to combat illegal trade, although that Government had shared its concern about its current lack of capacity and resources. Recent incidents had indicated that rhinoceros poaching continued and, despite the commitment made by the Attorney General that prosecutors would be instructed to deny bail to perpetrators of poaching and illegal activities, this had not been the case. The Secretariat has written to the Attorney General to express its concern that weaknesses in Zimbabwe's judicial system prevailed. The Secretariat noted that the situation in Zimbabwe was an ongoing concern for the CITES community and that it would report at the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee with an overview of the situation.

The Secretariat apologized for the late presentation to Parties of the draft decisions in document CoP15 Doc. 45.1 Addendum, and explained that they resulted from work carried out by IUCN and TRAFFIC regarding seizures of both rhino horn and ivory. Through the extensive membership of the proposed task force, it wished to replicate the 2006 Interpol initiative that had brought together countries to share information on the illegal trade in ivory. This had resulted in a detailed Alert from the Secretariat that the Customs community had found useful for risk assessment, targeting and profiling strategies. The Secretariat concluded by clarifying that the draft decisions were focused on smuggling and the illegal trade chain.

Zimbabwe extended their appreciation to the Secretariat for its visit in February 2010 and referred to document CoP15 Inf. 33, where they outlined measures taken to combat illegal trade. Swaziland expressed concern that the nature of rhino poaching had changed and was often conducted by highly sophisticated and organized international syndicates using efficient hunting techniques, making it difficult for CITES and national wildlife law enforcement authorities to tackle alone. This was echoed by Kenya and South Africa. Zimbabwe felt that, whilst demand continued, poaching would remain high, thus necessitating consumer awareness initiatives. They believed that more stringent measures were necessary as increasing rhinoceros populations in Zimbabwe had encouraged poachers to return. They requested material assistance to enable enforcement officers to match the sophisticated poaching tactics and appealed for international cooperation and assistance to tackle the problem.

South Africa stated that rhinoceros poaching incidents had increased dramatically since 2008 and that, in spite of the significant increase in South African white rhinoceros populations, they were concerned that continuation of current poaching rates would result in declining numbers. They stated that, whilst national legislation for rhinoceros management existed, international trade was currently under provincial legislation. They noted that new national CITES regulations would come into effect on 1 May 2010. They believed that discrepancies in export figures of live animals were possibly due to human error and noted that strict measures were in place to ensure that parts and derivatives were being used only for the purposes stated on the CITES permit. They confirmed their commitment to combat poaching and subsequent trade in illegal horns and drew attention to efforts already implemented. These included publication of: a national moratorium on sale of parts and derivatives; national norms and standards for rhinoceros horn marking and trophy hunting; and the national CITES regulations. Further measures included: establishment of a national multi-departmental biodiversity investigators forum; a national

biodiversity enforcement unit; an interim National Wildlife Crime Reaction Unit; and the drafting of a framework for the safety and security of rhinoceros populations and horn stocks in South Africa.

Botswana, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Nepal, Swaziland and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) supported the draft decisions but were concerned about the sudden and sustained increase in poaching levels in some range States, which could spill over into other countries. Swaziland commended Namibia and South Africa for their efforts to combat illegal killing and hoped that a similar trend would soon be seen in Zimbabwe. WWF urged South Africa to address outstanding issues, particularly documentation of specimens owned by the private sector.

Kenya pointed out that illegal trade had a substantial effect on range States irrespective of their law enforcement capacity. They also drew attention to claims within document CoP15 Doc. 45.1 (Rev. 1) that rhinoceros horn was believed to cure cancer and urged the Secretariat to hasten a response from the World Health Organization and traditional medicine communities regarding this. China and the Chinese Association of Traditional Medicine were not aware of this belief and reiterated that the use of rhinoceros horn had been removed from Chinese pharmacopoeia since 1993.

Kenya, Nepal and Spain (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States) urged range States to submit reports in accordance with Decisions 14.88 to 14.90 to enhance decision-making and informed them of the development of a rhinoceros information management system by Kenya, which would ease and enhance reporting. Strong transboundary collaboration in law enforcement was also supported by Liberia.

Viet Nam expressed concern about the illegal imports of rhinoceros horn from South Africa and highlighted a decrease in legal imports from 42 in 2007 to 14 in 2009, which they concluded reflected a reduction in the demand for the product. They mentioned their national legislation and inter-agency cooperation with police and border control agencies to combat the illegal trade and ensure seizures at entry points, in addition to the ban on advertising and sale of endangered wildlife. They concurred with the statement made by South Africa regarding live rhinoceros sales and encouraged range, importing and transit States to collaborate to ensure improved enforcement and control of the rhino horn trade.

The United States of America, noting the critical situation faced by rhinoceroses across their range, agreed with the Secretariat that this was a high priority for CoP15. They agreed with the recommendations of IUCN and TRAFFIC and felt that the following additional draft decision directed to the Secretariat could help to combat illegal trade:

The Secretariat shall:

- a) Facilitate, as a matter of urgency, and with other partners, as appropriate, bilateral exchanges of key rhinoceros range States and rhinoceros horn consumer States, to improve wildlife enforcement cooperation efforts; and
- b) Report at the 61st and 62nd meetings of the Standing Committee on these efforts.

They also offered to provide funding support to enable implementation of such a decision.

In response to comments, the Secretariat noted the addition of Nepal in the first draft decision in document CoP15 Doc. 45.1 Addendum. Noting no opposition, the Chair concluded that the draft decisions in the document, as well as the draft decision proposed by the United States, were accepted.

45.2 Revision of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP14) on Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses

Kenya introduced document CoP15 Doc. 45.2 (Rev. 1), including a draft revision of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP14), and highlighted that, in 2009, rhinoceros poaching in Kenya had reached its highest level for 25 years.

Botswana, Indonesia, Israel, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Care for the Wild International and TRAFFIC all expressed broad support for the document.

Botswana, supported by China, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Spain (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, were opposed to the amendment in the draft resolution that urged destruction of rhinoceros horn stocks. Several Parties cited sovereignty issues on this point and expressed doubt that destruction of these stocks would benefit rhinoceros conservation. Spain, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, reminded the meeting that the option to destroy stocks was already open to Parties. To address their concern regarding the destruction of stocks, Swaziland proposed deleting the first operative paragraph from after “such stocks” to the end of the paragraph. Botswana observed that they wished the retention of the deleted text in the eighth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. Israel questioned why Parties would want to retain their stockpiles if they were not going to use them, and stressed that the financial incentives driving trade in rhinoceros horn were the main threat to the species.

Botswana, supported by Indonesia, Rwanda, Spain (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States) and Zambia welcomed the increased emphasis on consumer States to take measures to end the illegal use and consumption of rhinoceros parts and derivatives. Swaziland, however, found the use of “consumer States” to be open to misinterpretation and suggested instead to use “the importing States of rhinoceros parts and derivatives” wherever the phrase “consumer States” occurred in the draft resolution. They suggested that the latter part of the second preambular paragraph should read “the South African and Swaziland populations of *Ceratotherium simum simum* were transferred to Appendix II with annotations in 1994 and 2004 respectively” and also suggested the insertion of to control and reduce after “implement strategies” in paragraph f) under URGES.

Spain, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, mentioned several problematic aspects of the draft resolution. They believed it premature to call for the revision of the conditions for submission of the IUCN/SSC and TRAFFIC report referred to in the operative part of the resolution and that the case for a task force was unproven. They believed that China, Malaysia, South Africa, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe should be priorities for rhinoceros conservation.

Namibia reported that they would be holding a security workshop on elephants and rhinoceroses with neighbouring States.

Botswana, China and Namibia were concerned that extra financial and reporting burdens would result if the draft resolution were adopted. TRAFFIC welcomed many features in the draft resolution, notably paragraph b) under the third “RECOMMENDS”. However, they were against changing the timing of submission for their joint report with IUCN and also against paragraphs a) and b) under “DIRECTS the Secretariat”, as the process would be too cumbersome. They supported Swaziland’s amendments.

After listening to the discussion, Kenya stated that they were willing to omit the amendment urging destruction of rhinoceros horn stocks and they welcomed Swaziland’s suggestion to reword “consumer state”. At the request of the Chair, Kenya agreed to amend its draft revision of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP14) taking account of comments made, for consideration in a later session of Committee II.

6. Financing and budgeting of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

The Chair appointed Switzerland as the Chair of the Budget Working Group. Australia, Germany, Israel, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States, Zimbabwe, the International Whaling Commission, IWMC World Conservation Trust and UNEP-WCMC expressed a wish to be in the group.

46. Tibetan antelope

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 46, adding that they had received further information from India, contained in document CoP15 Inf. 15. India explained that the species was subject to the highest level of protection, both nationally and in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. All holders of wool and shawls had recently been obliged to register their stocks and about 300 declarations had been made. Some illegal trade was still taking place, with about 200 shawls seized by various enforcement agencies recently, but India was taking all possible measures to control this trade. China noted that poaching of this species was reduced in their country and that the population was increasing. The Secretariat stated that, in view of these comments, the draft decisions in the Annex were no longer required and it withdrew them. The document was noted.

The session was closed at 17h00.