

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN  
THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICE OF LAW  
ENFORCEMENT/CLARK R. BAVIN NATIONAL FISH & WILDLIFE  
FORENSIC LABORATORY AND THE SECRETARIAT OF THE  
CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED  
SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

RECOGNIZING that infractions against the Convention, particularly illicit trafficking, taking of and trade in specimens of species of conservation concern, are prejudicial to the planet's natural heritage and to the economic interests of States;

RECOGNIZING also that international co-operation is essential to protect species of wild fauna and flora;

NOTING that the increase in illicit trafficking and taking of specimens of species of wild fauna and flora included in the CITES appendices necessitates that Customs and Police authorities intensify their surveillance and enforcement measures;

TAKING account of Resolution Conf 9.8 (Rev.), adopted at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Fort Lauderdale, United States of America) and amended at the tenth meeting (Harare, Zimbabwe, June 1997) which directs the CITES Secretariat to pursue closer international liaison between the Convention's institutions, national enforcement agencies, and existing intergovernmental bodies, particularly the World Customs Organization and ICPO-Interpol;

AWARE that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Law Enforcement/Clark R. Bavin National Fish & Wildlife Forensic Laboratory, has indicated that it will provide a service to all Parties provided that its internal Law Enforcement priorities have been met, without charge, and that the CITES Secretariat advised Parties of this in Notification No. 665 in January 1992;

BELIEVING that the employment of forensic techniques is a vital element of efficient enforcement and implementation of the Convention;

THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT/CLARK R. BAVIN NATIONAL FISH & WILDLIFE FORENSIC LABORATORY (hereinafter described as the Office of Law Enforcement) AND THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA (hereinafter described as the Secretariat) have agreed as follows:

1. In order to strengthen the co-operation between them, the Office of Law Enforcement and the Secretariat will send each other general information of common interest.
2. The Office of Law Enforcement and the Secretariat will invite each other as observers to meetings of common interest that they organize.
3. The Secretariat will advise the Office of Law Enforcement of Convention enforcement and implementation issues that warrant forensic attention.

4. The Secretariat will communicate information it receives that may contribute to the operational or research work carried out by the Office of Law Enforcement.
5. The Office of Law Enforcement will communicate to the Secretariat information on forensic techniques, together with intelligence resulting from the Office of Law Enforcement that will assist implementation and enforcement of the Convention, to enable dissemination of such information to the parties.
6. The Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement will collaborate on the preparation of publications to raise awareness of and to inform services responsible for combating the illicit trade in specimens of species of wild fauna and flora that are of conservation concern.
7. The Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement will jointly devise training materials on forensic assistance in combating wildlife crime.
8. Within the limits of their respective resources, and as appropriate, the Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement will cooperate in the training of Customs, Police and other enforcement personnel.
9. The Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement will exchange information on training activities and, provided there is interest, will endeavor to ensure that forensic issues are addressed in CITES training and that CITES issues are addressed in forensic training. Subject to the resources available, and whenever appropriate, the Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement will do their utmost to ensure that trainers from one agency participate in the training activities of the other.
10. Within the limits of its resources, the Office of Law Enforcement will make its services freely available to any Party to CITES, on the clear understanding that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cannot undertake to underwrite any activities other than those carried out within the premises of the Laboratory itself. For example, the cost involved in the attendance of Law Enforcement personnel at court proceedings will be the responsibility of the Party originally seeking assistance.
11. The Office of Law Enforcement and the Secretariat will collaborate in the preparation and communication to Parties of best advice on the seizure, handling, storage, preparation and submission of items for forensic examination.
12. The Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement will collaborate and cooperate on specific forensic projects to further enforcement and implementation of the Convention.

The Secretariat and the Office of Law Enforcement resolve that nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding will exclude any act done in the best interests of the enforcement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora or of the principles of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This includes acts authorized by the CITES Secretary and the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This Memorandum shall not be interpreted in such a way as to alter the rules and procedures of either body. This Memorandum may be canceled by either signatory organization by giving notice to the other in writing at any time.

Professor Rubin Olembo  
Interim Secretary General  
CITES Secretariat

Date: 15 October 1998

Jamie Rappaport Clark  
Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date 15 October 1998