

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

Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Panama City (Panama), 14 – 25 November 2022

Species specific matters

AFRICAN LIONS (*PANTHERA LEO*)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.244 to 18.250 on *African lions* (*Panthera leo*) and the *CITES Big Cats Task Force*. Decision 18.245 relating to the CITES Big Cat Task Force and the reporting on it in Decision 18.248 are addressed in document CoP19 Doc. 67. The present document concerns Decisions 18.244, 18.246, 18.247, 18.249 and the report on them detailed in Decision 18.248 and Decision 18.250 which were adopted as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

18.244 *Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall, in collaboration with African lion range States, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and, as appropriate, taking into consideration the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative and the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa:*

- a) *support the implementation of activities in joint African lion conservation plans and strategies that relate to trade in African lion specimens and the implementation of CITES and, as needed, the review of such plans and strategies;*
- b) *jointly with the CMS Secretariat undertake a comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices, such as lion hunting, within and between countries, including the role, if any, of international trade;*
- c) *support capacity-building in African lion conservation and management including where appropriate, in the making of non-detriment findings by range States according to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on Non-detriment findings and the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.9 on Trade in hunting trophies of species listed in Appendix I or II;*
- d) *assist in maintaining a joint CITES-CMS webportal on African lions, that also allows for the posting and sharing of information and guidance on the conservation and management of African lions;*
- e) *share the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa and any relevant update with the Animals Committee for its review, as appropriate; and*
- f) *report on the implementation of the present Decision to the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee and to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.*

18.246 *The Secretariat shall, subject to external resources:*

- a) *conduct further research and analysis on the legal and illegal trade in lions and other big cats to better understand trends, linkages between trade in different species, and the commodities in trade which contain, or claim to contain, such specimens;*
- b) *assess whether the trade in lion specimens reported under purpose code "H" follows the guidance in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on Permits and certificates, paragraph 3 h), and whether additional reporting specificities or descriptions are needed;*
- c) *develop guidance materials for the identification of lion and other big cat specimens in trade in consultation with relevant experts;*
- d) *develop and support, in consultation with relevant experts, the use of appropriate forensic-type techniques for identifying lions and other big cat species in trade;*
- e) *share relevant information generated through the implementation of this Decision with the CITES Big Cats Task Force; and*
- f) *report on the implementation of the present Decision to the 32nd meeting of the Animals and the 74th meeting of the Standing Committees as appropriate, and to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.*

Directed to the Animals Committee

18.247 *The Animals Committee shall:*

- a) *review the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa and any relevant update, as appropriate;*
- b) *review the information reported by the Secretariat under Decisions 18.244 and 18.246, and submit recommendations to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and African lion range States, as appropriate.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

18.248 *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *review and adopt the draft terms of reference, membership and modus operandi for the CITES Big Cat Task Force submitted by the Secretariat as per Decision 18.245, paragraphs a) and b) prior to convening the first meeting of the Task Force;*
- b) *consider at its 74th meeting the reports submitted by the Animals Committee and the Secretariat, as per Decisions 18.244 to 18.247, and make recommendations to the Animals Committee, the Secretariat and African lion range States, as appropriate;*
- c) *recommend further actions to be taken, including the possible need for the development of a draft resolution, on the conservation of the African lion taking into consideration Decisions 18.244, 18.245 and 18.247; and*
- d) *report on the implementation of Decision 18.248, and formulate recommendations as appropriate, to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.*

Directed to Parties

18.249 *Parties, including range States and consumer countries of African lion, as relevant, are encouraged to:*

- a) *increase enforcement efforts to detect illegal, unreported or misreported trade in specimens of African lion and other big cats;*

- b) use, where appropriate, South Africa's Barcode of Wildlife Project to help identify lion specimens in trade and, when importing lion specimens from South Africa, collaborate where necessary with relevant authorities in South Africa to improve the traceability of such specimens;
- c) provide details on the observed and/or removed lion body parts in trade when collecting and communicating data on illegal killing and illegal trade in lions to CITES in their annual reports; and
- d) cooperate on lion conservation, including by sharing information on lion populations, illegal killing and illegal trade

Directed to Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, nongovernmental organizations, donors and other entities

18.250 All Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities are encouraged to support African lion range States and the Secretariat in their efforts to conserve and restore African lions across their range, taking into consideration the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa; and in implementing Decisions 18.244 to 18.246, and 18.249.

3. The present document responds to the reporting obligations of the Secretariat in Decision 18.244, paragraph f) and Decision 18.246, paragraph f). Matters related to the CITES Big Cat Task Force are addressed in document CoP19 Doc. 67. Decision 18.249 directed to Parties did not include a reporting requirement and therefore information relating to the implementation of the Decision by Parties is not included in this present document.

Implementation of Decision 18.244

4. The Secretariat secured external funding for the implementation of some activities indicated in Decision 18.244 (see [Notification to the Parties No. 2021/049](#) on *Status of funding for the implementation of valid Decisions after CoP18 – as of 22 July 2021*) and is grateful for the contributions from the European Union, Switzerland and the United States of America. The Secretariat is in discussions on implementation and will report on developments orally at the present meeting.

Paragraph a): Implementation of activities in joint African lion conservation plans and strategies, and review of such plans and activities

5. The Secretariat, in collaboration with African lion range States, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), integrated joint African lion conservation plans and strategies into the Programme of Work (POW) of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative. The Standing Committee reviewed the draft POW at its 73rd meeting (SC73; online, May 2021; see document [SC73 Doc. 14](#)) and approved it on 13 September 2021 through intersessional decision-making ([Notification to the Parties No. 2021/054](#)). The Standing Committee of CMS approved the POW at its 52nd meeting (online, September 2021) ([UNEP/CMS/STC52/Report](#)). The final POW, as approved by both the CITES and CMS Standing Committees, is provided as an Annex to Notification to the Parties [No. 2021/054](#). The Secretariat has secured partial funding from Switzerland and through the CITES project on Minimizing the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKES+) funded by the European Union to organize a second meeting of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative at which priority conservation actions for African lions are to be reviewed. At the time of writing the present document, discussions were ongoing with CMS about the timing and organization of this meeting.

Paragraph b): Study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices

6. To date, no external funding was secured to undertake the comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices called for in paragraph b) of Decision 18.244.

Paragraph c): Capacity-building in African lion conservation and management, including non-detriment findings

7. Regarding support for capacity-building in African lion conservation and management including, where appropriate, in the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs), the Secretariat received external support from

the United States of America for undertaking this activity. The Secretariat intends to develop, in collaboration with range States, best practice guidance for the making of NDFs for trade in specimens of lions. The Secretariat plans to integrate this guidance in its implementation of Decisions 18.132 to 18.134 on *Non-detriment findings*; bring it to the attention of African Carnivores range States; and incorporate NDF guidance and best practices in the *Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa*.

Paragraph d): Joint CITES-CMS webportal on African lions

8. The joint CMS-CITES webportal on African lions, referred to in paragraph d) of Decision 18.244, has been established. It is hosted on the CMS domain and publicly accessible at: <https://www.cms.int/lions/en>. It allows for the posting and sharing of information and guidance on the conservation and management of African lions.

Paragraph e): Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa

9. As requested in paragraph e) of Decision 18.244, the Secretariat shared the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* with the Animals Committee in 2019 and 2020 for review.
10. In accordance with Decision 18.247, at the 31st meeting of the Animals Committee (AC31, online, June 2021), the Animals Committee adopted the following recommendations, addressed to the Secretariat, African lion range States and other stakeholders. No recommendations were formulated for submission to the Standing Committee.
 - a) The Animals Committee invited the Secretariat to convey the comments and suggestions on the *Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa* generated by the Animals Committee's intersessional working group on lions to IUCN and the Secretariat of CMS, and to make the comments and suggestions available in an information document¹.
 - b) The Animals Committee requested IUCN, in collaboration with the CITES and CMS Secretariats, and in consultation with African lion range States, to develop the next version of the *Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa* in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Work for the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI), taking into consideration the comments and suggestions referred to in paragraph a) and recent scientific literature pertinent to the conservation of African lion.
 - c) The Animals Committee encouraged the ACI range States to consider the revised *Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa* referred to in paragraph b) at their next meeting, which is envisaged for 2022.
 - d) The Animals Committee encouraged the African lion range States to share experiences and best practice recommendations in using and implementing the *Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa* at the ACI range States' meetings and through the Joint CMS/CITES/IUCN web portal on African lions.

Implementation of Decision 18.246

Paragraph a): Research and analysis on legal and illegal trade in lions and other big cats

11. The Secretariat secured external funding for undertaking the research and analysis of the legal and illegal trade in lions and other big cats, called for in Decision 18.246, paragraph a), which is being implemented thanks to support from the Netherlands and a contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Strategic Programme of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC). The final report was not available in time for review by the Animals Committee as required under Decision 18.247, paragraph b), but will be made available for consideration by the CITES Big Cat Task Force as directed in Decision 18.248, paragraph b).

Paragraph b): Purpose code "H"

12. As not specific funding was available, the Secretariat has not assessed whether the trade in lion specimens reported under purpose code "H" follows the guidance in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits*

¹ See information document AC31 Inf. 23 at <https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac/31/Inf/E-AC31-Inf-23.pdf>

and certificates. However, the Secretariat has not received queries from Parties in this regard and is unaware of problems, if any, with the use of the purpose code. Consequently, the Secretariat does not propose any continuation of this work after CoP19.

Paragraphs c) and d): Guidance materials for the identification of lion and other big cat specimens; and forensic-type techniques for identifying lions and other big cat species in trade

13. No external resources were obtained by the Secretariat for undertaking the activities envisaged under paragraphs c) and d) of Decision 18.246. However, in 2021, the Secretariat was offered assistance from the University of Applied Sciences Van Hall Larenstein (Netherlands) to help advance their implementation. This involved the collation of guidance materials for the identification of lion and other big cat specimens, and targeted research on forensic-type techniques for identifying lions and other big cat species in trade by academics in the context of their final year dissertation. The studies were completed in early 2022. The main findings are being evaluated and will be shared with the CITES Big Cats Task Force as required.

Paragraph e): Information for the CITES Big Cats Task Force

14. The Secretariat will share relevant information generated through the implementation of Decision 18.246 with the CITES Big Cats Task Force and considers that in the light of the above information, the Decision can be deleted.

Decision 18.247

15. The Animals Committee recommended that the mandates in Decision 18.247, paragraphs a) and b), be extended beyond the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties and made proposals specifically in relation to the African Carnivores Initiative. The latter are addressed in document CoP19 Doc. 17.4.

Conclusions

16. The Secretariat regrets that delays in securing funding and in holding meetings, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, have prevented the full implementation of Decisions 18.244, 18.246, 18.247 and 18.250. The Secretariat therefore supports the suggestions of the Animals Committee, referred to in paragraph 10 of the present document, for further intersessional work on African lions (*Panthera leo*).
17. Consequently, the Secretariat proposes the revision, updating and supplementing of the current suite of Decisions on African lions (*Panthera leo*). The proposal would revise existing Decisions 18.244, 18.247, 18.249 and 18.250; and delete Decision 18.246. It also introduces a new draft decision to address the role of the Standing Committee on issues relating to African lion (as outlined in existing Decision 18.248, see document CoP19 Doc. 67). The Secretariat's proposal that the Standing Committee develop recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, the Animals Committee, the Secretariat and/or African lion range States to improve the implementation of the Convention for African lions includes "further actions to be taken, including the possible need for the development of a draft resolution on the conservation of the African lions" which was previously found in Decision 18.248, paragraph c). The text of these draft revised/new decisions can be found in Annex 1 to the present document. For ease of reference, the Secretariat has renumbered the draft decisions.

Recommendations:

18. The Conference of the Parties is invited to:
 - a) note the present report;
 - b) adopt the draft decisions contained in Annex 1 to the present document; and
 - c) delete Decisions 18.244, 18.246, 18.247, 18.249 and 18.250.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON AFRICAN LIONS (PANTHERA LEO)

For ease of reference, the Secretariat has renumbered the draft decisions but has also indicated where the text of the CoP18 Decisions was kept. Change to existing Decisions are shown underlined (additions) or in ~~strike through~~ (deletions)

Directed to the Secretariat (former Decision 18.244, now draft decision 19.AA)

19.AA Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall, in collaboration with African lion range States, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and, as appropriate, taking into consideration the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative and the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* in information document CoP18 Inf. 10:

- a) support the implementation of activities in joint African lion conservation plans and strategies that relate to trade in African lion specimens and the implementation of CITES and as needed, the review of such plans and strategies;
- b) jointly with the CMS Secretariat, undertake a comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices, such as lion hunting, within and between countries, including the role, if any, of international trade;
- c) support capacity-building in African lion conservation and management including where appropriate, in the making of non-detriment findings by range States according to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.9 on *Trade in hunting trophies of species listed in Appendix I or II*;
- d) assist in maintaining a joint CITES-CMS web portal on African lions, that also allows for the posting and sharing of information and guidance on the conservation and management of African lions;
- e) share any relevant update of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* ~~and any relevant update~~ with the Animals Committee for its review, ~~as appropriate~~; and
- f) report on the implementation of the present Decision to the ~~32nd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee~~ and to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th ~~19th~~ meeting.

Directed to the Animals Committee (former Decision 18.247, now draft decision 19.BB)

19.BB The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review any relevant update of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*; ~~and any relevant update, as appropriate.~~
- b) review the information reported by the Secretariat under Decisions 19.AA 18.244 and 18.246, and submit recommendations to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and African lion range States, as appropriate.

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.CC The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review any reports received from the Secretariat and the Animals Committee under Decisions 19.AA and 19.BB and;
- b) make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, the Animals Committee, the Secretariat and/or African lion range States to improve the implementation of the Convention for African lions, as appropriate.

Directed to Parties (former Decision 18.249 now draft decision 19.DD)

19.DD Parties, including range States and consumer countries of African lion, as relevant, are encouraged to:

- a) increase enforcement efforts to detect illegal, unreported or misreported trade in specimens of African lion and other big cats;
- b) use, where appropriate, South Africa's Barcode of Wildlife Project to help identify lion specimens in trade and, when importing lion specimens from South Africa, collaborate where necessary with relevant authorities in South Africa to improve the traceability of such specimens;
- c) provide details on the observed and/or removed lion body parts in trade when collecting and communicating data on illegal killing and illegal trade in lions to CITES in their annual reports; and
- d) cooperate on lion conservation, including by sharing information on lion populations, illegal killing and illegal trade.

Directed to Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities (former Decision 18.250, now draft decision 19.EE)

19.EE All Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities are encouraged to support African lion range States and the Secretariat in their efforts to conserve and restore African lions across their range, taking into consideration the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*; ~~and in implementing Decisions 18.244 to 18.246, and 18.249; and~~ the implementation of Decision 19.AA and 19.DD.

TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding.

Decision	Activity	Indicative costs (USD)	Source of funding
Decision 19. AA a)	Support the implementation of activities in joint African lion conservation plans and strategies that relate to trade in African lion specimens and the implementation of CITES and as needed, the review of such plans and strategies	Support to the implementation of activities under Decision 19.AA: 50,000-70,000 USD [could also help implement paragraph c)]	Extra-budgetary
Decision 19. AA b)	Jointly with the CMS Secretariat, undertake a comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices, such as lion hunting, within and between countries, including the role, if any, of international trade.	Contribution to a technical study: 50,000 USD	Extra-budgetary
Decision 19. AA c)	Support capacity-building in African lion conservation and management including where appropriate, in the making of non-detriment findings by range States according to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) and the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.9.	Regional workshop: 50,000-70,000 USD Technical guidance study: 30,000-50,000 USD	Extra-budgetary
Decision 19. AA d)	Assist in maintaining a joint CITES-CMS web portal on African lions, that also allows for the posting and sharing of information and guidance on the conservation and management of African lions	No external funding required Currently supported by staff from the CMS Secretariat.	

Decision 19. AA e)	Share <u>any relevant update of the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa</u> with the Animals Committee for its review	No external funding required	
Decision 19. AA f)	Report on the implementation of the present Decision to the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee and to the Conference of the Parties at its <u>20th</u> meeting.	No external funding required	