

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

ECOWAS REGIONAL DECLARATION ON A ROBUST RESPONSE TO THE  
EXTINCTION CRISIS AT THE 19<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO CITES

1. This document has been submitted by Ghana and Liberia in relation to document CoP 19 Doc. 83.\*

---

\* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*



## ECOWAS REGIONAL DECLARATION ON A ROBUST RESPONSE TO THE EXTINCTION CRISIS AT THE 19TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO CITES

Abuja, Nigeria, 6 – 7 October 2022

**WE**, the CITES Management Authorities of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo;

**HAVING MET** in Abuja from 6 – 7 October 2022 to discuss the Proposals and Working Documents on the agenda of the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);

**RECOGNIZING** that biodiversity forms an integral and irreplaceable part of the world's natural heritage and must be protected for future generations;

**CONSCIOUS** of the massive scale of illegal trade in threatened species in West Africa and globally, involving transnational organized criminal networks which undermine good governance and the rule of law;

**AWARE** that this illegal trade is causing widespread and irreversible damage to biodiversity and vital ecosystem services across West Africa and globally;

**FURTHER AWARE** that up to one million species are threatened with extinction and that the second leading driver (first for marine species) of this unprecedented decline in biodiversity is the direct exploitation of wild plants and animals, which includes international trade;

**CONCERNED** that species declines across the globe are increasingly outpacing efforts being made by CITES, with many Critically Endangered or Endangered species threatened by international trade not listed in the CITES Appendices or listed in CITES Appendix II rather than CITES Appendix I;

**MINDFUL** of the crucial importance of implementation of the West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime (WASCWC) as a regional mechanism directed towards curbing illegal trade in fauna and flora;

### APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL CITES COMMUNITY TO:

- 1. BE AMBITIOUS** in its response to the extinction crisis, by supporting West Africa's efforts at CoP19 to protect species threatened by international trade;
- 2. RESPOND** to West Africa's call for CITES to urgently implement measures that will contribute to reducing future risks to human and animal health from wildlife trade and trafficking;
- 3. RECOGNIZE** that the West African region, despite significant resource and capacity challenges, has taken major steps towards tackling illegal trade in wild fauna and flora and is committed to bringing an end to wildlife crime;
- 4. SUPPORT** the West African region in their proposal for the development of a CITES Enforcement Fund, to provide urgently needed resources for implementation of CITES, the West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime (WASCWC) and other similar regional initiatives.