

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



Seventy-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6–10 November 2023

Strategic matters

CITES and people

DEMAND REDUCTION TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19, Panama, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 19.55 to 19.57 on *Demand reduction to combat illegal trade* as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

19.55 *The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:*

- a) *organize translation of the Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species into French and Spanish;*
- b) *organize regional training seminars on the use of the Guidance;*
- c) *organize pilot projects to promote the use of Guidance for selected species and countries, with necessary adaptation to suit local context when appropriate;*
- d) *support all interested Parties in implementing demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species and provide necessary technical support including the use of the guidance; and*
- e) *report to the Standing Committee on the progress made in the implementation of this Decision, and make recommendations on follow-up activities, including the identification of priority species and markets that may benefit from a demand reduction strategy and the use of the Guidance, taking into account national and regional priorities.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.56 *The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 19.55 and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting with regards to follow-up activities and priority species and markets that may benefit from the adoption of demand reduction strategies and the use of the Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species.*

Directed to Parties

19.57 *Parties are encouraged, subject to available resources, to translate the Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species into local languages and share their experience in the implementation of the Guidance.*

Implementation of Decision 19.55

3. The Secretariat translated the [Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species](#) into [French](#) and [Spanish](#). The Secretariat also welcomed an initiative to translate the *Guidance* into Chinese.
4. At the time of writing, an Asian regional training seminar on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species is scheduled to take place in Singapore on 10–11 October 2023. This regional training seminar, organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with TRAFFIC, aims to build capacity for Parties in the Asian region and their key partners in the use of the *Guidance*. The Secretariat published Notification to the Parties [No. 2023/084](#) on 17 July 2023 to invite Parties in the Asian region, as well as interested and relevant organizations that are active in the region, to attend the training seminar. Separate invitations were sent to Parties in the region for which the implementation of demand-reduction interventions to combat illegal trade is of particular importance owing to illegal trade affecting them. All Asian sub-regions, namely east, southeast, south, west and central Asia have confirmed participation in the training seminar.
5. The Secretariat is grateful to the CITES Management Authority of Singapore (the National Parks Board) for agreeing to host the seminar and to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China for its financial support.
6. Similar training seminars are also envisaged for other regions, including Africa and Central, South America and the Caribbean. The Secretariat has secured the funding to support the organization of these two training seminars and preparations are under way. More details about the dates and venues of the two seminars will be announced in due course.
7. With regards to pilot projects for selected species to promote the use of the *Guidance*, the Secretariat is of the view that priority should be given to the species that are already identified in various Decisions adopted at CoP19 as in need of demand reduction interventions to combat illegal trade, notably CoP19 Decisions on Asian big cats, jaguar, rhinoceros, totoaba, and west African vulture. The Secretariat is taking this into account when preparing regional training seminars referred in paragraph 6 above.
8. In addition, in order to maximize the impact of the regional training seminars, the Secretariat has requested each participating Party to consider one or more species that are subject to illegal trade and demand from local populations for use in the exercise segment of the training seminar. Such training seminars may also help identify interested Parties and partners to engage in potential pilot projects as mentioned in Decision 19.55. Information gathered in this regard could help inform the work of the Standing Committee regarding priority species and markets that may benefit from the adoption of demand reduction strategies, as anticipated in Decision 19.56.
9. Further, the Secretariat reached out to relevant Parties and partner organizations to encourage the use of the *Guidance*, following the 5-step approach to achieve behaviour change of targeted consumers of specimens of selected species. The Secretariat is in close contact with the CITES Management Authority of China regarding the demand for totoaba maws in certain areas in southern China. The Secretariat was also in contact with the China office of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) to discuss the use of the *Guidance* in the ongoing demand reduction project for saiga antelope.
10. The European Union functions as a hub for global wildlife trafficking and has a key role to play in the fight against it¹. Reducing consumer demand for illegally traded wildlife is featured as the first action in the revised EU Action Plan Against Wildlife Trafficking. On 21 March 2023, the Secretariat attended a hybrid-event on “Reducing illegal wildlife trade: expert roundtable on awareness-raising and behaviour change” convened by the European Commission to exchange lessons learned and identify best practices to reduce consumer demand for illegally traded wildlife. In its intervention, the Secretariat introduced the background and objectives of the *Guidance* and encouraged the active use of the *Guidance* in the European Union.
11. The United States of America remains an important market for illegally traded CITES-listed species, including for use as pets. When meeting with a delegation of the United States Fish & Wildlife Service in Geneva in July 2023, the Secretariat highlighted the 5-step approach featured in the *Guidance* and encouraged the United States to be proactive in supporting the use of the *Guidance* including within the United States. The

¹ [EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking](#)

Secretariat also expressed its appreciation to the United States for its financial support for the development of the *Guidance*.

12. In early 2023, the CITES Secretary-General joined the [Solution Search contest](#) as a member of the high-level judging panel. The contest, led by RARE's Center for Behavior & the Environment, aimed to identify and accelerate existing solutions that are changing behaviour towards the environment. This year's contest focused on projects that address different aspects of illegal trade and consumption of wild animal and plants through behaviour-change interventions.
13. As noted in the World Wildlife Crime Report², trade in wildlife and wildlife products is moving online like many markets. In April 2023, the Secretariat provided a presentation on demand reduction and the *CITES Guidance* for an event to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the global [Coalition to End Wildlife Trafficking Online](#). This global coalition brings together the world's biggest e-commerce, technology, and social media companies that have joined forces to shut down online marketplaces for wildlife traffickers.
14. The *Guidance* was also presented at the meeting of the Big Cats Task Force in Entebbe, Uganda in April 2023 and led to a number of recommended measures and activities related to demand reduction to combat illegal trade in big cat specimens (see section 3 of the [Outcome document](#)).

Discussion

15. Demand for illegally acquired wild animals and plants appears to be present in all six CITES regions and seems to start at the level of the local or provincial markets. In other words, before becoming international, the demand goes through several domestic market segments of the supply chain. The main objective of the regional training seminars is to build and improve the capacity of Parties in all regions to address the demand for illegal wildlife throughout the supply chain. By way of example, demand for jaguar and its body parts does exist outside the range States in the Americas, and therefore consuming countries outside the range are invited to take coordinated action to tackle such illegal demand. However, range States are also invited to reflect on how to address the first segments/transactions of the demand that starts at the domestic level. In fact, a [study](#) mandated by Decision 18.251 indicates that there are nine types of motivations of demand for jaguar parts and derivatives, some for domestic consumption and some for the international markets.
16. The Secretariat would like to highlight the difference between public awareness campaigns and demand reduction interventions aiming at behaviour change. The *Guidance* focuses on behaviour change for the purpose of the ongoing design and implementation of demand reduction strategies and plans. Under certain circumstances, broad public awareness campaigns can be counterproductive if the current demand is only among a specific demography and in a relatively small area; such campaigns may increase demand elsewhere.

Recommendations

17. The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the present document and the progress made in implementing Decision 19.55.

² [2020 World Wildlife Crime Report](#)