

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

Illegal trade and enforcement

Enforcement

WILDLIFE CRIME ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

1. This document has been submitted by Nigeria as Chair of the working group on wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa.\*

Introduction

2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 19.88 on *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa* as follows:

***Directed to the Standing Committee***

**19.88** *The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *establish a working group, with representation from all regions, to make recommendations on the development and adoption of procedures that will promote enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries, in particular to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries;*
  - b) *consider whether the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES to Parties that request such support is needed;*
  - c) *consider the report of the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 19.87; and*
  - d) *make recommendations to the Parties, the Secretariat, and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.*
3. At the 76th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee (SC76), the working group was established, with the mandate to consider Decision 19.88 paragraphs a) and b) and report to the Standing Committee. Nigeria was appointed as Chair.
  4. The membership<sup>1</sup> of the intersessional working group on wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa was as follows (21 Parties, 20 Observers): Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, European Union, Gambia (the), Ghana, Guinea, Israel, Italy,

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\* *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.*

<sup>1</sup> *As decided by the Standing Committee at its 72nd meeting. Members were added after the call for expression of interest in Notification No. 2023/008 of 27 January 2023.*

Liberia, Niger, Nigeria (Chair), Senegal, Spain, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America; Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Born Free USA, Conservation Force, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA-UK), Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Forest Trends, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, Law of the Wild, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Panthera, South African Taxidermy and Tannery Association, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Justice Commission, Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA), World Resources Institute and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

#### Background

5. On 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Nigeria, as Chair of the Working Group, distributed a background document to Working Group members, to be used as a guide for discussions. The background document can be found in Annex 1.
6. The Working Group participated in an online meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023 to progress its work. The working group thanks the USAID West Africa Biodiversity and Low Emissions Development (WABiLED) program for hosting the zoom call and for supporting the interpretation of the discussions of the working group to French and English. The minutes with further details on the discussions held during the meeting can be found in Annex 2.

#### Promoting collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries:

7. In accordance with Decision 19.88 paragraph a), the working group discussed a number of matters with a view to make recommendations on the development and adoption of procedures that will promote enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries, in particular to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries.
8. After discussing this issue in more detail (see minutes available in Annex 2 for details), the working group agreed that a number of existing mechanisms to promote collaboration between source, transit and destination countries exist, and that:
  - a) Parties should increasingly engage through established platforms (e.g. INTERPOL/WCO) and make use of the list of focal points on the CITES website to ensure they have direct contact with relevant countries.
  - b) Increased use of existing platforms and initiatives suggested in the background document should be sought, and Parties are encouraged to make use of the different initiatives and platforms available as appropriate to enhance collaboration across source, transit and destination.
  - c) Parties should ensure their information on focal points on the CITES website is updated to enable fast and direct contact with other Parties. CITES should ensure the list of focal points on the CITES website is updated as soon as Parties submit any updated information.

#### Establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms:

9. In accordance with Decision 19.88 paragraph b), the working group considered whether the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES to Parties that request such support is needed. In particular it discussed if existing financial mechanisms are sufficient and if they are adequately providing the needed support, as well as new opportunities and sources of funding that could be explored in the execution of CITES programmes.
10. During the meeting, participants highlighted that securing funding for CITES enforcement is vital to ensure the proper implementation of enforcement activities and to ensure compliance with CITES rules and regulations. Participants in particular discussed the need for more information in order to be able to understand whether existing funding mechanisms are adequate, accessible and can be delivered in a timely manner to countries that need support.
11. After discussing this issue in more detail (see minutes available in Annex 2 for details), the working group concluded that:

- a) At this stage there is no need to create an additional funding mechanism as there are various funding mechanisms and initiatives available. These are however not sufficient and additional funding is needed to support the implementation of existing activities and programmes and Parties efforts to comply with CITES rules and regulations.
- b) There is a lack of awareness of existing initiatives and how to access funds. There is a need to increase awareness and information on how to access funding. It would be useful if CITES could organize a workshop to brief all parties/donors on the various initiatives and funding sources and how to access these projects and funds.
- c) CITES should look at available funding mechanism and make this information available on the CITES website to direct Parties to available funding sources/initiatives they can reach out for support. CITES should also explore with the donor community the possibility to increase funding for its existing programmes for activities to support Parties with CITES implementation.
- d) Where possible, it is recommended that application for funds for initiatives be flexible so that Parties can access these funds.

#### Concluding remarks

12. The Working Group notes that discussions relevant to Decision 19.88 paragraph a) have been completed, but notes that while there has been an overall agreement by the working group that at this stage an additional funding mechanism is not needed, further discussions are required to explore other existing mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES as envisaged by Decision 19.88 paragraph b).
13. To facilitate this work, the working group envisages holding an additional online meeting in Q1 2024 and will consider the need for issuing a questionnaire directed to Parties, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, regarding existing access to finance mechanisms for CITES enforcement. An initial draft of this questionnaire can be found in Annex 3.

#### Recommendations

14. The Standing Committee is invited to:
  - a) note of the discussions of the working group and make any additional suggestions for consideration;
  - b) request the working group to continue its discussions with regards to Decision 19.88 paragraph b);
  - c) request the working group to finalize the questionnaire directed to Parties, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, regarding existing access to finance mechanisms for CITES enforcement;
  - d) request the CITES Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties regarding existing access to finance mechanisms for CITES enforcement, once finalized by the working group; and
  - e) request the working group to report on the implementation of Decision 19.88 paragraph b) to the 78th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

CITES Standing Committee Intersessional Working Group  
on Wildlife Crime Enforcement Support in West and Central Africa

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

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**A. Working Group Mandate**

In accordance with Decision 19.88:

- a) make recommendations on the development and adoption of procedures that will promote enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries, in particular to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries;
- b) consider whether the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES to Parties that request such support is needed;
- c) consider the report of the Secretariat relating to decisions directed to the Secretariat; and
- d) make recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee directed to the Parties, the Secretariat, and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

Although the working group has been established under the 'Wildlife law enforcement support in West and Central Africa' group of Decisions, it is anticipated that the outcomes of this Working Group will be relevant to all Parties.

**B. Promoting collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries.**

**Background and Working Group Objectives**

[Document SC74 Doc. 35.3](#) submitted by Nigeria, Benin and Niger highlighted the need for enhanced measures to combat wildlife crime across source, transit and consumer states. The proponents considered that there are currently inadequate measures in place to ensure a whole-of-supply chain response, in which source, transit and consumer countries collaborate and communicate effectively. It further noted that West African Parties are particularly concerned that illicit demand for CITES listed flora and fauna species from the region remains unsustainably high, whilst current collaboration with other regions implicated in the supply chain remains limited.

The Standing Committee submitted [CoP19 Doc 36.1](#) which led to the adoption of Decision 19.88, which establishes this Working Group. To support the working group in its discussions, a number of Discussion points are highlighted below and relevant CITES Decisions and Resolutions are described in Annex 1 and Annex 2. The discussion points are provided to guide discussions on the WG mandate. Additional suggestions in accordance with the provisions of Decisions 19.88 are welcome by the working group members.

Discussion Points Regarding collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries in accordance with Decision 19.88 paragraph a)

**WG Discussion Point 1: Are there existing mechanisms which could be enhanced to promote collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries? Are these mechanisms fit for purpose?**

Existing mechanisms include (but are not limited to):

- **CITES Illegal Trade Reports:** Data from CITES illegal trade reports (AITRs) are being inputted into a CITES Illegal Trade Database. 81 Parties had contributed AITRs by 15 June 2022. According to [CoP19 Doc 34](#), UNODC is developing the data dissemination platform for the CITES Illegal Trade Database. This platform will enable Parties and ICCWC partner organizations access to the information which can then be analysed (during activities or by request) and used to have targeted consultations on illicit trade trends. However, the Secretariat have indicated that it will not be possible to use this database directly as a mechanism for cooperation. Rather, it could be used to identify specific activities to be conducted through a cooperation mechanism.
- **Enforcement Focal Points:** National focal points have been identified to improve collaboration and communication on a number of specific enforcement issues between agencies responsible for wildlife law enforcement in different countries. [Enforcement focal points | CITES](#)
- **Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species: Resolution Conf 17.8 (Rev CoP19):** Promotes communication between Parties on disposal matters.
- **International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC):** ICCWC provides targeted support through mechanisms specifically tailored to promote and facilitate enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries. These include, for example, the convening of Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE)<sup>3</sup> and/or Regional Investigative and Analytical Case (RIACM) meetings, and global operations to combat wildlife crime.<sup>2</sup>
- **Wildlife enforcement networks and/or regional and sub-regional wildlife law enforcement groups and regional economic communities.**
- Existing mechanisms for regular and timely exchange of seizure data between CITES Management Authorities along illegal trade chains e.g. CENComm, ENVIRONET.

**WG Discussion Point 2: Are there any new mechanisms or tools which could be developed to promote collaboration?**

New mechanisms could include (but are not limited to):

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<sup>2</sup> A WIRE meeting is a meeting convened by UNODC designed in response to the need for intensified cooperation in the investigation of transnational criminal networks. It offers a specialized platform to convene one category of officials at a time, with a view to build bridges among like-minded professionals from different countries.

A RIACM is a meeting convened by INTERPOL to support investigations and operational analytical work., in particular to follow-up on transnational investigations linking organized criminal networks through information exchange and the development of operational plans to target these networks.

- A CITES early warning mechanism (e.g. in response to heightened seizures, or identification of a new trade route) that will ensure all Parties along the supply chain are promptly made aware of priority enforcement needs and can respond accordingly.
- A forum to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries on priority issues (e.g. *Pterocarpus erinaceus*).
- A new mechanism for regular and timely exchange of seizure data.
- A new mechanism to plan joint enforcement operations.
- New CITES guidelines on enforcement coordination between source/transit/consumer countries.

### **C. The establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms in accordance with Decision 19.88 paragraph b).**

[CoP19 Doc 36.2](#) highlighted the enormous challenge and overwhelming resources required to adequately enforce the Convention. To support enhanced CITES enforcement efforts globally in response to the species extinction crisis, the establishment of a CITES Enforcement Fund was proposed.

CoP19 adopted Decision 19.88, which establishes this Working Group. To support the working group in its discussions, a number of Discussion points are highlighted below and relevant CITES Decisions and Resolutions are described in Annex 1 and Annex 2. The discussion points are provided to guide discussions on the WG mandate. Additional suggestions in accordance with the provisions of Decisions 19.88 are welcome by the working group members.

#### **Discussion Points**

##### **WG Discussion Point 3: Is a CITES Enforcement fund needed by Parties to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES?**

Considerations include (but are not limited to):

- Existing financial mechanisms and to what extent they provide adequate support to Parties that need it e.g. CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP), ICCWC, Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP), GEF-8.
- Other / new potential sources of funding.
- The scale of investment required to meet enforcement requirements (e.g. national and regional CITES enforcement budgets) and needs related to the implementation of CITES.

##### **WG Discussion Point 4: How would a CITES enforcement fund be maintained and administered?**

- One example may be the African Elephant Fund, which is administered by UNEP. A Steering Committee of African Elephant Range States reviews Proposals and makes decisions about distribution of funds.
- How would the fund administrator assist with sourcing funds? How would Parties apply to be able to use the funds?

**WG Discussion Point 5: What other mechanisms could be developed to provide sustained financial support to Parties in the enforcement of CITES?**

Considerations include (but are not limited to):

- Creation of a dedicated fund under the World Bank or GEF that focuses solely on combating wildlife crime and on supporting Parties with the broader implementation of CITES (support for population surveys and the making of NDFs etc.).
- Creating a dedicated fund through donor agencies and partners.

**D. Summary Actions**

Working Group members are invited to:

1. Provide ideas and input regarding the Discussion Points outlined in Sections B. and C. above.
2. Provide any other inputs for consideration by the Working Group in relation to its mandate.

**E. Proposed Working Group Timetable**

Action	Responsible	Deadline
Distribution of discussion points to WG members	Chair	7 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
Responses on discussion points sent to the Chair by email	WG members	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
WG responses summarized.	Chair and Secretariat	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Zoom meeting of the Working Group	WG members	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
Prepare draft document for submission to SC77	Chair and Secretariat	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Responses on draft SC77 document	WG members	30 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Amended document shared with WG	Chair	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Final comments on SC77 document submitted	WG members	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
WG to present findings to SC77 and seek further feedback	Chair	November 2023
Between SC77 and SC78 agree on recommendations (e.g. Decisions) that will be submitted for approval at SC78.	Chair	SC77 – SC78
At SC78 submit the final WG Decisions for approval by the SC and submission to CoP for consideration	Chair	SC78

Annex 1: Related Decisions

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Directed to</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>18.90</b> <b>(Rev. CoP19)</b>	<b>Parties importing CITES specimens from West and Central Africa</b>	<p><i>Parties importing CITES specimens from West and Central Africa are encouraged to assist their counterparts in West and Central Africa, by implementing measures that will address wildlife crime and support legal trade that is limited to sustainable levels, in particular by:</i></p> <p><i>a) supporting efforts to determine and ensure sustainable levels of trade through scientific studies that can facilitate the making of robust non-detriment findings;</i></p> <p><i>b) undertaking due diligence as outlined in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement and closely scrutinizing consignments of CITES-listed species imported from West and Central Africa and accompanying CITES documents to ensure that illegal species are not laundered into legal trade; and</i></p> <p><i>c) as a priority, raise any concerns about imports with the exporting State, or with the Animals Committee, Plants Committee, Standing Committee, or the Secretariat.</i></p>
<b>18.91</b> <b>(Rev. CoP19)</b>	<b>Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations</b>	<p><i>Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide financial and technical assistance to Parties in West and Central Africa and mobilize resources to support the implementation of Decisions 19.84, 19.85, paragraphs a) and b), 19.86, 19.87 paragraphs a), b) and c) and 18.90 (Rev. CoP19) and, as appropriate, take these Decisions into consideration in the development of work programmes or activities they initiate in the two subregions.</i></p>
<b>19.84</b>	<b>Parties</b>	<p><i>Parties in West and Central Africa and Parties importing CITES specimens from West and Central Africa are strongly encouraged to enhance collaboration and communication regarding illegal wildlife trade affecting the two subregions, including by:</i></p> <p><i>a) using existing secure communication channels such as those provided by INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization for exchange of enforcement and illegal trade related information, and by drawing upon the enforcement focal point information available through the National CITES Authorities and Enforcement focal points webpages;</i></p> <p><i>b) actively pursuing international law enforcement collaboration through the mechanisms established by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC); and other relevant information exchange platforms;</i></p>



		<p>c) reporting seizures on timber exported from West and Central Africa to the exporting countries as soon as practical, as appropriate, including sharing information described in paragraph 2.1 d) under Strengthen regional and international collaboration to address illegal trade in CITES-listed tree species in the outcome document of the Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species; and</p> <p>d) actively pursuing the implementation of the measures and activities outlined in the Outcome document of the Task Force on illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species.</p>
19.85	<b>Parties in West Africa and Central Africa</b>	<p>Parties in West and Central Africa should:</p> <p>a) as relevant to them and where not yet done, continue to actively pursue the implementation of the Recommendations to Parties in West and Central Africa for consideration in their implementation of measures and activities to address wildlife crime affecting the two subregions;</p> <p>b) engage in regional and bilateral activities to share information on their national legislative and regulatory measures, exchange experiences and best practices, and identify opportunities for regional and cross-border cooperation and joint actions to address illegal trade in wildlife, taking into consideration paragraph 13 e) of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on Compliance and enforcement; and</p> <p>c) identify priority actions that could benefit from support, including activities referenced in Decisions 19.84, 19.85, paragraphs a) and b), 19.86, 19.87 paragraphs a), b) and c) and 18.90 (Rev. CoP19), and present these to the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICWC), donors and the development community, to seek support to implement them.</p>
19.86	<b>Parties in West Africa and Central Africa</b>	<p>a) Parties in West Africa are invited to, through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission, request support from ICCWC for the implementation of the ICCWC Guidelines for Wildlife Enforcement Networks, to facilitate fully operationalizing the West Africa Network to Combat Wildlife Crime (WAN); and</p> <p>b) Parties in Central Africa are invited to, through the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) or other appropriate platforms, request support from ICCWC for the implementation of the ICCWC Guidelines for Wildlife Enforcement Networks.</p>

19.87	<b>Secretariat, with its ICCWC partners</b>	<p>The Secretariat shall:</p> <p>a) subject to external funding, work with its ICCWC partners to support Parties in West and Central Africa in addressing illegal trade in wildlife, including by promoting and facilitating collaboration and communication between Parties in West and Central Africa, transit and destination countries, through the convening of Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement (WIRE) and Regional Investigative and Analytical Case (RIACM) meetings as appropriate, and by supporting Parties upon request as anticipated in Decision 19.86;</p> <p>b) subject to external funding, work with ICCWC partners to expedite ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit in West and Central African Parties to inform capacity building activities;</p> <p>c) subject to external funding and upon request from Parties, undertake general and targeted capacity-building activities to strengthen the effective implementation of CITES in the two subregions;</p> <p>d) issue a Notification to the Parties requesting them to provide information on their implementation of Decisions 19.84, 19.85, 19.86 and 18.90 (Rev. CoP19);</p> <p>e) report to the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee on the implementation of Decision 19.87, paragraphs a), b) and c), and the responses to the Notification in Decision 19.87, paragraph d), together with any recommendations it may have; and</p> <p>f) support the Standing Committee in the implementation of Decision 19.88, paragraph a) and b).</p>
19.88	<b>Standing Committee</b>	<p>The Standing Committee shall:</p> <p>a) establish a working group, with representation from all regions, to make recommendations on the development and adoption of procedures that will promote enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries, in particular to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries;</p> <p>b) consider whether the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES to Parties that request such support is needed;</p> <p>c) consider the report of the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 19.87; and</p>

		<i>d) make recommendations to the Parties, the Secretariat, and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.</i>
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**A. Resolutions relating to collaboration between source transit and destination countries:**

Resolution	Relevant Section(s)
<p><a href="#"><u>Res. Conf. 17.8 (Rev CoP19)</u></a></p> <p><b>Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species</b></p>	<p><i>Regarding specimens that are exported or re-exported in violation of the Convention</i></p> <p>1. RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>a) <i>when specimens are exported or re-exported in violation of the Convention, importing Parties:</i></p> <p>i) <i>consider that the seizure and confiscation of such specimens are generally preferable to the definitive refusal of the import of the specimen;</i></p> <p>ii) <u><i>notify as soon as possible the Management Authority of the State from which the specimens were consigned of the violation and of any enforcement actions taken concerning these specimens; and</i></u></p> <p>iii) <i>are encouraged to take enforcement actions against the party which violated the Convention in addition to seizure and confiscation of the specimens;</i></p> <p>----</p> <p><i>Regarding the disposal of confiscated and accumulated dead specimens</i></p> <p>2. RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>a) <i>a Management Authority before making a decision on the disposal of confiscated live specimens of species in the Appendices consult with and obtain the advice of its own Scientific Authority and, if possible, <u>of that of the State of export or origin of the confiscated specimens, and other relevant experts</u></i></p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Res. Conf. 17.10 (Rev. CoP19)</u></a></p> <p><b>Conservation of and trade in pangolins</b></p>	<p><i>Parties and non-Parties to further strengthen national inter-agency cooperation and <u>international cooperation and to enhance collective efforts as range, transit and destination States to coordinate activities, investigations and enforcement</u>, including by implementing systems for the recording of information relating to illegal trade in pangolin species and the exchange of information on trade routes and patterns and law enforcement responses to combat illegal trade in pangolin specimens, where possible and allowed by national legislation;</i></p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Res. Conf. 13.11 (Rev. CoP18)</u></a></p> <p><b>Wild meat</b></p>	<p>ENCOURAGES Parties to, as appropriate:</p> <p><u>d) increase collaboration and information sharing among Parties to better understand and monitor the international trade in wild meat</u></p>

Res Conf. 11.3  
(Rev. CoP19)

**Compliance and enforcement**

RECOMMENDS that:

a) if the Management Authority of the State of import or re-export has reason to believe that CITES specimens are being traded in contravention of the laws of any country involved in the transaction, or has reason to believe that the specimen accompanied by a CITES document may not have been traded in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, it should:

i) immediately consult with the Management Authority in the country whose laws were thought to have been violated (and the exporting or re-exporting country if different) and, to the extent possible, provide that Management Authority with copies of all documentation relating to the transaction, and during consultation the Parties should inform each other of all circumstances and facts relating to the transaction likely to be relevant to compliance with the Convention, national laws, illegal trade and also of control measures;

ii) when they have reason to believe that the specimen may not have been legally acquired, that the non-detriment finding, if required, may not have been made or properly made, or that any other CITES requirement(s) may not have been fulfilled, request the basis for the relevant determination;

iii) if after consulting with the Management Authority of the relevant State, the Management Authority of the State of import or re-export has not received satisfactory information regarding any CITES requirements, it should not authorize the import or re-export of the specimen concerned, including not issuing any required permits or certificates;

iv) if there is no satisfactory response, request the assistance of the Secretariat, as appropriate, in the context of its responsibilities under Article XIII of the Convention and Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on CITES compliance procedures;

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b) if, when implementing the provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.7 (Rev. CoP15) on Transit and transshipment, the Management Authority of the State through which specimens are transiting or being transhipped has reason to believe that specimens may not have been traded in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, it should immediately consult with the Management Authority in the State of export or re-export and, to the extent possible, provide that Management Authority with copies of all documentation relating to the transaction;

c) to ensure effective cooperation, Management Authorities should provide timely responses to inquiries (good practice is to provide a response within two weeks or indicate the need for more time to provide a response) and cooperate with the Management Authorities of other Parties, and the Secretariat when applicable, on matters relating to the validity of CITES documents;

	<p>-----</p> <p>The Conference of the Parties directs the Secretariat to, subject to available resources:</p> <p><i>a) analyse, in collaboration with ICCWC partners, the annual reports on illegal wildlife trade;</i></p> <p><i>b) <u>share with Parties information relating to the analysis to support further enforcement activities;</u> and</i></p> <p><i>c) submit a report at each meeting of the Standing Committee and the Conference of Parties based on the analysis and other relevant information available through ICCWC partners;</i></p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Res. Conf. 17</u></a> <a href="#"><u>(Rev. CoP19)</u></a></p> <p><b>National Reports</b></p>	<p><i>URGES all Parties to submit an annual illegal trade report by 31 October each year covering actions in the preceding year using the report format and the most recent version of the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report distributed by the Secretariat, as approved by the Standing Committee or amended by the Secretariat to include new terms adopted by the Conference of the Parties;</i></p> <p><i>AGREES that, unless otherwise specified by the reporting Party, <u>data collected in the annual illegal trade report and included in the database should be made available to Parties for research and analysis of wildlife and forest crime as it affects them, and to the members of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) for ICCWC global research and analysis studies on wildlife and forest crime and any data related to seizures of elephant specimens (as prepared by the Secretariat) to ETIS to support the monitoring the illegal trade in ivory and other elephant specimens as provided for in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19)</u></i></p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Res. Conf. 11.9</u></a> <a href="#"><u>(Rev. CoP18)</u></a></p> <p><b>Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles</b></p>	<p><i>all Parties:</i></p> <p><i>i) whose national legislation is not sufficient to control effectively the unsustainable harvest of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, to enact legislation to protect and manage these species appropriately;</i></p> <p><i>ii) especially range States and exporting and importing States of tortoises and freshwater turtles, to enhance and increase enforcement and prosecution efforts with regard to existing legislation as a matter of urgency; and</i></p> <p><i>iii) <u>to enhance cooperation concerning control of trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles, amongst wildlife-law enforcement agencies at national and international levels, and between enforcement agencies and national CITES authorities, including by, when possible making use of INTERPOL's National Environmental Security Seminars (NESS) to promote inter-agency coordination and, as appropriate, cooperating through regional wildlife enforcement networks to facilitate collaborative action at international level;</u></i></p>

<p><u>Res. Conf 10.10 (Rev. CoP19)</u></p> <p><b>Trade in elephant specimens</b></p>	<p><i>Regarding trade in elephant specimens</i></p> <p><i>URGES Parties that close their domestic markets to <u>enhance their border controls and collaboration with neighbouring countries that have not taken similar measures</u>; and such neighbouring countries to closely review trends to ensure that measures are taken to immediately and effectively address illegal trade in ivory.</i></p>
<p><u>Res Conf 18.6</u></p> <p><b>Designation and role of Management Authorities</b></p>	<p><i>V. Regarding coordination and capacity-building</i></p> <p><i>10. RESOLVES that Management Authorities have, in accordance with national law, the main responsibility of coordinating all national governmental agencies with a role in the implementation of the Convention;</i></p> <p><i>11. <u>ENCOURAGES Management Authorities to establish mechanisms for coordination and communication between Management Authorities and Scientific Authorities, as well as other government agencies with a role in the implementation and enforcement of the Convention (including, for example, customs, police and inspection services) to facilitate the effective implementation and enforcement of the Convention in accordance with their national laws and practices;</u></i></p> <p><i>12. <u>URGES Management Authorities and enforcement authorities to cooperate closely in the fight against illegal trafficking of wild fauna and flora in accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) 9 on Compliance and enforcement;</u></i></p> <p><i>13. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Parties, the Secretariat and interested intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations to develop and support capacity-building initiatives designed specifically to improve the implementation of the Convention by Management Authorities</i></p>



**B. Resolutions relating to an Enforcement Fund:**

The majority of Resolutions contain provisions calling on Parties, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to support implementation of the Resolution.

Resolution	Relevant Section(s)
<p data-bbox="164 376 368 409"><a href="#">Res. Conf 19.2</a></p> <p data-bbox="164 510 411 544"><b>Capacity Building</b></p>	<p data-bbox="448 376 1350 443">The <u>full Resolution</u> is relevant to the establishment of a CITES enforcement fund, including:</p> <p data-bbox="448 477 1281 510"><i>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</i></p> <p data-bbox="448 544 1350 611">1. <i>AGREES that full implementation of CITES requires the provision of adequate tools and resources and timely capacity-building efforts;</i></p> <p data-bbox="448 645 1350 846">2. <i>INVITES Parties to: a) support the capacity-building efforts of other Parties through sharing of information regarding capacity-building materials and efforts, translating materials into both the working languages and non-working languages of the Convention, offering advice related to CITES implementation, as appropriate, and providing of financial support for in-person training or training opportunities;</i></p> <p data-bbox="448 880 1350 981"><i>b) ensure the inclusion of capacity-building, including targeted, technical, enforcement and compliance assistance, in the relevant bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes;</i></p>



CITES Standing Committee Intersessional Working Group:  
Wildlife Crime Enforcement Support in West and Central Africa

MINUTES – WORKING GROUP CALL OF 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023

**Welcome remarks:**

The meeting was moderated by Nigeria as chair of the Intersessional Working Group on Wildlife Crime Enforcement Support in West and Central Africa.

The Chair welcomed participants, provided welcoming remarks and outlined the objectives of the meeting.

The Chair outlined the mandate of the working group and participants were encouraged to use the background document, available in Annex, for reference to discussions. The CITES Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur. The Chair extended its thanks to WABILED for providing simultaneous translation during the meeting.

**Introduction of participants:**

Working group member Parties and observers that participated included: Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, European Union (Belgium), Gambia (the), Guinea, Italy, Niger, Nigeria (Chair), Senegal, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, the CITES Secretariat, Born Free USA, Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA-UK), Fauna and Flora International (FFI), Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Justice Commission, World Resources Institute.

**Promoting collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries:**

The Chair highlighted a number of existing mechanisms to promote collaboration between source, transit and destination countries exist, some of which are highlighted in the background document. The working group should discuss and make recommendations on the development and adoption of procedures that will promote enhanced collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries, in particular to promote regular communication between source, transit and consumer countries.

Key issues raised during the discussion included:

- There are various layers of collaboration and existing mechanisms to share real-time information for investigations (e.g. those available through INTERPOL or WCO) should remain the formal mechanisms to be used to share real time intelligence.
- It is also important to enhance direct contact between Parties and their counterparts but there are some challenges to contact relevant authorities. There are already a number of enforcement focal points and national contacts (including enforcement) on the CITES website. Sometimes these are not correct or updated, and Parties should keep this information up to date on the CITES website.
- There are additional initiatives and platforms not included in the background document that could be used, such as the open timber portal platform (<https://opentimberportal.org/>) available in all Congo basin countries and used to exchange information across borders. This tool could potentially also be extended to other CITES countries. Other platforms such as the (Africa-, SADC-, east Africa-) TWIX could also be increasingly used to exchange general information, noting sensitive information should be exchanged using formal channels.
- The need to align sanctions and cooperate and enhance collaborative efforts to combat wildlife crime with bordering countries was also stressed.

Summary by the chair:

- Parties should increasingly engage through established platforms (e.g. INTERPOL/WCO) and make use of the list of focal points on the CITES website to ensure they have direct contact with relevant countries.
- Increased use of existing platforms and initiatives suggested in the background document should be sought, and Parties are encouraged to make use of the different initiatives and platforms available as appropriate to enhance collaboration across source, transit and destination.

- Parties should ensure their information on focal points on the CITES website is updated to enable fast and direct contact with other Parties. CITES should ensure the list of focal points on the CITES website is updated as soon as Parties submit any updated information.

#### **The establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms:**

The Chair highlighted the key discussion points suggested in the background document, and encouraged the working group to consider whether the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES to Parties that request such support is needed. In particular to discuss if existing financial mechanisms are sufficient and if they are adequately providing the needed support, as well as new opportunities and sources of funding that could be explored in the execution of CITES programmes.

Key issues raised during the discussion included:

- The scope and focus of a potential fund needed to be clarified, in particular whether the fund should be focused on facilitating compliance with – and the implementation of – CITES, or whether the funds should be for efforts to combat wildlife crime. There were varying opinions with some participants suggesting the focus should be on helping Parties implement CITES, and others suggesting the focus should remain on combating wildlife crime.
- Various Parties stressed that there was a need for funds to be available to Parties to support their efforts to implement CITES and address key gaps in capacity of management and scientific authorities, the generation of data for reports, the implementation of national strategies, Task Forces and plans, and broader implementation of – and reporting – to CITES. This could be streamlined with a CITES fund that included a call for projects so the authorities can develop projects and access funds to implement CITES. It was noted Parties often rely on external funds and external projects to raise funds to implement CITES.
- There was broad agreement that various initiatives and projects existed that could support different activities and Parties depending on needs and gaps identified. Issues related to CITES implementation and compliance could be addressed through initiatives such as the CITES Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) and issues related to wildlife crime could be addressed through various existing initiatives such as the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), the GEF, the Global Wildlife Programme or through various other existing initiatives and projects available in the different regions.
- It was suggested that noting the various existing initiatives, in order to discuss whether a new fund is needed it would be helpful to understand the gaps in the current funding mechanisms and where more funds were needed or how to adapt existing initiatives to emerging needs. It was also suggested it would be helpful to identify existing projects that support CITES implementation in West and Central Africa and that could complement the gap analysis. An inventory of existing projects supporting CITES implementation could be conducted to identify the various ongoing projects that Parties could reach out for to support (e.g. WABILED in West and Central Africa, among others). It was also noted the World Bank was in the process of conducting a second analysis of investment of donors on illegal trade that includes information on projects or interventions that aim to tackle or counter the illegal wildlife trade and that this information may be useful to Parties.
- It was acknowledged that further funding is needed and that the problems and funding needs of Parties far outweigh the funding available. Current financing mechanisms are not sufficient to supply all the demand from Parties, and additional funding was needed to support Parties efforts. Parties were encouraged to reach out to existing initiatives and funding mechanisms for support and to explore additional sources of funding. Apart from the discussed fund sources, it was also suggested other sources of funds such as Corporate Social or Environmental Responsibility could be explored as potential source of funds. It was noted some Parties are not aware of existing financing mechanisms and initiatives and that it would be useful if this information was more readily available on the CITES website.

#### Summary by the chair:

- At this stage there is no need to create an additional funding mechanism as there are various funding mechanisms and initiatives available. These are however not sufficient and additional funding is needed to support the implementation of existing activities/programmes and Parties efforts to comply with CITES rules and regulations.
- There is a lack of awareness of existing initiatives and how to access funds. There is a need to increase awareness and information on how to access funding. It would be useful if CITES could organize a workshop to brief all parties/donors on the various initiatives and funding sources and how to access these projects and funds.

- CITES should look at available funding mechanism and make this information available on the CITES website to direct Parties to available funding sources/initiatives they can reach out for support. CITES should also explore with the donor community the possibility to increase funding for its existing programmes for activities to support Parties with CITES implementation.
- Where possible, it is recommended that application for funds for initiatives be flexible so that Parties can access these funds.

#### **Action Points.**

- CITES to send summary of the meeting to the Chair. Chair to revise as needed and share with participants for feedback.
- Chair to explore the need to organize another call for the working group and update working group members as needed for a final call to discuss the final comments and/or the recommendations from the working group to the Standing Committee.
- Chair to prepare SC doc on behalf of the working group and submit to the Secretariat prior to the deadline for SC documents to SC77.

#### **AOB**

Mr TD John, the Chair of the working group and MA of Nigeria, announced his retirement in early August and introduced the new CITES MA of Nigeria, Ms Catherine Olukanni Bosede, that will chair the working group and coordinate the next steps as needed.

Noting some of the challenges of Parties regarding CITES implementation (in particular of listing proposals and making NDF's and the implementation of the adopted listing proposals), a Party drew to the attention of the working group the Animals and Plants Committee working group on Species at risk of extinction affected by international trade, that is looking into drafting recommendations on possible processes and mechanisms for providing support of guidance to Parties in the development of listing proposals. Decisions 19.132 – 19.134 on NDF's also direct the Secretariat to organize an international expert workshop, scheduled to take place in Q4 of 2023, to review, advance of complete draft guidance materials.

CITES Standing Committee Intersessional Working Group on Wildlife Crime Enforcement Support in West and Central Africa

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ACCESS TO EXISTING FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR CITES ENFORCEMENT

CITES Parties, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations are invited to provide responses to the questionnaire below, regarding access to existing mechanisms available to CITES Parties to finance enforcement of the Convention.

Kindly submit responses no later than 1st January 2024, to Mrs Catherine Olukanni, Chair of the Standing Committee intersessional Working Group on wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa: [boseolukanni@gmail.com](mailto:boseolukanni@gmail.com)

**1. Contact Details**

Name:

Title:

Organization/Institution:

Country:

Telephone:

Email:

**2. Existing finance mechanisms**

Please list all financial mechanisms/funds that your country/organization has been able to access to over the last 3 years for CITES enforcement or considers relevant to the procurement of CITES enforcement resources. Include examples of projects supported.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of these mechanisms/funds in terms of their effectiveness, flexibility, and alignment with your needs?

**3. Access to finance**

Please provide an overview of finance secured and the scale of funding provided to your country/organization over the last 3 years for CITES enforcement e.g. more than 1 million USD, 100,000 – 500,000 USD, less than 100,000 USD.

**4. Timescale for funding**

In your experience, please indicate how long it usually takes for your country/organization to access funding once it has identified a suitable funding mechanism. E.g. less than 3 months, 3 months – 6 months, 6 months – 1 year.

If the timescales vary between funding mechanisms, please provide details.

Does your country/organization have access to emergency funds should a CITES enforcement emergency arise?

**5. Funding limitations**

In your experience, are there restrictions or limitations within the current financial mechanisms/funds that hinder their ability to address your needs? For example, in terms of eligibility, application process and allocation of resources. Please describe these and how you would address these.

## **6. Funding requirements**

Does your country have a significant number of projects relating to CITES enforcement that are currently underfunded or unfunded? Please provide details and an estimate of the scale of funds required to ensure effective enforcement of CITES in your country.