

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



Seventy-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 3-8 February 2025

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. Following the CITES regional training workshop on demand reduction for Asia (Singapore, October 2023), the training workshop for the African region on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade took place from 11 to 12 September 2024 in Lusaka, Zambia. Representatives from CITES Management and Scientific Authorities of 18 African Parties attended the training workshop. This was the first regional event of its kind on the African continent. The Secretariat is grateful to the CITES Management Authority of Zambia (Department of National Parks) for hosting the workshop, to the European Union and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China for the financial support, and to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Zambia country office for providing logistical assistance.
4. There is local demand in various forms in several countries in the African region. Participants in the workshop were very engaged and committed during the training process, particularly during the breakout sessions which were dedicated to the preparation of work plans for selected species in the region and for their respective countries. The workshop included presentations on the background and objectives of demand reduction strategies to achieve consumer behaviour change, as well as detailed explanations on the five-step approach in the *Guidance*, and regional and national experiences. During the breakout sessions, participants prepared workplans for selected species in the region and for their respective countries. This approach can be used in future training workshops.
5. Argentina has offered to host the regional training workshop on demand reduction for Latin America (Central and South America and the Caribbean and Mexico) from 26 to 27 March 2025 in Buenos Aires. The Secretariat has secured the funding to support the organization of this training workshop from China and the European Union. Parties and observer organizations active in the region have been invited to nominate participants to attend the workshop.
6. With regards to pilot projects for selected species to promote the use of the *Guidance*, thanks to the funding from the Netherlands, the Secretariat has started work on three different pilot projects for species identified in CoP Decisions that explicitly called for demand reduction interventions to combat illegal trade, i.e. totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*) for Asia [Decisions 19.75 and 18.292 (Rev. CoP19)], West African vultures (*Accipitridae spp.*) for Africa (Decision 19.192) and Jaguars (*Panthera onca*) for Latin America (Decision 19.111).
 - a) For Asia, the pilot project on reducing demand for specimens of totoaba is ongoing. It aims to target a relatively small region in the country where the demand for totoaba maw (dried form of swim bladder) is known as most prevalent among small demographic groups. The project features a campaign towards the most likely consumers in the region via tailored messages through mobile apps. This project uses a targeted strategy that aims to achieve consumer behaviour change, as opposed to traditional public awareness campaigns.
 - b) For the African region, a pilot project on reducing belief-based demand for West African vulture in Nigeria is being planned. There have also been preliminary discussions on a potential pilot project to reduce demand for illegally sourced wild meat in the Democratic Republic of the Congo implicating multiple CITES-listed species. The intention is to focus on the consumption by urban populations as a luxury and status symbol and on species where cross-border trafficking is involved.
 - c) A pilot project to reduce demand for jaguars in the Plurinational State of Bolivia is under consideration for the Latin American region.
7. With funding from US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Secretariat is providing support to a project in Viet Nam which includes activities to reduce demand for illegal wildlife, focusing on rhino horn, elephant ivory, tiger products, and pangolin scales. The CITES Management Authority of Viet Nam and implementing agencies are expected to follow the *CITES Guidance on demand reduction* and methodologies for targeted strategies to achieve consumer behaviour change.

Implementation of Decision 19.57

8. Thanks to funding from the European Union, the *Guidance* was translated into German, Italian, Dutch and Portuguese and uploaded on the CITES website, together with the English, French, Spanish and Chinese versions.

9. As reported in document SC78 Doc. 38.2 on the *International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC)*, the Consortium is in the final stages of discussions on a new project funded by the European Union to support the ICCWC Vision 2030 and a broad range of activities to combat wildlife crime. The project includes, *inter alia*, a component on demand reduction interventions to combat illegal wildlife trade. The Secretariat has made available the *CITES Guidance on demand reduction* for those involved in the design and implementation phase of the project.

Discussion and conclusions

10. As highlighted in the third edition of the *World Wildlife Crime Report (WWCR3)* published in May 2024, concerted efforts over the past decade in combating illegal trade in specimens of elephants and rhinoceroses have resulted in a decline in poaching and illicit trafficking of their parts. It further notes that lessons from where progress is being made indicate that multifaceted interventions at both demand and supply stages can reduce wildlife trafficking. Implementation of demand reduction strategies thus remains one of the critical and effective measures in the fight against wildlife trafficking.
11. While the three pilot projects to promote the use of the *Guidance* on selected species are still at their early stages, they could potentially provide valuable evidence supporting the role and impact of demand reduction strategies in combating illegal trade in a wider range of CITES-listed species. Future pilot projects could consider other regions.
12. Based on these considerations and as part of its overall work on combatting illegal trade, the Secretariat proposes to continue the work on demand reduction with new draft decisions contained in the Annex to the present document. The Secretariat reminds Parties that, in addition to Resolution Conf. 17.4 on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*, more than ten Resolutions call for measures to address demand for illegally or unsustainably sourced specimens of CITES-listed species, including species-specific resolutions on marine turtles ([Conf. 19.5](#)), helmeted hornbill ([Conf. 17.11](#)), pangolins [[Conf. 17.10 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#)], great apes [[Conf. 13.4 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#)], wild meat [[Conf. 13.11 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#)], Asian big cats [[Conf. 12.5 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#)], musk deer ([Conf. 11.7](#)), bears [[Conf. 10.8 \(Rev. CoP14\)](#)], elephants ([Conf. 16.9](#)) and rhinoceroses [[Conf. 13.5 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#)] as well as resolutions on cross-cutting issues such as the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030* ([Conf. 18.3](#)), compliance and enforcement [[Conf. 14.3 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#)] and World Wildlife Day [[Conf. 17.1 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#)].
13. The Secretariat underscores the importance of targeted strategies to achieve behaviour change given the recent research in the area of demand reduction. While raising public awareness is often mentioned in various Resolutions and Decisions and has its own merit in the long term, it is different from a targeted strategy since a mass campaign typically aims at the whole of society through messages based on environmental ethics. Targeted strategies focus on specific consumer groups through tailored messages, messengers (spokespersons) and carefully chosen platforms to achieve behaviour change of the consumers. In many cases, only a fraction of the general public are consumers. For example, medicinal use represents a main motivation of demand for many illegally sourced CITES specimens. Resolution Conf. 10.19 (Rev. CoP14) on *Traditional medicines* only speaks of “developing public education and awareness programmes” instead of calling for consumer behaviour change communications. The Secretariat suggests that when revisiting such resolutions or preparing new resolutions, decisions or other working documents, Parties should consider highlighting the need for targeted demand reduction strategies to achieve consumer behaviour change.

Recommendations

14. The Standing Committee is invited to:
- a) take note of the progress made in implementing Decision 19.55;
 - b) review and submit the draft decisions on demand reduction to combat illegal trade contained in the Annex to the present document to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting; and
 - c) agree that Decisions 19.55 to 19.57 have been implemented and can be proposed for deletion.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
DEMAND REDUCTION TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE

Directed to Parties

20.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) share their experience in using the [Guidance for CITES Parties to develop and implement demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species](#) with other Parties and the Secretariat;
- b) communicate to the Secretariat information on priority species for potential pilot projects that require extrabudgetary resources; and
- c) promote the use of the *Guidance* by organizing pilot projects and providing support to the potential pilot projects mentioned in paragraph b) above.

Directed to the Secretariat

20.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) collect and analyse the experiences in using the *Guidance* shared by Parties;
- b) subject to extrabudgetary resources, and in consultation with donors and potential target Parties, organize pilot projects to promote the use of the *Guidance* for priority species and Parties with necessary adaptation to suit local context;
- c) subject to extrabudgetary resources, support interested Parties in implementing demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species; and
- d) report on the progress made in the implementation of this Decision to the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.CC The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 20.BB and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.