

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



Thirty-first meeting of the Animals Committee
Online, 31 May, 1, 4, 21 and 22 June 2021

Species specific matters

ADDENDUM TO WEST AFRICAN VULTURES (ACCIPITRIDAE SPP.)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Following the postponement, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, of the 31st meeting of the Animals Committee which was scheduled to take place from 13 to 17 July 2020, the Committee took a number of intersessional decisions (see Notification [No. 2020/057](#) of 22 September 2020), including the establishment of an intersessional working group on *West African vultures (Accipitridae spp.)*. The mandate, composition and recommendations of the working group are presented in addendum 1 to document AC31 Doc. 20.
3. Decision 18.191 directs the Animals Committee to provide guidance to range States on how to factor in all known threats to the species when making non-detriment findings (NDF) for trade in these species, and make recommendations, as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee.
 - a) Concerning NDFs, the Secretariat draws attention to document AC31 Doc. 14/PC25 Doc. 17, which proposes that new or updated guidance for making NDFs for trade in birds, including vultures, be developed and prioritized. This activity is incorporated in a comprehensive proposal for implementing Decisions 18.132 to 18.134, detailed in document AC31 Doc. 14/PC25 Doc. 17 and its addendum. The Animals Committee may ask the Secretariat to bring this upcoming opportunity to the attention of the range States of West African vultures, and share relevant NDF guidance materials with them when available.
 - b) Concerning recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee, in addition to those of the working group on West African vultures (*Accipitridae spp.*) available in addendum 1, the Secretariat draws attention of the Animals Committee to the study prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and commissioned by the European Union, and the CITES and CMS Secretariats with funding from UNEP, on "*West African vultures – a review of trade and sentinel poisoning*" (2021) (see information document AC31 Inf. 10). The draft study was reviewed by the CITES and CMS Secretariats and, when finalized, shared with the working group, which was generally supportive of the study's findings and recommendations, including the suggested text for several draft decisions on vultures (they are shown verbatim in the Annex to this addendum). The Animals Committee may wish to review the draft decisions that the study contains and recommend that they be considered and reviewed by the Standing Committee.

Revised recommendations

4. The Animals Committee is invited to:
 - a) take note of document AC31 Doc. 20 and its addenda 1 and 2;
 - b) consider whether Decision 18.190 has been implemented;

- c) consider asking the Secretariat to draw attention of the range States of West African vultures to the implementation of Decisions 18.132 to 18.134, and share relevant NDF guidance materials when available; and
- d) consider reviewing the draft decisions in the Annex to this addendum for recommendation to the Standing Committee.

**Draft decisions extracted from
West African vultures: A review of trade and sentinel poisoning (2021).
UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge**

19.AA *Decision directed to Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.*

Parties that are West African vulture range States are urged to:

- a) cooperate and collaborate with other West African range States to integrate illegal vulture trade considerations in to their implementation of Decisions 18.88-93 on *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa* (in particular, Decision 18.88 b) and 18.89 or related Decisions adopted at CoP19), as well as in the implementation of the *West Africa Strategy on Combatting Wildlife Crime (WASCWC)*;
- b) ensure that existing national laws to protect vultures and controls on the import and export of vulture parts and derivatives are effectively implemented, and ensure that penalties for non-compliance are sufficient to deter illegal trade;
- c) submit non-detriment findings for review by the Animals Committee in cases where there is an interest in exporting globally threatened vulture species, and share them with the Secretariat for inclusion on the CITES website;
- d) work with relevant experts/organizations on implementing demand reduction strategies for vultures and their parts and derivatives for belief-based use and consumption, and where appropriate, expand the implementation of projects that have been successful;
- e) work with relevant organizations to initiate wide-scale public awareness campaigns at regional, national, and local levels about the importance of vulture species to ecology and human health, and on the existing national legislation that protects them; and
- f) provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Decision to allow it to report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.BB *Decision directed to Parties, West African range States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.*

Parties, West African range States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (for example, BirdLife International and its partners in West African range States), are encouraged, subject to resources, to undertake work to:

- a) collaborate in the conservation and restoration of West African vultures and take proactive approaches to support the implementation of the Vulture Multispecies Action Plan of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) to conserve African-Eurasian Vultures; and
- b) gather and exchange scientific knowledge and expertise on West African vultures, with a particular focus on the following:
 - i) better characterizing the scale of vulture trade by surveying markets outside and within West Africa (particularly those outside of Nigeria that may not have received sufficient research attention);
 - ii) better characterising links between poisoning and trade, as well as international and inter-regional trade routes; and

- iii) updating the global population estimates available for *Gyps africanus* (white-back vultures), *Gyps rueppellii* (Rüppell's vultures) and *Torgos tracheliotus* (lappet-faced vultures) in particular.

19.CC Decision directed to the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC)

The International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) shall, where relevant and feasible, consider vultures in the context of its enforcement and capacity-building efforts in West Africa, and, subject to available resources, produce identification materials focusing on parts and derivatives of vulture species, that are accessible in terms of format, translated into local languages, and can easily be disseminated to customs and border officials.

19.DD Decision directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall prepare and submit a summary report on the implementation of Decisions 19.AA and 19.CC with draft recommendations to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate for their consideration.

19.EE Decision directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) if requested, consider any reports submitted by Parties with respect to making of non-detriment findings for trade in globally threatened vulture species; and
- b) analyse and review the results of any activities under Decisions 19. AA to 19.DD and develop recommendations as appropriate.

19.FF Decision directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall analyse and review the results of any activities under Decisions 19.AA to 19.EE and develop recommendations as appropriate.

19.GG Decision directed to Parties, donor organizations and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Donor Parties and other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide financial resources for the purpose of implementing Decisions 19.AA to 19.CC in support of efforts to ensure the survival of West African vultures.