

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



Thirty-first meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 13-17 July 2020

Species specific matters

AFRICAN LIONS (*PANTHERA LEO*)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.244 to 18.250 on *African lions* (*Panthera leo*) and the *CITES Big Cats Task Force*, which are presented in Annex 1 to this document.
3. At its 13th meeting (COP13, Gandhinagar, 2020), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) adopted Decisions 13.88 to 13.91 on the *Conservation and Management of African lions* (*Panthera leo*), which are presented in Annex 2 to this document. These decisions are complementary to, and compatible with Decisions 18.244, 18.247, 18.248, 18.249 and 18.250, adopted at CITES CoP18.

Implementation of Decision 18.244

4. The Secretariat secured some of the external funding required for the implementation of the activities indicated in paragraphs a), b) and c) of Decision 18.244 (see Notification to the Parties No. 2020/032 on *Status of funding for the implementation of valid Decisions after CoP18*). Thanks to contributions from Switzerland and the United States of America, the Secretariat is collaborating with the CMS Secretariat and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to progress the implementation of these activities to the extent possible within the available means. In this regard, donors are invited to contribute further financial support to implement Decision 18.244.
5. The comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices called for in paragraph b) of CITES Decision 18.244 and CMS Decision 13.88d will be a joint undertaking of the CITES and CMS Secretariats, with results to be integrated in the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*.
6. Regarding support and guidance for the making of non-detriment findings for trade in specimens of African lions, indicated in paragraph c) of Decision 18.244, the Secretariat hopes to integrate this as a case study in its implementation of Decisions 18.132 to 18.134 on *Non-detriment findings*.
7. The joint CMS-CITES webportal on African lions, referred to in paragraph d) of CITES Decision 18.244 and CMS Decision 13.88g, has been established. It is hosted on the CMS domain and publicly accessible at: <https://www.cms.int/lions/en>. It allows for the posting and sharing of information and guidance on the conservation and management of African lions.
8. As requested in paragraph e) of Decision 18.244, the Secretariat shared the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* with the Animals Committee in December 2019 and in March 2020. A first version of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*, compiled by the IUCN Species Survival Commission/Cat Specialist Group, was presented for review at the first meeting of the range States of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI1, Bonn, 2018). Version 1.0 was subsequently finalized in December 2018.

and made available at CoP18 as information document CoP18 Inf. 10 (in [English](#) and [French](#)). The Secretariat notes that the various sections that compose the *Guidelines* are intended to be regularly revised and updated in consultation with African lion range States and relevant stakeholders and experts. The content informs priority areas for the conservation of lions in Africa, and can therefore facilitate the cooperation between African lion range States under the scope of CITES and CMS. Version 1.0 of the *Guidelines* was also presented and taken note of at CMS COP13 under agenda item 26.3.1 on *African Carnivores Initiative*.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.246

9. The Secretariat secured part of the external funding required for undertaking the research and analysis of the legal and illegal trade in lions and other big cats, called for in paragraph a) of Decision 18.246, and which is being implemented thanks to a contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Strategic Programme of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC).
10. No external resources are currently available to advance the activities mentioned in paragraphs b), c) and d) of Decision 18.246. Funds are particularly required for developing identification guidance, and for developing and supporting the use of forensic-type techniques. The Secretariat could in the meantime undertake desk research to collect information on existing guidance materials for the identification of lion and other big cat specimens in trade, and on any forensic-type techniques that may be available for identifying lions and other big cat species in trade.
11. As provided in paragraphs e) and f) of Decision 18.246, the Secretariat will share relevant information generated through the implementation of this Decision with the CITES Big Cats Task Force, and report on its implementation to the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee.

#### Implementation of Decision 18.247

12. In its workplan for 2019-2022, the Animals Committee identified a lead or co-leads for each of the instructions directed to it in Resolutions and Decisions (see document AC31. Doc. 7.2. Three regional representatives, G. Mensah and P. Kasoma (Africa), and S. Ramirez (Central and South America and the Caribbean), are co-leading the review of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*.

#### Recommendations

13. The Animals Committee is invited to: establish an intersessional working group on African lions with a mandate to:
  - a) review the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*;
  - b) review relevant information provided by the Secretariat regarding its implementation of Decision 18.244, paragraphs a), b) and c), and Decision 18.246, paragraphs a), c) and d); and
  - c) draft recommendations directed to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and African lion range States, as appropriate, for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 32nd meeting.

Decisions adopted by the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
on African lions (*Panthera leo*) and the CITES Big Cats Task Force

**Directed to the Secretariat**

**18.244** Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall, in collaboration with African lion range States, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and, as appropriate, taking into consideration the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative and the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*:

- a) support the implementation of activities in joint African lion conservation plans and strategies that relate to trade in African lion specimens and the implementation of CITES and, as needed, the review of such plans and strategies;
- b) jointly with the CMS Secretariat undertake a comparative study of African lion population trends and conservation and management practices, such as lion hunting, within and between countries, including the role, if any, of international trade;
- c) support capacity-building in African lion conservation and management including where appropriate, in the making of non-detriment findings by range States according to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.9 on *Trade in hunting trophies of species listed in Appendix I or II*;
- d) assist in maintaining a joint CITES-CMS webportal on African lions, that also allows for the posting and sharing of information and guidance on the conservation and management of African lions;
- e) share the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* and any relevant update with the Animals Committee for its review, as appropriate; and
- f) report on the implementation of the present Decision to the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee and to the Conference of the Parties at its 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**18.245** The Secretariat shall:

- a) draft, terms of reference and a *modus operandi* for the CITES Big Cat Task Force prior to convening its first meeting and submit it to the 73rd Standing Committee for review and adoption, and

subject to external resources:

- b) establish and convene, in consultation with the Standing Committee, a CITES Big Cats Task Force (Task Force), focusing on big cat species from Africa, Asia and Latin America, and consisting of representatives from Parties most affected by the illegal trade in big cats, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime partner organizations, other Parties and organizations, as appropriate, and experts who the Secretariat determines may contribute to the Task Force;
- c) provide support to the Task Force allowing it, *inter alia*, to:
  - i) discuss enforcement and implementation issues related to the illegal trade in specimens of big cats;
  - ii) as deemed appropriate, exchange intelligence and other information on the illegal trade in big cats; and
  - iii) develop strategies and make recommendations to improve international cooperation regarding the enforcement of CITES concerning illegal trade in specimens of big cats; and

- d) report the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee for its consideration, and for making its own recommendations as appropriate.

**18.246** The Secretariat shall, subject to external resources:

- a) conduct further research and analysis on the legal and illegal trade in lions and other big cats to better understand trends, linkages between trade in different species, and the commodities in trade which contain, or claim to contain, such specimens;
- b) assess whether the trade in lion specimens reported under purpose code "H" follows the guidance in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates*, paragraph 3 h), and whether additional reporting specificities or descriptions are needed;
- c) develop guidance materials for the identification of lion and other big cat specimens in trade in consultation with relevant experts;
- d) develop and support, in consultation with relevant experts, the use of appropriate forensic-type techniques for identifying lions and other big cat species in trade;
- e) share relevant information generated through the implementation of this Decision with the CITES Big Cats Task Force; and
- f) report on the implementation of the present Decision to the 32nd meeting of the Animals and the 74th meeting of the Standing Committees as appropriate, and to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

**18.247 Directed to the Animals Committee**

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* and any relevant update, as appropriate;
- b) review the information reported by the Secretariat under Decisions 18.244 and 18.246, and submit recommendations to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and African lion range States, as appropriate.

**18.248 Directed to the Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review and adopt the draft terms of reference, membership and *modus operandi* for the CITES Big Cat Task Force submitted by the Secretariat as per Decision 18.245, paragraphs a) and b) prior to convening the first meeting of the Task Force;
- b) consider at its 74th meeting the reports submitted by the Animals Committee and the Secretariat, as per Decisions 18.244 to 18.247, and make recommendations to the Animals Committee, the Secretariat and African lion range States, as appropriate;
- c) recommend further actions to be taken, including the possible need for the development of a draft resolution, on the conservation of the African lion taking into consideration Decisions 18.244, 18.245 and 18.247; and
- d) report on the implementation of Decision 18.248, and formulate recommendations as appropriate, to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

**18.249 Directed to Parties**

Parties, including range States and consumer countries of African lion, as relevant, are encouraged to:

- a) increase enforcement efforts to detect illegal, unreported or misreported trade in specimens of African lion and other big cats;

- b) use, where appropriate, South Africa's Barcode of Wildlife Project to help identify lion specimens in trade and, when importing lion specimens from South Africa, collaborate where necessary with relevant authorities in South Africa to improve the traceability of such specimens;
- c) provide details on the observed and/or removed lion body parts in trade when collecting and communicating data on illegal killing and illegal trade in lions to CITES in their annual reports; and
- d) cooperate on lion conservation, including by sharing information on lion populations, illegal killing and illegal trade.

**18.250 Directed to Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities**

All Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities are encouraged to support African lion range States and the Secretariat in their efforts to conserve and restore African lions across their range, taking into consideration the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*; and in implementing Decisions 18.244 to 18.246, and 18.249.

Decisions on Lion (*Panthera leo*) adopted at the 13th meeting (COP13, Gandhinagar, 2020)  
of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)  
under the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI)

**Conservation and Management of the African Lion (*Panthera leo*)**

**13.88 *Directed to the Secretariat***

The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding and in collaboration with African Lion Range States and the Secretariat of CITES as well as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and, taking into consideration, as appropriate, the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa:

- a) support the implementation of activities in joint African Lion conservation plans and strategies that relate to the implementation of CMS, with a focus on matters relating to habitat conservation and land-use, creation of corridors, prey depletion, human-Lion conflict including poisoning, education and awareness raising and community involvement and, as needed, the review of such plans and strategies;
- b) support the development of an inventory of all African Lion populations across its range, and of relevant databases;
- c) encourage international cooperation on the conservation and management of African Lions, with particular focus on cross-border African Lion populations and within the context of the establishment of transfrontier conservation areas;
- d) jointly with CITES undertake a comparative study on African Lion population trends and conservation and management practices, such as Lion hunting, within and between countries, including the role, if any, of international trade;
- e) support capacity-building in African Lion conservation and management;
- f) provide or develop advice for African Lion Range States on financing the effective implementation of CMS decisions on African Lion;
- g) maintain a joint CMS-CITES web portal on African Lions, that also allows for the posting and sharing of information, voluntary guidance on the conservation and management of African Lion; and
- h) report on progress relating to the implementation of paragraphs (a) to (g) and 13.89 to the Conference of the Parties at its 14th meeting.

**13.89 *Directed to the Scientific Council***

The Scientific Council shall review the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa, and formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the African Lion Range States, IUCN and others, as needed;

**13.90 *Directed to the African Lion Range States***

African Lion Range States are encouraged to collaborate in implementing the measures contained in Decisions 13.88 paragraphs (a) - (g).

**13.91 *Directed to all Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities.***

All Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities are encouraged to support the African Lion Range States and the Secretariat:

- a) in their efforts to conserve and restore this iconic species across the continent, taking into consideration the Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa; and
- b) in implementing Decision 13.88.