

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

Forty-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 8-12 February 1999

REPORT ON PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING DECISION 10.2

1. This information document has been prepared by Robin Sharp, Elephant Co-ordinator.
2. Paragraphs 4 to 7 of Notification to the Parties No. 1998/09 records the decisions of the 40th meeting of the Standing Committee in relation to Decision 10.2. The Committee invited the representatives of the African region to the Standing Committee to ensure that, at the third dialogue meeting of the African elephant range States, the representatives of the 15 States that had declared government stocks discuss how they wished to proceed in obtaining donor support for the purchase of their ivory stocks, whether they wished to make a co-ordinated approach to donors and whether they required assistance in doing this. They were to inform the Secretariat of the results of this discussion, and the Secretariat was asked to report on progress to the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee. In addition, document Doc. SC.40.5.2.3 Annex B, on conservation trust funds, was to be transmitted to the Parties for information.
3. During the third dialogue meeting of the African elephant range States, held at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 28 September to 2 October 1998, the 15 range States concerned held a closed meeting to address these issues and report the outcome to the full meeting. Three fundamental principles were established.
 - the disposal of ivory stocks must be for non-commercial purposes;
 - the range States should avoid underbidding one another and might wish to set a benchmark price;
 - the ivory should not be sold at a price below its real value.
4. The range States agreed that it would be best to move forward together and asked the Secretariat, through the Elephant Co-ordinator, to investigate donor-interest without discussion of monetary value and to report confidentially to them by mid-January 1999. If possible, a meeting would be organized at that time. In addition, the three range States agreed to provide the Secretariat with information on existing conservation trust funds in their countries by the end of October 1998 for analysis in relation to the provisions of Decision 10.2.
5. Furthermore, representatives of donor countries and organizations present at the meeting in Arusha as observers put forward informal guidelines on the process of seeking funds for the implementation of the relevant decisions of COP10, stressing their view that funding for the monitoring systems under Resolution Conf. 10.10 should be sought at the same time as funding for the non-commercial purchase of ivory under Decision 10.2.

6. Shortly after the dialogue meeting, the Elephant Co-ordinator made contact with some of the principal donors supporting the dialogue process since its inception and met with Directorate General VIII of the European Commission. From this, it became clear that while DGVIII was willing to consider, in principle, providing assistance for both meetings, it would be impossible to obtain funding from the Commission before a meeting in January 1999 to report on donor willingness to support the process laid out in Decision 10.2. As a result, the Secretariat proposed that the meeting be held later in 1999 for which support would be sought from donors, including the European Commission.
7. The Commission also indicated that decisions on the non-commercial purchase of declared and verified government ivory stocks in the range States would not be taken in Brussels, but would depend on the priority given to assisting countries benefiting from EC co-operation programmes accorded to elephant conservation in terms of Decision 10.2. They offered to inform the EC delegations in the States concerned of the initiative, including the verification process and the discussions at Arusha, so that preliminary consideration could be given to the issue at the national level.
8. The information contained in paragraphs 6 and 7 was communicated to the three range States concerned in a letter dated 26 November 1998 from the Interim Secretary General. This letter also reported that seven range States had provided information as of that date to the Secretariat on conservation trust funds.
9. One donor, the United Kingdom, announced that, in addition to supporting the ETIS process under Resolution Conf. 10.10, it is prepared to make GBP 60,000 (c. USD 100,000) available for conservation work in return for disposal of part of the registered ivory stock obtained through management programmes and seizures.
10. At the time of writing, (early December 1998), the Elephant Co-ordinator has made informal contacts and is preparing to visit international financial institutions and other potential donors in the United States. Additional information will be communicated to the Parties at the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee.