

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

Forty-second meeting of the Standing Committee
Lisbon (Portugal), 28 September-1 October 1999

Issues relating to species

Elephants

VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRECAUTIONARY UNDERTAKINGS FOR
THE SALE AND SHIPMENT OF RAW IVORY

1. This document presents the Secretariat's actions [in accordance with Decision 10.1, Part A, paragraph b)] to verify compliance, by the range States concerned, with the precautionary undertakings given in relation to the sale and shipment of raw ivory permitted in accordance with Annotation °604 of Appendices I and II. Inspections carried out by the Secretariat were based on the plan presented at the 41st meeting of the Standing Committee in document Doc. SC.41.6.5. The Secretariat reports also about the arrival of the ivory in Japan.
2. The Secretariat is pleased to report that all the inspections carried out in Botswana, Japan, Namibia and Zimbabwe satisfied the precautionary undertakings referred to in Decision 10.1, Part A, paragraph h).
3. The Secretariat acknowledges the extraordinary support received by the CITES staff, Customs and Police in each country.
4. On 17 July 1999, all the ivory from the experimental sales was imported into Japan. The Secretariat will continue checking that all ivory tusks and derived products are duly registered in Japan and that all the funds obtained by the three countries are invested in elephant conservation, as required by Decision 10.1, Part A, paragraph f).
5. In the four countries involved (Botswana, Japan, Namibia and Zimbabwe), there was large coverage by the press. In general, the press showed positive support for the experimental trade.
6. The Secretariat would like to raise the concern that all these activities, although they have been successfully completed, required a significant amount of human and financial resources from the Secretariat.

Mission to Botswana (February 1999)

7. It was noted that the ivory allocated for export to Japan now included only ivory known to originate in Botswana and that this had been separated from other ivory in stock. Information on the source of the ivory at Gaborone appeared adequate and measures had been taken to improve the system of recording information, which was judged satisfactory. There were only two remaining concerns: that field stations had yet to be given instructions in completing the new ivory record forms; and that the certificate of ownership of ivory had not yet been gazetted. Only after these problems had been corrected, the Chairman agreed that Botswana had implemented the relevant provisions of Decision 10.1 so that it could participate in the experimental trade.

Inspection of the auctions in Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe (April 1999)

8. From 7 to 18 April 1999, the Secretariat travelled to Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe in order to verify that all conditions relating to the ivory auctions were met.
9. A detailed report of the inspections carried out in the three countries concerned was produced by the Secretariat. A copy of the report was sent to the CITES Management Authorities of the three countries concerned. The Secretariat is presenting herewith only a summary.
10. In Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe, staff from the Secretariat were present at the time of sale, packaging and shipment, to check all details and the inventories. The Secretariat verified that the precautionary undertakings had been complied with. These include the following:
 - The ivory should be from the relevant range-State population only;
 - The raw ivory to be sold should have been registered and held in a central store in each State concerned;
 - The ivory should have been marked using the standard system, e.g. preferably die-punched marks, which shall correlate with the records in the register;
 - For each trading State, the sale should be conducted through a single centre;
 - The ivory should be shipped, as far as possible, direct to Japan.
 - The Secretariat monitored the compliance of the undertakings reported by Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe in Document (Doc. SC.40.9.27).
11. In Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe, the following activities were undertaken.

Pre-auction

12. Verification that the stock of ivory offered for auction was a part of the total ivory stock pre-registered with the Secretariat. Random individual tusk-identification numbers were checked.
13. Inspection of the total amount of ivory (weight) being proposed for auction. The Secretariat verified that the individual total weight per country corresponded to the previously agreed country-quota. In addition, during packing, the Secretariat verified the final weight being shipped by each country.
14. Verification of compliance with the precautionary undertakings previously announced by each country and noted by the Standing Committee.

Auction

15. All participants in the auctions were duly registered by the Secretariat. Their credentials were verified.
16. The Secretariat recorded each bid and the ivory lots acquired by each buyer.

Post-auction

17. After the auction, the Secretariat inspected the individual packing in each country. During this inspection, the total number of tusks for each ivory lot was verified. Each ivory lot was re-weighed in order to have the final weight at the time of packing. The final weight was the figure mentioned in the corresponding CITES export permits. In order to ensure optimal security, the crate for each individual ivory lot was inspected. In each country, with the assistance of Customs officers, each individual crate was sealed. Customs seals were used to secure the ivory crates

so that any tampering with their contents could be detected. In addition, the cargo containers (two 40-foot containers per country) were also sealed by Customs.

18. The Secretariat verified the CITES export permits, checking that all boxes were duly filled in and re-calculated the remaining part of the quota. The Secretariat informed the CITES Management Authority of Japan about this verification process, indicating its satisfaction with the associated permits.
19. The Secretariat considered that the inspections done in the three southern African countries were satisfactory. The ivory containers remained sealed and under Customs/Police custody until the shipment was completed. All export permits were considered as correct. Copies of the export permits were sent to the CITES Management Authority of Japan.

Arrival of the ivory in Japan (July 1999)

20. From 11 to 17 July 1999, the Secretariat carried out a mission to Tokyo. The aim was to discuss the final details before inspecting the ivory crates and to confirm the steps already taken by Japan with respect to the registration of the ivory tusks and the associated derived products.
21. On 15 and 16 July 1999, the ivory crates were inspected jointly by the Secretariat, the Japanese Customs authorities and the CITES Management Authority of Japan.
22. The Customs seals on the cargo containers were checked and found to be intact. The cargo containers were opened and the ivory crates unloaded.
23. The Customs seals on each ivory crate were inspected. All were found to be intact.
24. A number of crates for each country were randomly selected, opened and the ivory unloaded. The total number of tusks was checked against the corresponding annex of the CITES export permit. Individual tusks were checked against the identification mentioned in the annex of the associated CITES export permit.
25. On 18 July 1999, all ivory containers were delivered to the corresponding buyers.
26. As a result of the auctions, a substantial amount of funds for elephant conservation was obtained by the three range States. The total amount of funds received from the auctions is approximately USD 5 million.
27. The Secretariat considers the inspection of the arrival of the ivory in Japan as satisfactory.