

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

CITES issues in southern Africa

BRIEF REPORT BY THE NAMIBIAN CITES MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
AS A REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFRICA TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Introduction

Progress has been made on a number of CITES issues in southern Africa since the 41st Meeting of the Standing Committee. Various opportunities to liaise and consult on CITES issues (and related matters) have occurred, at formal intergovernmental level as well as informally between wildlife management agencies and other stakeholders.

Southern African Development Community Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement

The drafting of a framework SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement has been completed and has progressed through various technical and legal stages through to consideration by the SADC Heads of States and Governments at their annual Summit (Maputo, Mozambique, August 1999). This Protocol emphasizes the strengthening of cooperation amongst existing structures across the wildlife conservation and law enforcement spectrum at national and regional level. This benchmark mechanism will eventually hold significant advantages for wildlife conservation in general but also CITES implementation, at national and regional level.

Capacity building

At the meeting of the SADC Wildlife Sector Technical Coordinating Committee in May 1999 in Mauritius, a decision was taken to develop a regional project(s) to sensitize national customs services to CITES issues; to present a refresher course to CITES Management Authorities in view of personnel turnover problems; to review the manufacturing of and trade in wildlife-based curios in the region; to promote national-level monitoring of wildlife crime; and to promote the monitoring at a regional scale of wildlife resources of economic and biodiversity conservation importance. External assistance will be sought for some elements of this initiative which will probably be submitted to the next meeting of the Standing Committee for approval as a CITES project.

Elephant conservation issues

Elephant conservation issues have continued to play a special role in CITES-related activities in southern Africa as in previous years. Following final verification by the CITES Secretariat that all prerequisite conditions of Dec. 10.1 were met and subsequent authorization by the Standing Committee, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe successfully auctioned and exported approved quotas of raw ivory to Japan. (The outcome of this exercise will be discussed under another agenda point at SC42).

National legislation and CITES implementation

The issue of improving national legislation to implement CITES more effectively in the SADC region was given further attention. It can be expected that the SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement will provide further impetus towards updating and harmonizing wildlife legislation in the region. Notwithstanding the challenges presented to governments by an upsurge in regional conflicts and ongoing restructuring and repositioning of wildlife management agencies, some progress was made towards improved implementation of CITES. Progress regarding the development of an innovative computer-based CITES permitting system in South Africa (with assistance from Denmark) has been reported. Such a system may have wider application in the SADC region and beyond, and hopefully facilitate routine CITES implementation as well as trade monitoring and reporting. A new CITES implementation policy and draft legislation concerning CITES in Namibia was completed after a major consultative process (and the final product will also be distributed to other Africa Region Parties to CITES).

Animals Committee meeting in Madagascar

The 15th Meeting of the CITES Animals Committee was held in Antananarivo, Madagascar (5-9 July 1999). In addition to formal representation on the committee, participation by the Africa region has continued to increase with representation from Madagascar, Namibia, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe (as SADC member States) as well as Kenya. The Chairman of the Animals Committee, other Committee members, the CITES Secretariat and the CITES Management Authority Madagascar are congratulated for arranging a highly successful, informative and constructive meeting, conducted in a pleasant atmosphere.

Consultation regarding (potential) COP11 proposals

The process of consultation on proposals that may be presented to COP11 has been started, involving several species occurring in southern Africa (e.g. the great white shark and devil's claw or grapple plant (*Harpagophytum* spp)). More can be expected and if possible, a pre-CoP11 technical coordination meeting will be organized in southern Africa to review CoP11 proposals.

Miscellaneous

Participants at the last meeting of the SADC Wildlife Sector Technical Coordinating Committee were reminded that the current plight of the Gaborone Amendment to CITES might have severe implications for future economic integration of SADC, and that those CITES Parties concerned should take all necessary steps to ratify the amendment as soon as possible.

Acknowledgement must be made of the sterling efforts of the Africa Resources Trust in conjunction with the CITES Secretariat to produce the CITES newsletter for the Africa region, with major support from WWF(US). This newsletter plays a useful role in disseminating information and summarizing major issues and developments.

Mr John Kundaeli, who retired from the CITES Secretariat after many years as Coordinator for the Africa Region, is thanked for his tireless efforts in the region and unfaltering friendliness and we hope that he enjoys his well-deserved rest.

Lastly, the SADC region learnt with much sadness of the untimely death of Mr John Mphande, the head of the Wildlife Sector Technical Coordination Unit and Director of Wildlife and National Parks and Wildlife in Malawi. John played a pivotal role in wildlife matters in SADC and will be missed as a

friend by many colleagues in the region. He was succeeded by Mr Leonard Sefu. The importance of regional coordination through SADC structures cannot be underlined enough, and all those who provide technical and other support to SADC are thanked.

On behalf of the southern African Parties to CITES, ongoing support from the CITES Secretariat, IUCN, TRAFFIC, other Parties and institutions with regards to wildlife conservation and CITES implementation is gratefully acknowledged.