

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



Fifty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 14-18 July 2008

Species trade and conservation

Elephants

DECISION-MAKING MECHANISM FOR AUTHORIZING IVORY TRADE

This document has been prepared by a working group of the Standing Committee on the basis of document SC57 Doc. 33.4.

Participation

- a) Botswana, France (chairman), Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mali, Namibia, South Africa, United States of America;
- b) European Commission;
- c) Born Free, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, EIA, IFAW, IWMC, SSN, TRAFFIC; and
- d) CITES Secretariat

Mandate

To look at the scope of the study proposed in paragraph 3 of document SC57 Doc. 33.4 and report to the Committee later in the meeting

Proposed amendments to paragraph 3 (changes are underlined):

- 3. In order to initiate the implementation of this Decision, the Secretariat proposes that an independent study be undertaken on the development of a decision-making mechanism and process for future trade in elephant ivory for review by the Standing Committee. This study, which could be coordinated by the Secretariat in consultation with stakeholders including African and Asian elephant range States and which would be subject to the availability of external funding, is proposed to cover the following issues:
 - a) examination of the various processes and decision-making mechanisms related to ivory trade that are or have been operating under the provisions of the Convention, including compliance and enforcement provisions;
 - b) evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of international trade regimes and associated controls, safeguards and monitoring methods for other high-value commodities in the context of future trade in ivory;
 - c) basic principles and factors that could guide future trade in ivory, and proposals on how an effective, objective and independent decision-making mechanism could operate, taking into account the provisions of the African elephant action plan and experiences from Asia, and

- d) exploration of the conditions under which international trade in elephant ivory could take place, taking into account: ecological and economic sustainability of ivory trade; the impact of trade on the illegal killing of elephants; the initial impact of the one-off sale of ivory that was agreed at CoP14; levels of illegal trade; enforcement challenges and capacities; information on linkages between legal and illegal trade, and methods to elucidate these linkages; methods to track the chain of custody; etc.