

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

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Sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 7-11 July 2014

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Elephants

ELEPHANT PROTECTION INITIATIVE

1. This document has been submitted by the Republic of Botswana<sup>1</sup>, the United Republic of Tanzania<sup>2</sup>, the Republic of Chad<sup>2</sup>, the Gabonese Republic<sup>2</sup> and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia<sup>2</sup>.
2. At the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade, hosted by the Government of the United Kingdom, the States listed above agreed to take a leadership role against elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade, together putting forward the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI).
3. The full text of the EPI is annexed below. In summary, its objectives include the following:
  - a) Provide both immediate and longer-term funding to address the Elephant Crisis through full and timely implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan by accessing public and private sector support through the creation of a long-term fund that provides guaranteed financial support for all participating range States for the implementation of the AEAP on the basis of threat to Elephant populations and need, and further provides incremental payments linked to overall elephant numbers and growth in elephant populations. This fund would also provide funds for world-wide citizen education on the issue; for addressing the various development needs of local communities, including poverty, for national conservation activities, and for regional co-operation;
  - b) Close domestic ivory markets in those participating states still operating a domestic market; and
  - c) Observe a moratorium on any consideration of future international trade for a minimum of 10 years and thereafter until African elephant populations are no longer threatened; and agree to put all stockpiles beyond economic use.
4. This initiative is intended to implement the African Elephant Action Plan (the agreement between the 38 African elephant range States, endorsed by the range States at CITES CoP15 and by the Parties to CITES at CoP16) and the 14 Urgent Measures agreed at the African Elephant Summit in Gaborone, Botswana on 2-4 December 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

<sup>2</sup> *Note from the Secretariat: no official submission of the present document has been received from this country.*

5. In the light of the ongoing high level of threat to elephants posed by the epidemic of poaching in the majority of African Elephant range States and the global illegal ivory trade, the Committee is cordially invited to take note of the Elephant Protection Initiative, to encourage other range States to join those proposing states in working towards the above objectives, and encourage non-range States, International Organizations and NGO observers to contribute their support, in order to facilitate the Initiative's speedy implementation.

## ELEPHANT PROTECTION INITIATIVE

WE, THE GOVERNMENTS OF BOTSWANA, CHAD, ETHIOPIA, GABON AND TANZANIA

### ACKNOWLEDGE

1. **The Elephant Crisis:** the illegal killing of elephants and trade in their ivory is out of control across much of Africa. It threatens the survival not only of small exposed elephant populations, but also those which have previously been thought secure thereby harming the economic development of our countries and undermining the ecological integrity of our ecosystems. The poaching and illegal trade is driven by international criminal networks and cartels, which fuels corruption, undermines the rule of law and security, and, evidence suggests, provide funding to those associated with organised crime and terrorist activities.
2. Any **supply of ivory**, including that used within legal domestic markets, is inherently likely to increase the risk to elephant populations, those charged with their protection, and remote, vulnerable communities.
3. **The African Elephant Action Plan:** this agreement between the 38 African elephant range States, endorsed by the range States at CITES CoP15 and by the Parties to CITES at CoP16, sets out a range of agreed prioritised objectives and actions which if implemented across the African elephant's range would go a long way to address the current situation.
4. **The need to implement the 14 Urgent Measures agreed at the African Elephant Summit** in Gaborone, Botswana on 2-4 December 2013.
5. **The existence and accrual of ivory stockpiles:** these are costly to secure and maintain, diverts limited conservation resources, diverts scarce resources away from front line elephant conservation, protection and wildlife law enforcement; and may enter the illegal supply chain and drive speculation.
6. **The current restrictions on international trade:** range States with elephant populations currently on Appendix II of CITES may not apply to sell ivory until after 2017 at the earliest and so any such proposal would not be considered until CoP18 (2019) at the earliest. Range States with elephants on Appendix I may not apply to sell ivory. The earliest any Appendix 1 state may apply to down list its elephant populations to Appendix II would be at the next Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP17 in South Africa in 2016). No seized illegal ivory may ever be sold.

### RECOGNISE

7. **Range States need urgent and sustained financial and technical support:** for anti-poaching work in the field, to strengthen and enforce national laws protecting elephants and preventing trafficking; to deliver regional and international intelligence-sharing and law-enforcement efforts; to safeguard habitats; and to support communities which live alongside elephants, particularly with regard to the development of sustainable livelihoods and the reduction of human-elephant conflict.

### PROPOSE

8. **A global initiative, the "Elephant Protection Initiative",** in which range states, partner states, NGOs, IGO's, private citizens and the private sector work in partnership to:
  - i. **Provide both immediate and longer-term funding** to address the Elephant Crisis through full and timely implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan, by accessing public and private sector support through the creation of a long-term fund that provides guaranteed financial support for all participating range States for the implementation of the AEAP on the basis of threat to Elephant populations and need, and further provides incremental payments linked to overall elephant numbers and growth in elephant populations. This fund would also provide funds for world-wide citizen education on the issue; for addressing the various development needs of local communities, including poverty, for national conservation activities, and for regional co-operation;
  - ii. **Close domestic ivory markets in those participating states still operating a domestic market;**

- iii. **Observe a moratorium on any consideration of future international trade** for a minimum of 10 years and thereafter until African elephant populations are no longer threatened; and agree to put all stockpiles beyond economic use.

#### **AGREE**

9. **To lead efforts to establish a financial and administrative mechanism to deliver the aims of the Elephant Protection Initiative as quickly as possible and by the end of 2014 at the latest, building on existing agreements, proposals and structures where.**
10. **To develop an initiative to federate national parks and wildlife agencies in Africa, in order to exchange lessons learned and technical experience aimed at promoting south-south cooperation and finding African solutions to this issue.**