

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



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Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Elephants

DISPOSAL OF IVORY STOCKS

The present document is submitted by Chad² and the Philippines² in support of the Comoros³.

Introduction

1. African elephants are under intense and increasing pressure from poaching and ivory trafficking to meet escalating demand for ivory products, primarily in Asia. It is estimated that 35-50,000 African elephants are illegally killed *each year* to meet this demand. Given the increased rate of killing since 2006, experts predict possible localized or even continent wide extinction of African elephant populations, both forest and savannah elephants, within 10-12 years.⁴
2. Despite ongoing national and international efforts in response to this crisis, the poaching continues, fuelled by the substantial value of ivory. Law enforcement agencies in many range States are unable to combat the situation, particularly given the increasing involvement of organized criminal syndicates (involving poachers to middlemen to elusive “kingpins”) and terrorist organizations using the illegal trade in ivory to fund and facilitate their operations.⁵
3. Law enforcement actions often result in the confiscation of illegally obtained ivory. This ivory, when added to ivory from natural mortality or elephants killed in management actions, is creating growing ivory stockpiles in both range and consumer countries. Although CITES Parties have been required to report their ivory inventories to the CITES Secretariat since 1997,⁶ up-to-date, comprehensive, and accurate ivory inventories are unavailable to the Standing Committee. After examining historic and more recent information available from TRAFFIC and other sources, it is believed that current African ivory stockpiles contain at least 800 tonnes of ivory (see below). The true figure, however, may be considerably higher than that.

¹ The English translation was provided by the Philippines.

² 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.

³ Note from the Secretariat: no official submission of the present document has been received from this country.

⁴ 'New figures reveal poaching for the illegal ivory trade could wipe out a fifth of Africa's Elephants over next decade,' CITES, IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group, TRAFFIC Press Release, December 2013. Available at: http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20131202_elephant-figures.php

⁵ See e.g., Karimi, Faith. 'Report: Joseph Kony's struggling militia killing elephants for cash,' CNN, June 2013. Available at: <http://www.cnn.com/2013/06/05/world/africa/kony-elephant-poaching/>; Marshall, Michael. 'Elephant ivory could be bankrolling terrorist groups,' New Scientist, October 2013. Available at: <http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn24319-elephant-ivory-could-be-bankrolling-terrorist-groups.html#.U1iRz9h8PIU>

⁶ See Resolution Conf. 10.10, as revised at subsequent CoPs including most recently at CoP16.

4. Given the high value of ivory, these stockpiles must be maintained in secure facilities often under 24-hour guard to prevent theft. Instances of stockpiled ivory disappearing or being stolen have been reported.⁷ Although CITES has authorized one-off sales of stockpiled ivory from southern Africa in 1999 and 2008, stockpiled ivory is an economic and security burden for most countries. In response to the current poaching crisis and to reduce the burden of retaining their stockpiles, a number of governments have recently destroyed them to remove the ivory, permanently, from the market and to send a clear message to elephant poachers, traffickers, and consumers that the illegal killing of elephants and trade in their ivory will not be tolerated.
5. The purpose of this document is to seek endorsement from CITES of the destruction of ivory stockpiles, to encourage such ivory destruction events, and to provide assistance and technical guidance to countries to assist in ivory stockpile destruction.

Background - increased elephant poaching and illicit ivory trade

6. There has been a substantial rise in the illegal killing of elephants since 2006 across Africa. By 2010, poaching and natural losses exceeded elephant reproduction rates,⁸ increasing the potential for local extinctions. Data from the MIKE (Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants) programme indicated that by 2011 poaching had reached the highest levels since the programme began in 2002, and probably for at least 20 years.⁹
7. More recent studies strongly suggest that the MIKE data, based on counting elephants killed at selected sites, may have underestimated the true scale at which elephant populations are being decimated in parts of Africa. For example, a study published by the Tanzanian Government in January 2014 based on a full census showed that the largest population of elephants in Eastern Africa in the Selous Game Reserve had fallen from 55,000 in 2007 to 13,100 in October 2013 - an 80% reduction in just 6 years.¹⁰ A different study by the Wildlife Conservation Society in 2013¹¹ and updated in February 2014,¹² revealed that the population of forest elephants in five Central African countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gabon and Republic of Congo) had decreased by 65% in little more than a decade (2002 - 2013). The study authors concluded that "to save the remaining African forest elephants, illegal poaching for ivory and encroachment into core elephant habitat must be stopped. In addition, the international demand for ivory, which fuels illegal trade, must be dramatically reduced".
8. Data on the illicit ivory trade reinforces reports from African elephant habitats. Seizure data from the CITES Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) compiled by TRAFFIC and published in December 2013¹³ shows that illegal trade in ivory was at its highest levels in 2011-12 since the beginning of ETIS records in 1989, with "2011 representing nearly three times as much illegal ivory trade as 1998". Meanwhile, preliminary indications from large seizures of ivory (>500 tonnes) in 2013 - considered a crude early indicator of illicit ivory trade as a whole - revealed an increase in quantity seized, with 18 large-scale seizures yielding "a greater quantity of ivory [41,674 kg] than any other previous year going back to 1989" and representing 20 percent more ivory than contained in 21 large seizures recorded in the previous record high year of 2011. The 2013 seizure data were viewed with "considerable alarm" in that they not only indicate an increase in involvement of organized crime but also "could be an indication that the illegal

⁷ See e.g., News24.com, 'Concerns over stockpile ivory theft,' June 2012. Available at: <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Concerns-over-stockpile-ivory-theft-20120622>

⁸ *Status of African elephant populations and levels of illegal killing and the illegal trade in ivory: A report to the African Elephant Summit December 2013*, p 8-9.

⁹ CoP16 Doc. 53.1, *Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants*

¹⁰ See: Jones, T., and K. Nowak. 'Elephant Declines Vastly Underestimated,' *National Geographic*, December 2013. Available at: <http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2013/12/16/elephant-declines-a-view-from-the-field/>. See also, United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Press Release, "The Elephant populations status in Selous-Mikumi and Ruaha-Rungwa Ecosystems; Census Results of 2013" January 2014. Available at: http://www.daressalam.diplo.de/contentblob/4116694/Daten/3871893/Download_Press_Release.pdf

¹¹ Maisels F., Strindberg S., Blake S., Wittemyer G., Hart J., et al. (2013). Devastating Decline of Forest Elephants in Central Africa. *PLoS ONE* 8(3): e59469. Available at: <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0059469>

¹² See: Wildlife Conservation Society. 'New Data Shows Continued Decline of African Forest Elephants,' February 2014. Available at: <http://www.wcs.org/press/press-releases/new-data-on-forest-elephants.aspx>

¹³ "Status of African elephant populations and levels of illegal killing and the illegal trade in ivory: A report to the African Elephant Summit. December 2013. Prepared by CITES, IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group, and TRAFFIC International. See also: http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20131202_elephant-figures.php

trade in ivory is continuing to increase”.¹⁴ They undoubtedly reflect a level of elephant poaching that is unsustainable and unacceptable. Indeed, several countries such as Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong SAR), China and Singapore have reported their largest ivory seizures in recent years.¹⁵

Distribution and Estimated Size of Ivory Stockpiles

9. Increased poaching means that more ivory is entering the market illicitly. Some is intercepted by enforcement agencies, a small proportion of which is destroyed by authorities after seizure, but in most cases, especially in countries on the main global ivory smuggling routes, seized ivory is added to official stockpiles. These stockpiles have been gradually increasing in both range and non-range States since the original CITES listing of the African elephant on Appendix I 25 years ago. In range States, some of the stockpiled ivory is of lawful origin - mainly from elephants which have died naturally or have been removed for management purposes.
10. Comprehensive data about the number, location and size of global or country-specific stockpiles is not presently available. CITES Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) includes a provision urging Parties to:

maintain an inventory of government-held stockpiles of ivory and, where possible, of significant privately held stockpiles of ivory within their territory, and inform the Secretariat of the level of this stock each year before 28 February, indicating: the number of pieces and their weight per type of ivory (raw or worked); for relevant pieces, and if marked, their markings in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution; the source of the ivory; and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year.

This provision updates a long-standing recommendation dating back to 1997 that Parties maintain an inventory of their raw ivory stocks and inform the Secretariat annually of its level, and the source of the ivory.¹⁶ It is therefore unclear why comprehensive data on raw ivory stockpiles, up-dated annually, are unavailable. The CITES Secretariat distributed a notification in December 2013 reminding CITES Parties of the revised reporting provision but, as yet, no data on country-specific ivory stockpiles has been published.

11. There are both historic and more recent data that provide estimates of ivory stockpile quantities. The most comprehensive single set of data on stockpiles was prepared for CoP10 in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1997 where Parties agreed to downlist certain southern African elephant populations (i.e., Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe) and relax the global ivory trade ban though limited, closed loop ivory sales. A report prepared for CoP10, based on information provided by TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, estimated there were 462 tonnes of stockpiled ivory in all African range (and some non-range) States.¹⁷ Of this total, 87 percent was accounted for by the seven largest ivory stockholders; South Africa, Burundi, Tanzania, Namibia, Sudan, Botswana and Zimbabwe.¹⁸
12. In 2007, a questionnaire was sent to CITES Parties seeking updated information on ivory stockpiles. The results of this questionnaire were published by TRAFFIC in April 2010.¹⁹ Though not as comprehensive as the 1997 document, according to the inventory data reported by TRAFFIC, Parties maintained 421 tonnes of stockpiled ivory in 2007. Outside Africa there is no database documenting accumulated quantities of ivory, although some limited information is available for countries which have destroyed specific quantities of ivory stocks in recent destruction events (see below).

¹⁴ *Ibid* (CITES, IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group, and TRAFFIC International).

¹⁵ See: Tan, Sue-Ann. 'Largest ivory seizure by AVA and Singapore Customs in more than a decade,' *The Straits Times*. January 2013. Available at: <http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/singapore/story/largest-ivory-seizure-ava-and-singapore-customs-more-decade-20130130>. Inocencio, Ramy. 'Hong Kong seizes Nigerian container in biggest ivory bust this year,' CNN. August 2013. Available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/08/08/world/hong-kong-ivory-tusk-seizure-august/>

¹⁶ Res. Conf. 10.10 through to Res. Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP15).

¹⁷ See CoP 10 Doc. 10.46.

¹⁸ For States whose elephant populations were not downlisted or whose ivory was not permitted in trade, these 1997 estimates were designated as "Ivory for Non-Commercial Buyout" by State or private donors. However there were no actual buyouts in the aftermath of CoP10.

¹⁹ Milliken, Tom. *Report on the results of the Elephant and Ivory Trade Questionnaire pursuant to Decision 13.26 (Rev. CoP14) on the Action plan for the control of trade in elephant ivory*. TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa, April 2010.

12. In addition to the CoP10 report and 2010 TRAFFIC study, ETIS reports give cumulative or “running” totals of ivory in known seizures worldwide. The total amount of ivory seized from 1989 through 2009 was 361 tonnes as reported to CoP 15 in 2010.²⁰ In the ETIS report prepared for CoP16 in 2013, TRAFFIC altered the methodologies and time period used to analyse seizure data.²¹ The total ivory seizures reported at CoP16 for 1996 through 2011 amounted to 297 tonnes.²² In the report prepared for the African Elephant Summit held in Gaborone, Botswana in December 2013, the estimated weight of seized ivory, based on ETIS reports from range and non-range States, for 2012 and 2013 (through October 14, 2013) was approximately 39.5 and 36 tonnes, respectively.²³
13. Though no recent inventory of stockpiled ivory is available, when the estimates of ivory stockpile quantities and ivory seizure data provided above are considered together, a minimum of 816 tonnes of African elephant ivory has been stockpiled or seized from 1989 through October 2013. Some of these stockpiles are very large, in the range of 50-100 tonnes. Even this is likely to be a significant underestimate of global ivory stocks since, even if ivory sold in the one-off sale in 2008 (102 tonnes) and ivory stockpiles destroyed by governments between 2011 and the present (approximately 32 tonnes) is deducted, ETIS data does not include ivory collected from culled or naturally deceased elephants from 1997 to 2013; stockpiled Asian elephant ivory is not included; seized ivory collected by non-range States prior to 1989 is not included; and not all seizure data is reported.

Problems presented by Ivory Stockpiles

14. Ivory stockpiles present a major security risk and a cost to authorities, particularly in developing countries.²⁴ This diverts resources from wildlife conservation, including the direct protection of elephants and other seriously threatened species in the wild. The costs incurred to secure stockpiles are never acknowledged or accounted against estimates of potential income from ivory sales; if they were, the true net income would be small or, more likely, negative and any justification of sales benefitting conservation would be undermined or discredited.
15. Wildlife criminals will inevitably exploit weaknesses in control systems. The growing profits available from ivory smuggling increase opportunities to subvert officials responsible for maintaining the security of ivory stockpiles.²⁵ A 2010 TRAFFIC report suggested that almost one third of stockpiles had *decreased* through illegal leakage.²⁶ Thefts of ivory from allegedly secure ivory stockpiles have also been documented.
16. The existence of ivory stockpiles provides poachers, traders, speculators, and consumers with a reason to believe that global ivory trade may be restored and that the value of ivory as a commodity could ultimately exceed the value of elephants as live animals.²⁷ This, in turn, maintains or expands demand for ivory products, increasing the pressure on elephant populations.

20 See CoP15 Doc. 44.1 Annex.

21 *The changes included: the use of Bayesian hierarchical modelling to improve the robustness of the analysis; improved methods for bias adjustment and data smoothing to reduce anomalies in seizure rate patterns and reporting rate data for each country for each year past and present; consideration of ivory type, raw and worked ivory (including semi worked), and different weights of seized ivory to refine the assessment of seizure data; and the use of a Transaction Index of illegal ivory trade activity and a Weight Index to assess trends in the weight of illegal ivory traded over time.*

22 See CoP16 Doc. 53.2.2.

23 “Status of African elephant populations and levels of illegal killing and the illegal trade in ivory: A report to the African Elephant Summit.” December 2013. Prepared by CITES, IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group, and TRAFFIC International.

24 Namibia, for examples, holds approximately 30 tonnes of stockpiled ivory that costs USD 75,000 per year to store; see: ‘Ivory Stockpiles’ the Case For Non-Commercial Disposal,’ Stop Ivory, January 2013. Available at: http://uat.mccannlondon.co.uk/stopivory/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/SI_IvoryDisposal.pdf. Similarly, in 2010, The East African reported Tanzania spent \$75,000 annually to secure its stockpile; see Riungu, Catherine. ‘EU, UK favour Dar’s ivory sale bid,’ East African, March 2010. Available at: <http://newsroom.wildlifedirect.org/tag/eu/>

25 See: Neme, Laurel. National Geographic, ‘Destroying elephant ivory stockpiles is no easy matter,’ National Geographic Newswatch August 2013. Available at: <http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2013/08/02/destroying-ivory-stockpiles-no-easy-matter>

26 Milliken, Tom. ‘Report on the results of the Elephant and Ivory Trade Questionnaire pursuant to Decision 13.26 (Rev. CoP14) on the Action plan for the control of trade in elephant ivory’. April 2010.

27 Elephants are arguably of far more value to a multi-billion dollar tourism industry than as a resource to be exploited for ivory. Economic studies show that the value of ivory is falling compared with other non-consumptive uses of elephants, e.g. James Blignaut, Martin de Wit and Jon Barnes (2008), ‘The Economic Value of Elephants’, in RJ Scholes and KG Mennell (eds) *Elephant Management: A Scientific Assessment of South Africa*. Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg.

Recent Actions to Tackle Ivory Stockpiles

17. A combination of factors, particularly the inexorable rise in elephant poaching and ivory smuggling, have led to a series of public events in which governments have destroyed ivory stockpiles to send a powerful message to wildlife criminals against elephant poaching and illicit trade in ivory and in collective support of elephant conservation.
18. Prior to 2011, there had been just three public destructions of ivory (all by burning): two by Kenya in 1989²⁸ and 1991 totalling 18.8 tonnes and one by Zambia (9.5 tonnes)²⁹ in 1992. In 2011, ivory that had been seized in Singapore in 2002 was destroyed in Kenya (nearly 5 tonnes).³⁰ Since then there has been a series of public events in which governmental authorities have destroyed ivory stocks by burning or crushing. Eight such events have taken place so far:

Country	Date	Quantity of Ivory Destroyed	Method of Destruction
Gabon	2012	4.8 tonnes	Burned ³¹
Philippines	2013	>4.2 tonnes ³²	Crushed and Burned ³³
India	2013	Unknown	Burned ³⁴
USA	2013	5.4 tonnes	Crushed ³⁵
China	2014	6.0 tonnes	Crushed ³⁶
France	2014	3.0 tonnes	Crushed ³⁷
Chad	2014 (Feb)	1.1 tonnes	Burned ³⁸
Belgium	2014 (April)	1.5 tonnes	Crushed ³⁹

It is notable that the list includes both developing and developed countries, and range and non-range States. The total ivory destroyed in the 25-year period since 1989 amounts to approximately 60 tonnes.

28 Perlez, Jane. 'Kenya, in gesture, burns ivory tusks,' July 1989. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/07/19/world/kenya-in-gesture-burns-ivory-tusks.html>

29 Jackson, Tim. 'Ivory Apocalypse,' *Africa Geographic*, April 2013. Available at: <http://www.elephantswithoutborders.org/downloads/papers/Ivory%20Apocalypse.pdf>

30 BBC News Africa, 'Kenya burns ivory in fight against poachers,' July 2011. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14217147>

31 Jones, Greg. 'Gabon burns ivory stockpiles,' *The Guardian*, June 2012. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2012/jun/27/gabon-burn-ivory>

32 Philippines' National Ivory Action Plan - First Progress Report, submitted to the CITES Secretariat (Nov 2013)

33 Ibid

34 Media sources indicate the State of Maharashtra intended to burn ivory tusks in July 2013 (see <http://www.pressclubmumbai.com/content/save-tiger-wildlife-contraband-be-burned-chief-minister>; <http://gulfnnews.com/news/world/india/maharashtra-to-burn-wildlife-contraband-1.1214658>; 'India Burns Smuggled Ivory. And France?,' Robin des Bois Press Release, July 2013, available at: http://www.robindesbois.org/english/animal/india_burns_smuggled_ivory.html) but it is unknown how much ivory (if any) was destroyed.

35 Gannon, Megan. 'US Crushes Its Stockpile of Elephant Ivory,' *LiveScience*, November 2013. Available at: <http://www.livescience.com/41229-us-crushes-stockpile-of-elephant-ivory.html>

36 Liang, Aislinn. 'China destroys ivory stockpile in significant symbolic step towards saving Africa's elephants,' *The Telegraph*, January 2014. Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/10553779/China-destroys-ivory-stockpile-in-significant-symbolic-step-towards-saving-Africas-elephants.html>

37 France24.com. 'In pictures: France crushes illegal ivory by Eiffel Tower,' February 2014. Available at: <http://www.france24.com/en/20140206-pictures-france-destroys-huge-stockpile-illegal-ivory-paris-elephants/>

38 Cronin, Melissa. 'Chad Destroys Ivory Stockpile As Symbolic Message To Poachers,' *The Dodo*, February 2014. Available at: <https://www.thedodo.com/chad-destroys-ivory-stockpile--438741778.html>

39 Russo, Christina. 'Belgium Crushes its Elephant Ivory As Europe Takes Harder Look at Wildlife Trafficking,' *National Geographic Daily News*, April 2014. Available at: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/04/140409-elephant-ivory-trafficking-eu-brussels-ifaw-ivory-crushes-world/>

When considered in the context of minimum estimates of stockpiled ivory (see above), only about 9 percent of stockpiled ivory has been destroyed to date.

19. There have also been symbolic ivory crushing events conducted by NGOs, including one outside Parliament in London by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (February 2014) and another by the Born Free Foundation for a popular British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) programme (March 2014). Much of the ivory items crushed comprised worked objects donated by the public and the total amounts are understood to have been small.
20. Further ivory stockpile destructions are scheduled to occur in the future. Hong Kong SAR announced in January 2014 that it would destroy (incinerate) 28 tonnes of its total 30 tonne stockpile over the next two years with the balance used for educational purposes.⁴⁰ The State of Kerala in India was reported in August 2013 to be considering destroying 8 tonnes of ivory following a request by the Chief Wildlife Warden who considered it cost too much to protect.⁴¹ Meanwhile, in February 2014 the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI) was launched at a conference on illegal wildlife crime in London by the governments of Botswana, Chad, Ethiopia, Gabon and Tanzania who agreed to put all ivory stockpiles "beyond economic use".⁴² The EPI was launched with a \$2 million commitment from the UK government, and \$2 million from the Stop Ivory initiative.⁴³
21. Many countries have retained some raw and worked ivory for public awareness, education, and research purposes, but only small quantities should be needed for these uses. The United States anticipates using crushed ivory for educational purposes, France will mix its crushed ivory with a composite material to be used in construction,⁴⁴ while the Philippines has announced it will mix the ash remains of its burnt ivory with concrete and turn it into a sculpture of an elephant protecting its calf as a monument and reminder of its historical action.⁴⁵ There is concern, given the belief by some that ivory has curative value in traditional medicine, that merely crushing ivory may not entirely eliminate its value or prevent its sale, trade, or use.

The Role of CITES

23. Elephant conservation, including the ivory trade, has been a dominant issue within CITES and the wider conservation community for more than 30 years. Recent increases in poaching and smuggling have attracted high level attention in both range and consumer States. The destruction of ivory stockpiles has been endorsed and implemented by a number of key CITES Parties over the last three years including five destruction events conducted or announced in 2014 alone. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has also applauded the destruction of ivory.⁴⁶
24. It is essential that CITES as the preeminent global treaty regulating wildlife trade supports the process of ivory stockpile destruction and provides a legal and technical framework to facilitate destruction events. CITES has done little to address the stockpile issue since agreeing to the downlisting of four southern African elephant populations (of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe in 1997 and South Africa in 2000). Neither Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in elephant specimens nor the now deleted Action Plan for the Control of Trade in Elephant Ivory (Decision 13.26, Rev. CoP 13) provides any advice to Parties on how to secure or destroy ivory stockpiles. Similarly the MIKE and ETIS reports produced for Parties at each CoP generally lack discussion on the issue.

40 See *BBC News China*. 'Hong Kong to destroy 28 tonnes of seized ivory,' January 2014. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-25858913>.

41 'Kerala mulls burning ivory at its disposal,' *Times of India*, August 2013. Available at: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/flora-fauna/Kerala-mulls-burning-ivory-at-its-disposal/articleshow/21583423.cms>; see also Heath, Kevin. 'Kerala wildlife chief seeks permission to destroy ivory,' *Wildlife News*, September 2013. Available at: <http://wildlifeneews.co.uk/2013/kerala-wildlife-chief-seeks-permission-to-destroy-ivory/>

42 *Elephant Protection Initiative*, February 2014. Available at: <http://www.stopivory.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Elephant-Protection-Initiative-210214.pdf>

43 See <http://www.stopivory.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/statement.pdf> and <http://www.stopivory.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/ChadRelease.pdf>

44 Willsher, Kim. 'France destroys illegal ivory stocks,' *The Guardian*, February 2014. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/feb/06/france-destroys-illegal-ivory-poaching>

45 'Philippines to build elephant monument from destroyed ivory,' *Agence France Press*, March 2014. Available at: <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140313/philippines-build-ivory-monument-destroyed-ivory>

46 'UN Applauds China Efforts to Combat Illegal Ivory Trade,' *UNEP News Centre*, January 2014. Available at: <http://www.unep.org/newscentre/default.aspx?DocumentID=2758&ArticleID=10688>

25. It is important for CITES to endorse ivory stockpile destruction, as UNEP and many Parties have done, and to encourage all range and non-range States with ivory stockpiles to destroy them. CITES endorsement and encouragement of ivory stockpile destruction is crucial to ameliorate unhelpful internal pressure in some States promoting commercial use of stockpiled ivory. CITES can also gather information from range and non-range States that have previously destroyed ivory stockpiles to ensure that “best practice” is adopted in future ivory stockpile destruction events including, but not limited to, full, transparent monitoring of stocks earmarked for destruction, preferred methods of destruction and disposal, and verification of destroyed ivory disposition.
26. Furthermore, direction from CITES concerning ivory stockpile destruction is critical considering the designation of the majority of national elephant populations on Appendix I of the Convention. Strong and unambiguous messages from the CITES Standing Committee are necessary to deter and reduce demand for ivory and to conserve elephants and their habitat recognizing the species’ ecological and economic importance to national governments and local communities.
27. Given the current crisis, and strong indications since CoP16 that illegal trade could be continuing to increase along with increasing involvement of organized crime, it is imperative that the Standing Committee uses its mandate in Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP16) to “carry out, between one meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the next, such interim activities on behalf of the Conference as may be necessary” and initiates concerted action on stockpiles in support of Parties that have already acted to destroy them.

Recommendations

28. The CITES Standing Committee is requested to:

- a. *Endorse* the action taken by Kenya, Gabon, the Philippines, United States, China, France, Chad, and Belgium in destroying ivory stockpiles since 2011 in response to the upsurge in elephant poaching and illegal trade and encourage Hong Kong SAR to destroy the majority of its stockpiled ivory as soon as possible;
- b. *Recommend* that all countries with ivory stockpiles held by government and parastatal agencies destroy all ivory which is surplus to public awareness, educational, or research purposes to prevent the ivory from entering the market and to send a clear message to poachers, smugglers, and consumers that the killing of African elephants will not be tolerated and must end;
- c. *Urge* countries to establish protocols to continue destroying any new ivory that may be acquired in the future;
- d. *Request* the CITES Secretariat to provide urgent technical guidance to Parties about “best practices” for ivory stockpile management, including security, inventory procedures, transparency in tracking and reporting costs of storage/ security, destruction options, pre- and post- destruction monitoring, and use of residual material;
- e. *Encourage* non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, if requested, to provide support to countries to plan for and implement ivory stockpile destructions and commend those organizations that provide such assistance.