

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



Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 11-15 January 2016

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Great apes (Hominidae spp.)

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in great apes*, the Conference of the Parties:

DIRECTS the Secretariat to: ...

- d) *report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of this Resolution at each of its regular meetings*

and

DIRECTS to the Standing Committee to:

- a) *review the implementation of this Resolution at each of its regular meetings on the basis of the Secretariat's reports.*

3. At the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013) the Conference adopted Decision 16.67 on *Great apes (Hominidae spp.)* as follows:

Directed to the Standing Committee

16.67 *The Standing Committee, assisted by the Secretariat, and in consultation with interested Parties, GRASP, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Animals Committee and other bodies as appropriate, review Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP16), with a view to establishing an illegal trade reporting mechanism, and present a summary of its consultations and its recommendations at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

4. At its 65th meeting (SC65, Geneva, July 2014) the Standing Committee endorsed the recommendations in document [SC65 Doc. 37](#) subparagraphs 22 a) to d), as follows:

- a) *invite all Parties, in particular great apes range States, to review their implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.11 on Bushmeat;*
- b) *encourage Parties and organizations with relevant expertise to conduct research to improve methods for species-specific identification of bushmeat;*

- c) *extend the mandate of its Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements to consider the possible establishment of an illegal trade reporting mechanism for reporting illegal trade in great apes, as directed in Decision 16.67; and*
- d) *consider requesting the Secretariat, subject to external funding, to commission a report on the status of great apes for its 67th meeting, as suggested in paragraph 12 of the present document.*

Implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP16) on Conservation of and trade in great apes

- 5. On 30 July 2015, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/042](#), inviting great ape range States and other countries with relevant information to submit information on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in great apes*, to the Secretariat. In the same Notification, Parties were also requested to provide information on any activities that might have been conducted on the review of their implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.11 on *Bushmeat*, in the context of great apes, and on any research that might have been conducted to improve methods for species-specific identification of bushmeat, in particular as it relates to great apes. In response to the Notification the Secretariat received reports from Greece and the United States of America.
- 6. Greece reported that both its management and enforcement authorities are well informed about, and strictly enforce CITES provisions, and that no import or re-export of great ape specimens were recorded in the country during the past three years. The United States of America reported that the US Fish and Wildlife Service has signed a five year cooperative agreement with the Wildlife Conservation Society, to support conservation in the Conkouati Douli National Park, Republic of the Congo. It was reported that this cooperative agreement will focus on five main objectives as follows: control of illegal killing and park encroachment on land; control of illegal killing and by-catch in park waters; development of a better evidence base to adaptively manage park activities; improvement of community support of the park; and enhancement of management capacity to implement and oversee important park programmes. The United States of America also reported that the cooperative agreement is intended to support the conservation of populations of chimpanzees, gorillas and large monkeys, as well as a number of other species in the park, and that the agreement will address commercial bushmeat trade and other key threats to wildlife. No further detail on this was however provided.

Implementation of Decision 16.67

- 7. At SC65, the Standing Committee agreed to Recommendation c) in Document SC65 Doc. 37, extending the mandate of the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements to, in accordance with the provisions of Decision 16.67, consider the possible establishment of an illegal trade reporting mechanism for reporting illegal trade in great apes. As requested by the Standing Committee, the Working Group considered this matter and came to the conclusion that illegal trade in great apes should be part of the annual illegal trade report already recommended, and that a separate international trade reporting mechanism for great apes was probably not warranted. This matter is addressed in detail in document SC66 Doc. 30.2 on *Special reporting requirements*, prepared by the Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements for the present meeting. Document SC66 Doc. 30.2 also contains a recommendation relating to the implementation of Decision 16.67, for consideration by the Committee. The Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements will report on its work at the present meeting.

Report on the status of great apes

- 8. At SC65, the Standing Committee agreed to Recommendation d) in Document SC65 Doc. 37, requesting the Secretariat to, subject to external funding, commission a report on the status of great apes for its 67th meeting, similar to the report on rhinoceroses from the African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission and TRAFFIC, submitted before each meeting of the Conference of the Parties in accordance with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) on *Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses*.
- 9. At the time of writing, the Secretariat had not received any external funding to commission the report on the status of great apes, but in support of the implementation of recommendation d) in Document SC65 Doc. 37, the Secretariat has engaged with the IUCN Primate Specialist Group and the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) Secretariat, to discuss potential opportunities for such a report to be prepared. GRASP indicated that it might be in a position to provide some funding support for this work,

and at the time of writing the Secretariat was working with the IUCN Primate Specialist Group and GRASP to develop an outline for the proposed report. The lack of data on some threats affecting great ape populations, for example the scale of illegal domestic bushmeat trade, needs to be further discussed to identify how these issues might be best addressed in the planned report. The Secretariat will continue to work closely with the IUCN Primate Specialist Group, GRASP and others on these issues. This collaboration would also ensure that matters such as the revision of the IUCN Red List and available reports on the subject at hand, are adequately considered during the preparation of the report. The work to be conducted could provide important opportunities to gather information in particular with regard to some issues severely affecting great ape populations, but about which very limited information is available at present.

10. The Secretariat continues to believe that the planned report will greatly assist Parties in their deliberations on matters relating to great apes, and that it will ensure that responses are targeted at those pressures that most significantly impact on these species. Parties and organizations are therefore encouraged to provide funding for the study.
11. The Secretariat proposes to further report on the status of great apes at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016).

Illegal trade in great apes

12. On 5 November 2014, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties [No. 2014/050](#) on the *Special report format on measures taken in 2013 to address illegal wildlife trade*. As part of the special report format that was made available to Parties as an Annex to the Notification, Parties were invited to provide case-by-case seizure data on specimens of a limited number of CITES-listed species, including great apes. When the Parties authorized the use of the information they provided in response to the Notification in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) supported global study on wildlife crime, the Secretariat forwarded these reports to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Some of the reports provided to UNODC included information on illegal trade in great apes. It should be noted that data compiled by UNODC to date on the basis of the reports it received, similar to what was reported at SC65, reflects that illegal international trade in great ape specimens is currently limited. The Secretariat reports in more detail on the ICWC-supported global study on wildlife crime in document SC66 Doc. 16.5 on the *International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime*.
13. Since SC65, the Secretariat has received information from different sources about alleged illegal trade in great apes. As a result, the Secretariat engaged with authorities of Germany, Kuwait and Qatar, requesting these authorities to further investigate these allegations. The Secretariat also engaged with INTERPOL to initiate investigations and follow-ups.
14. The Management Authority of Kuwait informed the Secretariat that three juvenile orangutans from Indonesia were confiscated by customs authorities in Kuwait, in July 2015. The Secretariat was also informed that one of these orangutans was dead upon arrival, and that another one was too young to be returned to Indonesia, and is currently being cared for at a rescue facility in Kuwait. The Secretariat was further informed that the oldest of the three juvenile orangutans was successfully returned to Indonesia in October 2015.
15. On 12 November 2015, Thailand conducted a repatriation of 14 confiscated orangutans to Indonesia. The orangutans were transported to Indonesia by Indonesian military aircraft from the Donmeang Military Airport in Bangkok, Thailand.

Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP)

16. The Secretariat continued its work as a member of the GRASP Executive Committee in the period since SC65, and hosted the 9th GRASP Executive Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, from 21- 22 August 2014. The Secretariat also participated in the 10th GRASP Executive Committee meeting from 22-23 September 2015 in Bonn, Germany. As a GRASP Executive Committee member, it also regularly participated in GRASP Executive Committee teleconference calls during the reporting period. During these meetings and conference calls, participants discussed the activities currently ongoing as part of the GRASP Secretariat work plan 2013-2016, designated by the 2nd GRASP Council (November 2012, Paris) and focusing of six priorities areas: law enforcement and judiciary, political advocacy, addressing threats of disease, habitat protection and enhancement, conflict sensitive conservation and green economy. The Secretariat expresses its sincere appreciation to Hong Kong, SAR, China, for the

generous funding it provided, which enabled the Secretariat to participate in the 10th GRASP Executive Committee meeting in Germany.

17. From 4-6 September 2014, a GRASP Regional Meeting – East Africa was held in Bujumbura, Burundi. This meeting brought together delegates from Burundi, the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, along with conservation organizations, research institutions and other agencies working in the region, to discuss transboundary collaboration, ecotourism, illegal trade and other regional priorities.
18. From 27-28 July 2015, the Secretariat participated in the GRASP Regional meeting – South East Asia in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. The meeting brought together GRASP focal points and partners from the two great ape range States in Asia (Indonesia and Malaysia), along with United Nations agencies, conservation organizations, research institutions and private companies to discuss issues such as sustainable palm oil, illegal trade, technology and the latest population data. A report entitled *The future of the Bornean Orangutan: Impacts of Change and Land cover*,¹ was launched and presented at the meeting. The Secretariat expresses its sincere appreciation to Hong Kong, SAR, China, for the generous funding it provided, which enabled the Secretariat to participate in this meeting.

Recommendations

19. The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this document and to agree to the suggestion in paragraph 11 above, that the Secretariat report on the report on the status of great apes at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

¹ <http://www.un-grasp.org/videos-resources/publications/>