

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



Sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 27 November - 1 December 2017

Strategic matters

COMMUNITY AWARENESS ON WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING:
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. The Conference of the Parties, at its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), adopted Decision 17.86 on *Community awareness on wildlife trafficking*, as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

17.86 *The Secretariat shall subject to external funding:*

a) *contract a consultant to:*

- i) *engage with Parties that reported against Decision 16.85 paragraph c)* and any other Parties as may be appropriate to identify best practices and challenges experienced by these Parties in their implementation of strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife, and to encourage the general public to report wildlife trafficking to appropriate authorities for further investigation;*
- ii) *conduct a review of existing strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness; and*
- iii) *prepare a report on the basis of the findings made through the activities outlined in paragraphs i) and ii) in this decision, together with recommendations, on how to further enhance the effectiveness of such strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness; and*

b) *report progress on the implementation of the present Decision at the 69th and 70th meetings of the Standing Committee.*

3. It is the Secretariat's understanding that the review of best practices and challenges in enhancing community awareness on wildlife trafficking, as mandated by Decision 17.86, which originated from Decision 16.85, is meant to focus on rural communities that live in the immediate vicinity of conservation areas in the source countries, since awareness building on wildlife trafficking in destination countries is already covered by the work in demand reduction as mandated by the Decisions on demand reduction. That is why the scope of the study will not duplicate the work on demand reduction in destination countries.
4. The Secretariat has already secured funding for this consultancy work which will allow the study to start as soon as the necessary contract is signed. This will allow the Secretariat to prepare a report and

* *China, Greece, South Africa and Zimbabwe – document CoP17 Doc. 68.*

recommendations on how to further enhance the effectiveness of strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness at the 70th meeting of the Committee.

5. Community-based responses to poaching and illegal wildlife trade have been the subject of research of the [IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group](#) (SULi). In the past, SULi has led a series of workshops with its partners to, *inter alia*, identify effective community-level interventions to stop poaching of and illegal trade in wildlife. That is why the Secretariat sees SULi as best placed to undertake this review. SULi has recommended an expert for this work and has also agreed to establish a small technical panel within SULi to review and ensure the quality of the outputs of the consultancy. At the time of preparing this report, the Secretariat is discussing the scope of the study with the consultant.
6. While initiatives of community-based conservation started decades ago, community-level response to illegal trade in wildlife, especially in the context of current challenges of increasing involvement of transnational organized criminal syndicates as a result of the rising profits from illicit trade, is a relatively new subject and warrants new analysis. This study is therefore very timely.
7. The Secretariat is of the opinion that the enhancement of community awareness about the economic, social and environmental impacts of trafficking in wildlife should be seen as part of the holistic efforts to engage and empower local communities in wildlife conservation, in conjunction with livelihoods programmes. This is because where the economic and social value of wildlife populations for local people is positive, they will be more motivated to support and engage in efforts to combat poaching and illicit trade. The proposed review can focus on the efforts to enhance awareness of wildlife trafficking at community level, but it will benefit from looking at the issue from a slightly broader perspective.
8. The Committee is requested to note the developments in the implementation of Decision 17.86 described in the present document.