

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

Species specific matters

Elephants (Elephantidae spp)

UPDATE ON THE ELEPHANT PROTECTION INITIATIVE

1. This document has been submitted by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, sitting Chair of the Head-of-State led Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI), on behalf of the other member States of the EPI. As of the submission of this document the EPI member States are: the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Botswana, the Republic of Chad, the Republic of Congo, the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Republic of Gambia, the Gabonese Republic, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Liberia, the Republic of Malawi, the Republic of Sierra Leone, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of South Sudan, the Republic of Uganda and, the United Republic of Tanzania. All EPI member States except for the Republic of Gambia are also African elephant range States.*
2. In July 2014, SC65 Doc. 42.5 notified the Standing Committee that at the London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade, five States agreed to take a leadership role against elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade and had launched the EPI. These five EPI founder States are Botswana, Tanzania, Chad, Gabon and Ethiopia. A further 11 African States have since taken up their invitation to join them in working towards the EPI's objectives, and International Organisations and NGOs have contributed their support, facilitating the EPI's speedy implementation across range States.
3. The full text of the EPI is annexed below as Annex 11. 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 (endorsed by the African elephant range states and the CITES Conference of the Parties at CoP15) by accessing public and private sector support through the creation of a long-term fund;
 - 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
 - d) Agree to put all stockpiles beyond economic use.
4. In January 2016, SC66 Doc. 47.6 "Update on The Elephant Protection Initiative"² submitted by EPI founding member Botswana, provided a note on and requested the Standing Committee to welcome the progress of

* *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.*

¹ See <http://www.elephantprotectioninitiative.org/> for the full text and further details.

² [SC66 Doc. 47.6: Update On The Elephant Protection Initiative](#)

the EPI, while welcoming the growing international support for the EPI from Governments, NGOs and IGOs worldwide.

5. In SC66 Sum. 3 (Rev.1), “The Standing Committee noted and welcomed the Elephant Protection Initiative (EPI); noted that the EPI member States encouraged other range States to join the EPI member States in working towards the above objectives; and encouraged non-range States, International Organizations and NGOs that have not yet done so to contribute their technical and financial support, in order to facilitate the African Elephant Action Plan’s speedy implementation.”³
6. SC66 Doc. 47.6 also noted a growing consensus against ivory trade, and decisive actions taken by countries against the illegal ivory trade and illegal wildlife trade of all kinds. The EPI continues to build this momentum, bringing States and non-state partners together under a common initiative to deliver its actions to stop elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade.
7. Ethiopia, on behalf of the EPI member states, welcomes:
 - a) the action taken by Angola, the Republic of Congo, Coté d’Ivoire, Liberia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and South Sudan and to join the EPI since SC66;
 - b) the actions taken by the United States and the People’s Republic of China since the joint statement by President Barak Obama of the United States and President Xi Jinping issued on 25 September 2015 against their commitment to “enact nearly complete bans on ivory import and export, including significant and timely restrictions on the import of ivory as hunting trophies, and to take significant and timely steps to halt the domestic commercial trade of ivory”, as well as the actions taken by the People’s Republic of China in line with their commitment, issued on 30 December 2016⁴, to close their domestic market by the end of 2017⁵;
 - c) the actions taken by Hong Kong SAR, People’s Republic of China, which has banned the import and export of ivory and has announced a 5-year timeline to phase out its domestic ivory market⁶;
 - d) the pledge by France in May 2016 to enact a total ban of ivory sales in France and call on other EU countries to implement a similar measure.
 - e) the formal support for the EPI by 25 leading conservation NGOs (which is below as Annex 2);
 - f) the strong support given to the EPI by the multilateral community, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank;
 - g) the Decision at the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) World Conservation Congress, held in Hawaii in September 2016, to urge “the governments of countries in which there is a legal domestic market for elephant ivory, or any domestic commerce in elephant ivory, to make all necessary legislative and regulatory efforts to close their domestic markets for commercial trade in raw or worked elephant ivory”; as well as to note the EPI⁷; and
 - h) the decision made by Parties to CITES at COP 17 to recommend “that all Parties and non-Parties in whose jurisdiction there is a legal domestic market for ivory that is contributing to poaching or illegal trade, take all necessary legislative, regulatory and enforcement measures to close their domestic markets for commercial trade in raw and worked ivory as a matter of urgency”⁸.
8. A robust African-led EPI governance mechanism was agreed at the Addis Ababa meeting in September 2015: a Summit of Heads of State, a Council of member State Ministers, an Implementation Board consisting of 5 technical officials appointed by the Council, and a Secretariat (currently provided by the NGOs Stop Ivory and Conservation International) which reports to the Implementation Board. Ethiopia, on behalf of the

³ [Sc66 Sum. 3 \(Rev. 1\): Summary Morning](#)

⁴ [Wcs News Releases: China Announcement Of Domestic Ivory Ban In 2017 - English Translation](#)

⁵ [Joint Press Release: China Moves Ahead With Its Closure Of Domestic Ivory Market As Witnessed By The Cites Secretary General](#)

⁶ [Hong Kong Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs: Proposed Plan for Phasing out the Local Trade in Elephant Ivory](#)

⁷ [Motion 007 - Closure Of Domestic Markets For Elephant Ivory](#)

⁸ [Resolution Conf. 10.10 \(Rev. CoP17\) Trade in Elephant Specimens](#)

EPI member states, invites the Standing Committee to take note of and welcome the following actions delivered through the EPI:

- a) Development of a standardized ivory Inventory Protocol and Inventory Technology, designed to ensure the process adheres to the requirements of CITES Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), which has been used for 13 inventories of ivory stockpiles since its development. In 2016 alone, inventory trips were undertaken to Kenya, Gabon, Malawi, Congo Brazzaville, Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola and Uganda. Across these countries, 18.37 tonnes of ivory were inventoried, and 133 personnel from wildlife departments and law enforcement agencies were trained in the use of the inventory protocol, with senior staff also trained in the Stockpile Management Software developed by Stop Ivory in partnership with EPI member countries and partner organisations;
 - b) Development of Standards and Guidelines for National Elephant Action Plans to facilitate the national level implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan. 10 National Elephant Action Plans have been developed or are in development (and which has been updated following the extensive stakeholder feedback afforded by this work);
 - c) The commitment of growing levels of funding for the implementation of these National Elephant Action Plans, with 17 stakeholder developed priority conservation projects drawn from NEAPs across 10 range States having now received full funding, and further projects approved.
 - d) The approval by the EPI Implementation Board in July 2016 of a Resource Mobilisation Strategy. The Strategy has been designed to enhance the level of collaboration between EPI member States and the international community in ensuring both political will and the availability of finance for African elephant conservation.
9. 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, the recognized involvement of transnational organized crime networks in ivory trafficking, and the global nature of the illegal ivory trade, the Committee is invited to:
- a) Take further note of the Elephant Protection Initiative and its achievements to date;
 - b) Support and engage with, where appropriate, a consultative process between EPI States and the wider international community on seeking enhanced political and financial support to elephant conservation efforts. Encourage non-range States, International Organizations and NGOs that have not yet done so to contribute their technical and financial support, in order to facilitate the African Elephant Action Plan's speedy implementation.
 - c) Take note of the standardized ivory Inventory Protocol and Inventory Technology developed by Stop Ivory on behalf of the EPI, which was developed with the aim of assisting Parties to CITES with the recommendations under Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16)⁹.

⁹ [Resolution Conf. 10.10 \(Rev. CoP16\) Trade in Elephant Specimens](#)



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 CoP 18 (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.**

13/02/2014

NGO declaration of support for the EPI as of August 2017



Coalition of major NGOs joins the Elephant Protection Initiative

We the undersigned organisations fully support and are pleased to announce our acceptance of the invitation made by the Governments of Botswana, Ethiopia, Chad, Gabon and Tanzania at the London Conference to join the Elephant Protection Initiative.

In doing so, we also join the Governments of Uganda, Malawi, The Gambia, Kenya, The Republic of Congo, Liberia, Angola, Somalia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire.

We commit to work together to support the current and future EPI Governments to achieve:

- immediate and longer term funding for the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan through National Elephant Action Plans;
- the closure of domestic ivory markets;
- all stockpiles being put beyond economic use; and
- a moratorium on any consideration of future international ivory trade for at least 10 years and thereafter until African elephant populations are no longer threatened.

We support the call for other Governments, IGOs, NGOs and the private sector to bring together their efforts behind the EPI to secure the future for elephants.

Alexander Rhodes	Chief Executive Officer, Stop Ivory
Michael O'Brien-Onyeka	Senior Vice President – Africa & Madagascar Field Division, Conservation International
Dr Iain Douglas-Hamilton	Chief Executive Officer, Save the Elephants
DrCristián Sampere	Chief Executive Officer, The Wildlife Conservation Society
Angela Sheldrick	Chief Executive Officer, David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
Dr Max Graham & Keith Roberts	CEO & Director of Wildlife Security, Space for Giants
Prof. Jonathan Baillie	Conservation Programmes Director, The Zoological Society of London
Dr Paula Kahumbu	Chief Executive Officer, Wildlife Direct
Santosian Noor	President and Founder, Africa Nomads
Bhavik Shah	President, Big Life Foundation
Mary Rice	Executive Director, The Environmental Investigation Agency
Peter Fearnhead	Chief Executive Officer, African Parks Network
Charlie Mayhew, MBE	Founder and Chief Executive, The Tusk Trust
Jonathan Vaughan	Director, The Lilongwe Wildlife Trust

Daudi Sumba	Vice President of Program Design and Government Relations, African Wildlife Foundation
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Peter Knights	Co-Founder and Executive Director, WildAid
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Mark Rose	Chief Executive Officer, Fauna and Flora International
David Canavan	Chief Executive, RSPCA
Dr. Arend de Haas	Director, African Conservation Foundation
Raabia A. K. Hawa	ExecutiveDirector, Ulinzi Africa Foundation
Vladimir Russo	ExecutiveDirector, Kissama Foundation
Sir David Richmond	Chief Executive Officer, The Brazzaville Foundation for Peace and Conservation
Ian Saunders	CEO, Tsavo Conservation Group