

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



Seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee
Rosa Khutor, Sochi (Russian Federation), 1-5 October 2018

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

Enforcement

WILDLIFE CRIME ENFORCEMENT SUPPORT
IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

1. This document has been submitted by Niger, Senegal and Nigeria on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its member States.*

Background

2. In March 2016, representatives of Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Gabon adopted the Dakar Declaration on the Development of Subregional Wildlife Enforcement Collaboration¹, which identified the threat posed by wildlife crime and the need to develop a collaborative regional response.
3. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP17) adopted the following decisions on *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa*:

17.97 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding,

- a) *in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and with the support of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and relevant stakeholders, commission a threat assessment report on illegal wildlife trade in West and Central Africa, to identify and collate information regarding trade routes, techniques and trends relating to wildlife trafficking in the two subregions, including recommendations on priority measures necessary to address and significantly reduce wildlife crime in the two subregions;*
- b) *produce the report in the working languages of CITES and make it available to Parties; and*

* *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 <https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/Dakar-declaration-English-French.pdf>

- c) *assist Parties, upon request, with the implementation of the recommendations and priority measures identified in the threat assessment report.*

17.98 Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall review findings and recommendations emanating from the implementation of Decision 17.97 and make recommendations for further action to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

17.99 Directed to Parties

Parties are urged to support the activities to be conducted in compliance with Decision 17.97 through the provision of information on legal and illegal trade, as may be requested.

17.100 Directed to Parties

Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities are invited to provide financial or technical assistance to ensure the effective implementation of the priority enforcement recommendations identified in the threat assessment report commissioned in accordance with the provisions of Decision 17.97.

Implementation of Decisions 17.97 to 17.100

4. On 2-4 July 2018, representatives from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) member States² attended a workshop in Abuja, Nigeria, and adopted the *Strategic Areas of Intervention and Priority Recommendations to Develop a Counter Wildlife Trafficking Response in West Africa*. This document (available as an information document) confirmed the 6 priority areas and 47 strategic priority recommendations that the ECOWAS member State representatives identified as necessary for countering wildlife crime in the West Africa sub region, thereby providing subregional guidance for the implementation of CITES Decisions 17.97 to 17.100.
5. In the course of this meeting, ECOWAS member States also adopted the Abuja Recommendations on the Development of a Coordinated Counter Wildlife Trafficking Response in West Africa (available as an information document) encouraging high-level decision-makers to support the development and adoption of a West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime, the establishment of a West Africa Network to Combat Wildlife Crime, and the creation of sustainable funding mechanisms ensuring that the Strategy can be sustainably implemented in the long term. A West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Steering Committee, comprising representatives of Senegal, Nigeria, Togo, Niger, Gambia, Liberia and Guinea Bissau was appointed to coordinate future work on behalf of the subregion in this regard.
6. The West African subregion, under the auspices of the West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Steering Committee, is undertaking a consultation process with all CITES Parties and other interested stakeholders, to seek input with regard to the development of the *Wildlife Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in West Africa (West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime or WASCWC)* and its associated implementing mechanisms. This consultation, in the form of a Questionnaire (reproduced in Annex of this document), will review other national and regional strategies, as well as infractions relating to West Africa as the source, transit or destination country for illicit trade of CITES-listed wildlife. Responses to the Questionnaire should be submitted to the management authorities of Senegal (Mr. Abba Sonko abbasonko@hotmail.com) and Nigeria (Elizabeth Ehi-Ebewele elizaehi@yahoo.com), the Co-Chairs of the *West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Steering Committee* by 31 December 2018.

Recommendation

7. The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - a) Take note of the present report.

² Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

- b) Take into account the *Strategic Areas of Intervention and Priority Recommendations to Develop a Counter Wildlife Trafficking Response in West Africa* when defining recommendations for further action to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as per Decision 17.98; mandate the Secretariat to take this document into account when prioritizing CITES enforcement capacity-building activities in the subregion; and encourage Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and interested stakeholders to take the priorities identified in this document into account when providing wildlife law enforcement support in the West Africa subregion.
- c) Mandate the Secretariat to distribute the questionnaire reproduced in Annex and the *Strategic Areas of Intervention and Priority Recommendations to Develop a Counter Wildlife Trafficking Response in West Africa* to CITES Parties and other stakeholders in a CITES Notification to support the *West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Steering Committee* in the efforts they lead to develop the *West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime* (WASCWC) and its associated implementing mechanisms.

West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Questionnaire

Background

The West African subregion, under the auspices of the *West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Steering Committee*, is undertaking a consultation process with all CITES Parties and other interested stakeholders, to seek input with regard to the development of the *Wildlife Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in West Africa (West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime or WASCWC)* and its associated implementing mechanisms. This consultation, in the form of a Questionnaire, will review other national and regional strategies, as well as infractions relating to West Africa as the source, transit or destination country for illicit trade of CITES-listed wildlife. As responses to the Questionnaire may contain sensitive information, the Questionnaire responses will be kept confidential and will not be made publicly available (unless requested by the submitting Party or stakeholder).

Responses to the Questionnaire should be submitted to the management authorities of Senegal (Mr. Abba Sonko abbasonko@hotmail.com) and Nigeria (Elizabeth Ehi-Ebewele elizaehi@yahoo.com), Co-Chairs of the *West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime Steering Committee*. Deadline for submission of completed questionnaires is **31 December 2018**.

A. Contact Details

- i) Name of country or organization
- ii) Details of contact person (name, email, telephone)

B. National and Regional Wildlife Crime Strategies

- i) Does your country have a National Wildlife Crime Strategy? If so, can a copy be made available?
- ii) Does your region have a Regional Wildlife Crime Strategy? If so, can a copy be made available?
- iii) In your country or organization's experience, should the initial focal area for the Regional Wildlife Crime Strategy be narrow (e.g. a number of target species) or should it tackle all CITES-listed species from the outset?
- iv) Do you have any other recommendations concerning key focal areas and prioritization of activities of a Regional Wildlife Crime Strategy?
- v) Please highlight any concerns your country or organization has had with regard to communication and collaboration with other countries or regions regarding wildlife crime (e.g. poor response times to requests for information, lack of resources to conduct joint operations, problems with translation of communications into different languages) and possible mechanisms adopted to overcome these challenges;
- vi) Please provide brief details of collaborative success stories in your country or region, such as targeted transboundary operations, or information sharing that led to the successful prosecution of criminals.

C. Implementing Mechanisms

- i) What mechanisms, if any, are in place for combating wildlife crime in your country (e.g. National Task Forces)? Please provide details;
- ii) What mechanisms, if any, are in place for combating wildlife crime in your region (e.g. Wildlife Enforcement Networks)? Please provide details;
- iii) Which agencies, if any, are tasked with tackling wildlife crime in your country (e.g. rangers, customs authorities, police, judiciary, financial investigation units, non-governmental organizations) and how do they collaborate with one another? Please provide details;
- iv) If your region has a WEN, please provide any relevant details concerning its structure, governance, funding, etc.;
- v) Does your country, region or organization have a wildlife crime enforcement database? If yes, please provide details of its structure, access rights, etc.;
- vi) Does your country or region have a structured mechanism in place for disposal of confiscated live specimens? If yes, please provide details;

- vii) What mechanisms, if any, does your country or region utilize to enable forensic analysis of confiscated specimens?

D. Experience of Wildlife Crime Relating to West Africa

- i) Does your country or organization have experience with regard to illegal trade in wildlife products that have originated in, or transited through West Africa? Please provide details of seizures or any other relevant information;
- ii) Does your country or organization have experience with regard to perpetrators of wildlife crime that are of West African nationality or origin? Please provide any details as relevant;
- iii) Do you feel that your country or organization would benefit from collaboration with the West African subregion with regard to combating wildlife crime? If yes, in what capacity do you think this collaboration would be most beneficial (e.g. through Memorandums of Understanding, joint operations, etc.)?

E. General Observations

- i) Please provide any further observations that may be useful in the development of a West Africa Strategy on Combating Wildlife Crime and its associated implementing mechanisms.