

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



Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

DEMAND REDUCTION TO COMBAT ILLEGAL TRADE:
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted adopted Decisions 18.86 and 18.87 on *Demand reduction to combat illegal trade* as follows:

18.86 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:

- a) *develop CITES guidance on demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species, taking into consideration the results of the study commissioned by the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 17.48, paragraph a), and any recommendations resulting from the workshop convened in accordance with Decision 17.48, paragraph b);*
- b) *convene a workshop for Parties and experts to review the guidance and to provide training to the Parties in designing and implementing demand-reduction campaigns to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species;*
- c) *submit the draft CITES guidance on demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species to the Standing Committee for its consideration; and*
- d) *support interested Parties in implementing demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species and provide necessary technical cooperation to those Parties on an ongoing basis.*

18.87 Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall review the guidance developed in accordance with Decision 18.86 and make recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

Implementation of Decision 18.86

3. Pursuant to paragraph a) of Decision 18.86, the Secretariat commissioned the development of guidance on demand reduction strategies. The guidance aims to serve as a practical tool for Parties and other potential users in designing and implementing their demand-reduction initiatives. It focuses on a five-step process:

from identifying the species and type of consumption behaviour to change; the audience segment to target; the most effective approaches to reducing demand; to designing the most effective messages and choosing messengers; and implementing, evaluating and refining the strategy. The draft guidance is found in Annex 3 to this document.

4. In accordance with paragraph b) of Decision 18.86, the Secretariat co-organized with TRAFFIC a two-day workshop for Parties and experts to review the guidance. The workshop was held online from 14 to 15 June 2021 due to the travel restrictions in connection with the COVID19 pandemic. Close to 100 representatives from over 22 Parties and nearly 30 international and national non-governmental organizations from around the world participated in the workshop. Participants were given an overview of the background and purpose of the guidance and detailed explanations on each of the 5 steps as recommended in the guidance. In general, the guidance was well received by the participants who also provided constructive inputs for further improvements. Day 2 of the workshop, dedicated to training and exercise in five breakout groups, was found particularly useful as participants were given the opportunity to take a hands-on test of what they learned in the five-step approach. The final version of the draft guidance takes into account comments received during the workshop as well as written comments received after the workshop.
5. The Secretariat would like to express its sincere appreciation to Germany, the United States of America and the European Union for their financial contribution to the preparation of the guidance. Following the workshop, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland expressed its interest in providing funding to support next steps, including through regional workshops and research materials, to support the use of guidance through pilot projects for selected species and countries.

Other activities related to demand reduction

6. Demand reduction was a topic of the online meeting of range, transit and consumer States of totoaba (18-20 and 22 October 2021). The Secretariat took the opportunity to introduce the draft CITES guidance on demand reduction, noting that it is subject to approval by the Conference of the Parties and its potential to help improve demand reduction strategies for species such as totoaba. A number of recommendations related to demand reduction have been built into the outcome document of the meeting (see document SC74 Doc. 28.5).
7. The Secretariat also participated in several events led by Parties which focused on demand reduction, such as the event entitled *Post 2020 Wildlife Trade: current challenges and opportunities* organized by the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The opening remarks provided by the CITES Secretary-General are available [here](#).

Discussion

8. Resolution Conf. 17.4 on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*, adopted at CoP17 in 2016, sets out overarching principles for demand reduction efforts in the CITES context. With the objective of producing a tool that can truly support Parties in the implementation of the Resolution, the Secretariat worked closely with the consultant to ensure that the guidance is more practical than theoretical, noting the complexity of the subject and bearing in mind that Parties are the main target users. The final version of the draft guidance is the result of several rounds of reviews by the Secretariat's different teams before it was presented at the workshop in June 2021. The 5-step approach and the 10-point benchmark criteria, coupled with a collection of examples from the field to illustrate each step and a summary of actions to be taken at the end of the description of each step, are all attempts to make the guidance easily digestible for Parties. The 5-step approach for demand reduction has been tried and tested for rhinoceros horn as introduced by the Standing Committee working group on rhinoceroses at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013).
9. Whilst the merit of mass campaigns that aim to raise general public awareness is recognized in line with Resolution Conf. 17.4, the guidance focuses on evidence-based, well-targeted, species-specific and government-led demand reduction interventions to achieve consumer behaviour change. Market research of the species in demand and social science research to understand the drivers of the demand and type of consumption behaviour to change as described in Step 1 represents the very first and critical step to ensure that demand reduction initiatives are evidence-based and well targeted. Steps 2, 3 and 4 on identifying the audience to target, the most effective approach to reducing demand and most effective messages and messengers all aim for behaviour change of specific groups of consumers. Under Step 5 on *Implementing, Evaluating and Refining*, the specific recommendations on social research insight into changes in the target audience behaviour, and market research insight into changes in the end-market once again underline the

importance of an evidence-based demand reduction strategy, including at the stage of measuring the impact of the campaigns. The recommendations on actions to influence the benefits and barriers of consumer choices and to advise what people should do rather than what they should not do are based on well-tested behaviour change studies.

10. Despite the great efforts to make the guidance a practical and easy-to-use tool, given the complex nature of demand reduction interventions through behaviour change, the Secretariat believes that Parties will benefit from tailored training on the ground for specific regions or countries. The need of Parties for capacity-building was already expressed at previous events on demand reduction, as well as in the responses to the questionnaire issued by the Secretariat. The interest demonstrated by participants at the training session during the workshop in June 2021 already shows the great potential of the guidance in supporting Parties' demand reduction initiatives. The Secretariat therefore suggests that training courses on the use of the guidance be organized at regional and country levels. It is also advisable that the guidance be translated into local languages with necessary adaptations when appropriate. Funding support for such efforts will be needed.
11. Since the CITES guidance on demand reduction is by design a tool to facilitate the implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.4, it is suggested that Resolution Conf. 17.4 be updated to reflect the availability of this new tool and to encourage the use of the tool by Parties. In the meantime, it should be noted that the guidance could always benefit from improvement and further enhancement in the future when more experience from implementation is available and best practices collected. Further, based on discussions at the workshop, piloting use of the guidance for selected species in priority countries with necessary adaptation to suit local context would be a desirable way forward.
12. The understanding of the difference between mass campaigns to raise general public awareness and targeted demand reduction strategies to achieve consumer behaviour change still needs to be enhanced. For instance, when specimens of certain species are sought after for the purpose of speculation or investment as one of the motivations of the demand, which seems to be the case for several Appendix-I listed species, raising awareness of the rarity of the species can be counter-productive. Therefore, it is critical to design demand reduction initiatives and communication messages based on the accurate understanding of the motivation of the demand as discussed in the draft CITES guidance on demand reduction.

Recommendations

13. The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to endorse the guidance and submit it for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.
14. The Secretariat also invites the Standing Committee to submit the draft decisions and amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.4 on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* included in Annexes 1 and 2 for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting. The suggested amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.4 reflect the availability of the CITES guidance on demand reduction and encourage Parties to make full use of the guidance in support of their demand reduction initiatives to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species.

Draft decisions of the Conference of the Parties

19.AA Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:

- a) organize translation of the Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species into French and Spanish;
- b) organize regional training seminars on the use of the Guidance;
- c) organize pilot projects to promote the use of Guidance for selected species and countries, with necessary adaptation to suit local context when appropriate;
- d) support all interested Parties in implementing demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species and provide necessary technical support including the use of the guidance; and
- e) report on the progress made in the implementation of this decision to the Standing Committee.

19.BB Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall review the report of the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 19.AA and make recommendations as appropriate to the Conference of the Parties.

19.CC Directed to Parties

Parties are encouraged to translate the *Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* into local languages and share their experience in the implementation of the *Guidance*.

Conf. 17.4
(Rev. CoP19)

**Demand reduction strategies to combat
illegal trade in CITES-listed species**

RECOGNIZING that poaching and illegal trade are decimating some wildlife populations and driving numerous CITES-listed species and driving them toward extinction;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that wildlife trafficking contributes to damage to ecosystems and rural livelihoods, ~~including those based on ecotourism~~, undermines good governance and the rule of law and, in some cases, threatens national stability and security and requires enhanced regional cooperation and coordination in response;

CONSCIOUS that enforcement interventions play a critical role in stemming illegal trade in specimens of species included in CITES Appendices, but bearing in mind that, without a complementary effort to address the persistent market demand that drives this trade, enforcement action alone may not be sufficient to eliminate this threat;

RECALLING that Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP18) on *Trade in elephant specimens* urges relevant Parties to “engage in public awareness campaigns, including: supply and demand reduction; drawing attention to existing or new regulations concerning the sale and purchase of ivory;”

RECALLING also that Decision 16.85 on Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.) recommends that “all Parties implicated in the illegal trade of rhinoceros horn as a range or consumer State, where applicable, should: a) develop and implement long-term demand reduction strategies or programmes and immediate actions aimed at reducing the illegal movement and consumption of rhino horn products;”

RECALLING also Resolution Conf. 10.19 (Rev. CoP14) on *Traditional medicines*, which recommends that the Parties “work closely with groups of traditional-medicine practitioners and consumers in developing public education and awareness programmes towards the elimination of illegal use of endangered species, and developing awareness of the need to avoid over-exploitation of other wild species”;

WELCOMING the historic resolution on tackling wildlife trafficking adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2015 that “urges Member States to engage actively in efforts to raise awareness about and address the problems and risks associated with the supply and transit of and demand for illegal wildlife products and to reduce the demand using targeted strategies in order to influence consumer behaviour;”

ACKNOWLEDGING that demand-reduction interventions can effectively complement and support law enforcement efforts;

RECOGNIZING that wildlife trafficking via e-commerce is a growing and significant threat that calls for new approaches to reduce demand for illegally traded wildlife;

NOTING the need for well-targeted, evidence-based, species-specific, country-specific demand-reduction campaigns to more effectively bring about behaviour changes;

NOTING that legal and sustainable trade can be vital to rural livelihoods and consequently important to *in situ* conservation and that demand reduction campaigns must distinguish between legal and sustainable, and illegal trade;

RECOGNIZING the CITES guidance on demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species;

~~RECOGNIZING the demand reduction initiatives by many countries, organizations and inter-governmental bodies, including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) demand reduction workshop organized by the governments of the United States of America and Viet Nam and the workshop on demand-side strategies for curbing illegal trade in ivory in Hangzhou, China, organized by the government of China and the CITES Secretariat;~~

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. URGES Parties where there is a significant market for illegally traded wildlife products to:
 - a) develop strategies to reduce the demand for illegal products of wild animals and plants through demand reduction campaigns and to enhance, as appropriate, policy, legislation and law enforcement in this regard;
 - b) conduct in-depth and regular research on the demand for specimens of illegally traded CITES-listed species, where possible, using standard methodologies to understand the drivers and dynamics of the demand and to provide solid information for use in demand-reduction campaigns;
 - c) actively develop and implement well-targeted, species-specific, evidence-based campaigns by engaging key consumer groups and targeting the motivations for the demand, including the speculative nature of the demand, and develop specific messaging approaches and methods for target audiences in order to achieve behaviour change;
 - d) create greater awareness of the broader consequences and impacts of illegal harvest and illegal trade of wildlife and plants, particularly on wild populations and the ecosystems in which they exist, as well as raise awareness of broader impacts of wildlife trafficking on livelihoods and sustainable development; and
 - e) strengthen legal and enforcement deterrents by creating greater awareness of laws prohibiting trade in illegal wildlife products and any associated penalties;
2. ENCOURAGES Parties to involve all stakeholders when conducting demand reduction campaigns, including, for example, relevant government agencies, health, public awareness and education sectors, the business sector, online retailers, social media platforms, traditional medicine practitioners and their associations, consumer groups, key influencers and opinion leaders who can most effectively reach out to consumers;
3. ALSO URGES Parties to make full use of the *CITES guidance on demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* in their efforts to reduce demand for illegally acquired wildlife and their products through the 5-step approach in order to achieve behaviour change of the consumers;
- ~~43.~~ ENCOURAGES Parties, when appropriate, to collaborate with and provide full support to relevant demand reduction campaigns undertaken by the United Nations agencies and partners as well as non-governmental organizations;
- ~~54.~~ RECOMMENDS that Parties convene workshops to design and develop targeted solutions for particular species or types of trade, including the development of communications and marketing strategies and campaigns aimed at eliminating demand for illegal wildlife and illegal wildlife products of CITES-listed species among key consumer groups; and
- ~~65.~~ INVITES Parties, and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations interested in furthering these efforts to share best practices and provide technical support and assistance, if requested.