

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

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

REVIEW OF THE CONVENTION

This document has been submitted by Benin, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia in relation to agenda item 18.\*

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\* *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*

**REPUBLIQUE DU NIGER**  
Fraternité-Travail-Progress

Niamey, le 04 MARS 2022

**MINISTRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT, ET DE LA  
LUTTE CONTRE LA DESERTIFICATION**

**DIRECTION GENERALE DES EAUX ET FORETS**

**DIRECTION DE LA FAUNE, DE LA CHASSE ET DES  
AIRES PROTEGEES**

**Mr. Samaila SAHAÏLOU, CITES  
Management Authority of  
Niger**

N° 000037 /DGE/F/DFC/AP

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Madame Carolina Caceres,  
Chair of the CITES Standing  
Committee  
Canadian Wildlife Service

**Objet** : Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee

Madame,

The CITES Management Authorities of Benin, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and The Gambia, as representatives of Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), are writing to the 74th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee to express our deep concern about the present scale of the extinction crisis, the rate of species decline aggravated by unregulated wildlife trade and wildlife trafficking, and the risks that wildlife trade pose to human and animal health.

The 2019 Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment Report warns that up to one million species are threatened with extinction. According to the report, the second leading driver (first for marine species) of this unprecedented decline in biodiversity is the direct exploitation of wild plants and animals, which includes trade.

We consider that CITES has a vital role to play in addressing this crisis. However, the rate of species declines across the globe are increasingly outpacing efforts being made by CITES. The Appendices, for example, in many cases fail to reflect the vulnerable status of species in trade, with multiple Critically Endangered or Endangered species threatened by international trade not listed in the CITES Appendices or listed in CITES Appendix II rather than CITES Appendix I. Consequently, species that are or may be affected by trade are not being adequately protected.

The fact that threatened species in the West African region do not benefit effectively from the protection mechanism offered by CITES is not due to a lack of need or willingness but to a lack of capacity and resources, such as a shortage of qualified experts to support the drafting of sound listing proposals, insufficient population surveys or expertise for the issuance of non-detriment findings.

In addition, we are concerned at the lack of urgency within CITES to identify and implement measures that will contribute to reducing future risks to human and animal health from regulated wildlife trade as well as trafficking. It is widely accepted that wild animals pose a significant risk of new infectious diseases of zoonotic origin emerging, and that the trade and exploitation of species, often in pairings not found in nature, amplifies the risk of pathogen proliferation, mutation and spillover. As the global threatened wildlife trade regulator, CITES and CITES Parties have a vital role to play in lending their expertise and addressing this risk.

With these concerns in mind, the ECOWAS region will shortly be gathering to discuss how we can ensure that CITES better reflects the true status of species affected by trade, and how this can be addressed at CoP19.

In advance of our meeting, we are taking this opportunity to invite input from Parties and interested stakeholders to submit their ideas, guidance and offers of support. For example, we would welcome offers of support from species experts with regard to the development of CITES listing proposals, and from experts in epidemiology with regard to disease risk prevention.

CoP19 will be an opportunity for CITES to demonstrate its commitment to species protection and pandemic risk mitigation. We urgently must ensure that the CITES response is adapted to preserve global natural resources and the health and well-being of animals and people at its core.

Thank you for your kind consideration. Interested stakeholders wishing to submit information or ideas should kindly do so to the Nigerian Management Authority (Timothy Daniel John, Head of Wildlife and CITES Management Division [timdanjohn@yahoo.com](mailto:timdanjohn@yahoo.com)) and the Nigerian Management Authority (Mr. Samaila Sahailou, Directeur de la Faune, de la Chasse des Parcs et des Réserves [sahailou2@yahoo.fr](mailto:sahailou2@yahoo.fr)), by 31 March 2022.



**Mr. Samaila SAHAILOU, CITES**  
**Management Authority of Niger**