

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

Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Buenos Aires (Argentina), 22 April to 3 May 1985

Interpretation and Implementation of the Convention

TRADE IN LEOPARD SKINS

1. During its fourth meeting in Gaborone (1983), the Conference of the Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 4.13 on Trade in Leopard Skins (Annex 1).
2. Under Recommendation g), the whole Resolution should be reviewed at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
3. Under Recommendation e), each state that has exported leopard skins in terms of the Resolution should report the number of skins so exported to each biennial meeting of the Conference of the Parties. When the present document was drafted, none of the Parties listed under Recommendation a) had yet submitted such a report, but Zimbabwe had indicated in a letter dated 30 August 1984 that "the needs of e) will be met by a verbal (or written) report to plenary", and Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania had included 1983 data in their annual reports for that year.
4. Under Recommendation f), the states authorized to export leopard skins in terms of the Resolution and their quotas should be subject to review by the Conference of the Parties and quotas may only be increased with the consent of the Conference of the Parties.
5. In the above-mentioned letter of 30 August 1984, Zimbabwe has sent to the Secretariat for consideration by the Conference of the Parties two alternative draft resolutions to cover the requirements of Recommendation g) and to seek an increased quota for Zimbabwe in accordance with Recommendation f). These two draft resolutions are attached as Annexes 2 and 3\*. Attached as Annex 4, is the copy of a letter from Zimbabwe dated 3 December 1984 which supports the request for an increased quota.
6. The United Republic of Tanzania has also sent a request for an increased quota for the export of leopard skins under Resolution Conf. 4.13. The supporting statement submitted by the United Republic of Tanzania is attached as Annex 5.

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\* Following the decision taken on this subject by the Conference of the Parties, these two draft resolutions have been withdrawn by the delegation of Zimbabwe (see document Plen. 5.6). Therefore, they are not reproduced in these Proceedings. (Note from the Secretariat).

RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Conf. 4.13

Trade in Leopard Skins

RECALLING that with the exception of the rare cases of exemptions granted under Article VII of the Convention, trade in Appendix I species is prohibited;

RECALLING that the leopard Panthera pardus is listed on Appendix I;

RECOGNIZING that the killing of specimens of leopard may be sanctioned by countries of export in defense of life and property and to enhance the survival of the species, and that the leopard is in no way endangered in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia or Zimbabwe;

RECOGNIZING that the said countries of export may trade in such dead specimens in accordance with Resolution Conf. 2.11 (San Jos , 1979) and may grant export permits in accordance with paragraph 2 of Article III of the Convention;

RECALLING that paragraph 3(c) of Article III of the Convention provides that import permits shall only be granted when a Management Authority of the state of import is satisfied that the specimen is not to be used for primarily commercial purposes, and that paragraph 2(a) of Article III of the Convention provides that export permits shall only be granted when a Scientific Authority of the state of export has advised that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of that species;

RECOGNIZING the overwhelming desire of the Parties that the commercial market for leopard skins should not be reopened;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

RECOMMENDS

- a) that in reviewing applications for permits to import whole skins or nearly whole skins of leopard, in accordance with paragraph 3(a) of Article III of the Convention, the Scientific Authority of the state of import approve permits if it is satisfied that the skin being considered is from one of the following states which may not export more of the said skins in any one calendar year than the number shown under "quota" opposite the name of the state:

| <u>State</u>                | <u>Quota</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Botswana                    | 80           |
| Kenya                       | 80           |
| Malawi                      | 20           |
| Mozambique                  | 60           |
| United Republic of Tanzania | 60           |
| Zambia                      | 80           |
| Zimbabwe                    | 80           |

- b) that in reviewing applications for permits to import whole skins or nearly whole skins of Panthera pardus, in terms of paragraph 3(c) of Article III of the Convention, the Management Authority of the state of import may be satisfied that the said skins is not to be used for mainly commercial purposes if:
- 1) a skin is acquired by the owner in the country of export and is being imported as a personal item that will not be sold in the country of import; and
  - ii) the owner imports no more than one skin in any calendar year;
- c) that the Management Authority of a state of import only permit the import of a leopard skin in accordance with this Resolution if the skin has a self-locking tag attached which indicates the state of export, the number of the specimen in relation to the annual quota and the calendar year to which the quota applies - for example ZW 6/80 1983 indicating that Zimbabwe is the state of export and that the specimen is the sixth specimen exported by Zimbabwe out of its quota of 80 for 1983;
- d) that in the case of whole or nearly whole leopard skins traded according to the terms of this Resolution, the words "has been granted" in paragraph 2(d) of Article III of the Convention be deemed to have been satisfied upon the written assurance of the Management Authority of the state of import that an import permit will be granted;
- e) that each state that exports leopard skins in terms of this Resolution report the number of skins so exported to each biennial meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- f) that the states authorized to export leopard skins in terms of this Resolution and their quotas be subject to review by meetings of the Conference of the Parties taking into account, inter alia, existing stocks, and that the quotas may only be increased with the consent of the Conference of the Parties; and
- g) that the whole Resolution be reviewed at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties so as to allow sufficient time for Parties to assess the merits of this Resolution.

Rel. C/95/i

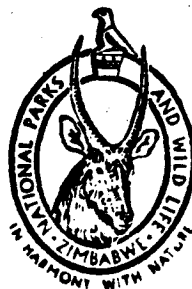
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS  
AND WILD LIFE MANAGEMENT

P.O. Box 8365 Causeway,

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3rd December 1984

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Dear Sir,

RESOLUTION 4.13 : LEOPARDS

Resolution 4.13 calls upon the Parties mentioned in the text to report to you prior to the Fifth Meeting of Parties to CITES. It does not specify the format for this reporting or when it should be effected.

The leopard Panthera pardus, is widespread and common throughout Zimbabwe (Child G. and Savory, 1964) where it is not endangered, except perhaps very locally due to loss of habitats. Domestic legislation permits it to be hunted at the discretion of the appropriate authority for the land on which it occurs and the parts and derivatives may be sold within the country upon obtaining a "routine" (essentially for statistical purposes) permit from the Management Authority. Many people hold pre-CITES and pre-Conf 4.13 trophies as personal or household effects, some going back to pre-1930.

Leopards are notoriously secretive and difficult to census. Smith (1977) in a detailed study of their home ranges in the Matobo National Park concluded that it supported one leopard per 4,5 to 5,0 km<sup>2</sup>. Child B (1984) in a survey of the status of game ranching in Zimbabwe, estimated the population on commercial land (40% of Zimbabwe) to be not less than one animal per 6,5 km<sup>2</sup>. Leopards are probably less common on Communal Land and small scale farms which cover 46% of the country, although the species is well represented in some such areas.

This data suggests a population in Zimbabwe of 38 000 animals, say  
35 000 of which 10 000 to 13 000 are in protected areas  
12 000 to 16 000 are on commercial land and  
11 000 to 12 000 are on communal land and  
small scale farms.

Table 1 lists the 1983 huntable quota set by the Scientific Authority for hunting within the Parks and Wild Life Estate. These quotas were set rather empirically and have not varied much over the years and there has been no detectable drop in trophy quality or the hunter success rate. It is interesting that in areas that have been hunted for many years like the Sapi and Hurungwe the quota has been edged up gradually to about five animals per 100 000 ha, but where hunting has been intensively monitored in the Matetsi area by two resident biologists for over a decade, it has been possible to push the quota up to almost double this number to 9,5 animals 100 000 ha<sup>-1</sup> year<sup>-1</sup>. Landholders with a good track record of conserving their wildlife well, have taken the figure to above 10 leopards 100 000 ha<sup>-1</sup> year<sup>-1</sup>

2/...

Like all cats leopards grow quickly (Child G and Wilson, 1966) and mature from about 2½ to 4 years of age, with litters of about 3 cubs being born after a gestation period of ca 100 days in any season (Smithers, 1983). Maturity is rapid and cubs commence hunting when about 4 months old but not killing on their own until some 5 months old (Hamilton, 1981). Smithers, 1983 also indicates a wide distribution for the species in Africa South of the Sahara (Fig. 1).

Conf. 4.13 was aimed at promoting the free flow of leopard skins, particularly hunters' trophies, in numbers that would not permit the re-appearance of leopard, or other spotted cats, in the commercial fur trade. In effect it placed a greater restriction on the export of leopard skins as personal and household effects than had previously existed in terms of CITES and in so doing is causing hardships to land-owners, in particular, in Zimbabwe.

Prior to the promulgation of the Parks and Wild Life Act, 1975, the leopard could be hunted only under Government licence with the licence fee going to the consolidated revenue fund. This provided no incentive for landholders to protect the species which was viewed as vermin to be destroyed in defence of property at every opportunity. With the changed spirit of the 1975 legislation, which permits and encourages landholders to benefit financially from the wildlife on their land, the species has gained much sympathy among the people best able to conserve it on their own land. Stock losses to leopard are generally tolerated, whereas those due to cheetah (Acynonix jubatus, a fully protected species in Zimbabwe where it may be killed only in defence of life or under special ministerial permit, cause strong public dissatisfaction. The result is that leopard are tolerated by landholders who can, if they so wish, derive some compensation by hunting the species. Cheetah on the other hand tend to be shot and disposed of illegally, if they kill stock, even by law abiding wildlife conservation conscious farmers, with little chance of retribution due to widespread public sympathy for their actions.

The annual export quota of leopard skins from Zimbabwe, agreed in Conf 4.13, has proved much too low and should be raised to at least 350 year<sup>-1</sup> so as to prevent the species from degenerating back to being viewed as an agricultural pest. Such a quota will represent no more than 1% of the overall national population as opposed to the present quota of 80 which only just matches the safe annual off-take permitted in Safari Areas (State hunting areas), making no allowance for animals hunted elsewhere in the country.

A quota of 350 would not encourage the use of leopard or other spotted cat pelts in the fur trade as, in terms of Conf 4.13, each person may export no more than one skin per year and it takes six or seven matched skins to produce one lady's coat.

Wildlife Management is assuming increasing significance as a form of sustainable productive landuse in Zimbabwe, particularly in parts of the country that are marginal or sub-marginal for conventional agriculture. Here more and more land is being devoted to a pure wildlife economy to the benefit of the wildlife resource, the conservation of the land and the welfare of the people who depend upon it. This is in line with management goals set some 2½ decades ago.

Profitability of such ventures, or those involving a mix of livestock and game, depends upon selling meat and other useful products and

recreational hunting. Leopard is a key species with elephant, buffalo and lion in the marketing of hunting and is the only member of the "big four" available to most game ranchers. It has the effect of upgrading the profitability and justification for their whole operation, even if it is harvested at a low rate of 2 or 3 animals 100 000 ha<sup>-1</sup> year<sup>-1</sup>, by facilitating the marketing of hunting, extending the length of hunts from say 10 to 15 days and increasing the daily rate for hunting from around \$250 to \$500 day<sup>-1</sup>. Thus a quota of plains game animals might earn \$2 500 while the same bag with the possibility of shooting a leopard would be \$7 500. Clearly the possibility of shooting a leopard and taking the trophy home to a foreign country enhances the value and so promotes the better conservation of other wildlife, including the setting aside of land specifically for this purpose.

Failure to allow Zimbabwe a realistic quota also runs the risk of making the law (in this case the Convention) an ass in the eyes of reasonable members of the public. It is well known that the species is widespread and common to the extent that it enters towns and cities. Within the past year alone, two have entered Harare, the Capital City. One had to be destroyed in a central suburb while the other was captured in a bedroom in a house on the outskirts. After creating a disturbance which attracted the lady of the house, it jumped over the perimeter fence, knocked her over and ~~running~~ <sup>ran</sup> into the house past her baby in its pram in the lounge, before it took refuge on top of a bedroom cupboard. It was immobilised with drugs through a hole cut in the ceiling. There would have been no purpose in liberating the animal in an area where all available leopard territories were occupied, so it was released into a Safari Area where there was known to be a vacant territory and where it had every chance of surviving.

Because leopard are in no way endangered in Zimbabwe they have enjoyed a low priority in the allocation of scarce research and monitoring effort. Conf 4.13 has had the beneficial effect of drawing attention to the species and to the fact that it has been being under utilized in this country in areas where consumptive use is permissible. Administration of the export quota including the attachment of special individually marked self locking tags to each skin, has presented few difficulties and has demonstrated the value of the quota system in the implementation of CITES. Experience in the implementation of this quota in Zimbabwe, since it became effective 90 days after the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of Parties, indicates the value of a pragmatic quota system in the creditable Application of CITES, as it provides a powerful tool towards achieving the spirit of the Convention.

Yours sincerely



Dr G F T Child  
Head, Zimbabwe CITES Scientific and  
Management Authorities.

GFTC/CS

TABLE 1

ANNUAL QUOTA OF LEOPARD PERMITTED IN STATE HUNTING AREAS

| AREA   | AREA IN HA | QUOTA | LEOPARD OFF-TAKE<br>100 000 HA <sup>-1</sup> | COMMENT  |
|--|------------|-------|--|--|
| Matetsi  | 295 500    | 28    | 9.5  | Hunted intensively                                 |
| Chete  | 108 100    | 6     | 5.6  | Area hunted 10 yrs                                 |
| Chirisa  | 171 300    | 8     | 4.7  | Area hunted 10 yrs                                 |
| Hurungwe   | 289 400    | 15    | 5.2  | Area hunted 22 yrs                                 |
| Doma   | 94 500     | 4     | 3.8  | Not V. comparable<br>with other areas              |
| Chewore  | 339 000    | 6     | 1.8  | Area hunted 8 yrs                                  |
| Charara  | 169 200    | 4     | 2.4  | Area hunted 5 yrs                                  |
| Dande  | 52 300     | 4     | 7.7  | Area hunted 4 yrs<br>but part of larger<br>complex |
| Sapi   | 118 000    | 5     | 4.2  | Area hunted 22 yrs                                 |
| COMMUNAL LANDS (Hunting<br>Under Department Control) |            | 80    |  |  |
| TOTAL  |            | 121   |  |  |

FIG. 1



The distribution of leopards in Africa and parts of the Middle East (From Smithers; 1983).



AMENDMENT TO RECOMMENDATION a) OF RESOLUTION Conf. 4.13

A. PROPOSAL

To increase the export quota of leopard skins of the United Republic of Tanzania from 60 to 250.

B. PROPONENT

The United Republic of Tanzania.

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Present Quota: At the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Gaborone, Botswana, in 1983, the United Republic of Tanzania was given an export quota of only 60 leopard skins.
2. Export Trend in the Last 5 Years: In 1973 the Tanzanian Government imposed a ban on hunting throughout the country. The ban was in response to uncontrolled harvesting by white professional hunters. For five years, the ban was in force until 1978 when hunting was allowed again through a public corporation, the Tanzania Wildlife Corporation. The corporation which was given the mandate to monopolise tourist hunting throughout the United Republic of Tanzania carries out its hunting activities in line with the provisions of the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1978. The logic behind the creation of a public corporation was to better supervise and monitor the hunting industry and the export of trophies hunted by clients.

Hereunder are leopard skins exported from the United Republic of Tanzania from 1978 to 1982.

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Leopard skins exported</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 1978        | 11                            |
| 1979        | 15                            |
| 1980        | 12                            |
| 1981        | 24                            |
| 1982        | 61                            |

3. Taxonomy

31. Class: Mammalia
32. Order: Carnivora
33. Family: Felidae
34. Species: Panthera pardus
35. Common Names: English: leopard  
French: léopard  
Spanish: Leopardo

#### 4. Biological Data

Although there are no scientific data to provide a background for evaluation of this proposal, it is well to note the following:

- a) Over 90% of the United Republic of Tanzania's land surface is excellent leopard habitat (Tanzania has an area of 950,000 sq. km.; 90% of this is 855,000 sq. km.)
- b) The hunting of the leopard is confined only to tourist hunting as well as in the protection of people's lives and property.
- c) Reports of leopards killed in the protection of lives and property indicate that there is a viable leopard population throughout the country. For example in the last 6 years, reports of such cases is as follows:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Leopards killed</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 1978        | 436                    |
| 1979        | 645                    |
| 1980        | 301                    |
| 1981        | 512                    |
| 1982        | 635                    |
| 1983        | 406                    |

The figures quoted above represent only those cases executed by our Wildlife Department staff and do not include those killed by non-government individuals. We estimate that the actual kills in the protection of lives and property is more than 3 times the figures quoted above.

#### 5. Illegal Trade

So far there is little evidence to indicate illegal trade is substantial. On the contrary, there are indications that illegal trade is on the decline.