

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

Consideration of Proposals for Amendment  
of Appendices I and II

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE NILE CROCODILE PROPOSAL  
SUBMITTED BY MALAWI ON BEHALF OF THE AFRICAN GROUP

1. Proposal number 30 submitted by Malawi on behalf of the African CITES Parties presented at the Brussel Seminar is amended as follows.
2. PROPOSAL: Transfer of the populations of the Nile crocodile, Crocodylus niloticus, of Cameroon, the Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, the Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia from Appendix I to II to allow legal trade under set quotas.
3. QUOTAS: The setting of quotas is an accepted tool in wildlife management. A quota so set represents an upper limit. Details of quotas so set differ from species to species. However, the basis for any quota is the pool of resources being considered and trends that pool of resources is likely to exhibit over a given period of time. While surveys and specific censuses are often used in order to determine the magnitude of the population in question, these at best are estimates and are most useful in as much as they give an indication of the trends of the population under consideration. Accordingly, field surveys and observations made were used to arrive at a figure of number of crocodiles per kilometre of river for each country. This figure was used in calculating the crocodile population estimates for each African country listed below:

Name of Country	Nile Crocodile populations estimates	Quotas
Cameroon	5,000	20
Congo	40,000	2,000
Kenya	40,000	150
Madagascar	30,000	1,000
Malawi	28,300	500
Mozambique	202,000	1,000
Sudan	250,000	5,000
United Republic of Tanzania	74,000	1,000
Zambia	150,000	2,000

4. TAGGING OR MARKING: All Parties requesting a quota agree that marking of their products is of paramount importance for the proper control of trade in Nile crocodile skins. To this end, Parties given a quota will mark all their skins before they enter the international market using the Zimbabwe system of marking. Briefly, this system of marking entails the production of self-locking plastic tags which will bear the following data: CITES country code, number of skin, number of quota allocated to the Party state and the year. For example for Malawi, the tag will bear the following data: MW/001/500/85.

These will be produced in duplicate, original being attached to the product and the duplicate being kept by the Management Authority concerned for record purpose. In addition, the information contained on the skin tags will be endorsed on the export documentation. Being self-locking the tags cannot be removed and then be refitted. The tags will be fixed by the Management Authority concerned at the time that documentation for export is being issued and preparations for the exporting of the consignment is being undertaken. In order to ensure that the marking system is implemented immediately, Malawi will liaise closely with the Secretariat with a view to identifying possibly, one source of supply and then supplying at a cost those Party states who might have difficulties in procuring such tags within their national borders. This marking system will become effective on 1st August 1985 when Party states granted quotas will start to export and trade in Nile crocodile skins legally.

5. LONG TERM MONITORING: Monitoring is part and parcel of any management exercise. Since certain Party states will be allowed to exploit their Nile crocodile populations commercially through harvesting wild populations this will afford those Party states an added opportunity to collect more scientific data which will be presented at the next meeting of the Conference of Parties in order to assure the community at large that all is well with the Nile crocodile. An attempt will also be made to get hold of trade data for the last 10 years or so and then analyse this data for possible trends in the populations.