

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

Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Lausanne (Switzerland), 9 to 20 October 1989

Consideration of Proposals for Amendment of Appendices I and II

Other Proposals

TRADE IN IVORY FROM AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

This document has been prepared and is submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to be considered by the Conference of the Parties in the event that the proposal to transfer the African elephant from Appendix II to Appendix I is agreed.

INTRODUCTION

In the light of the severe decline in population of the African elephant the United Kingdom Government believes that there is now a clear case for listing the African elephant (Loxodonta africana) in Appendix I of CITES. This view is shared by many other governments.

If the proposal to transfer the African elephant from Appendix II to Appendix I is agreed by the Conference, it will be essential that every effort is made to ensure that the African elephant is accorded the best protection available. To this end, we propose to the Conference of the Parties the draft resolution, attached as Annex, recommending further measures to reinforce the proposal to upgrade the elephant.

Of the measures proposed in the draft resolution, the most important is the recommendation that all Parties should implement controls under Appendix I with immediate effect. Under the terms of the Convention there is a time lapse of 90 days before amendments to appendices come into force. Traders, and indeed poachers, could be expected to make the most of such an interval to bring as much ivory as possible into trade before the controls take effect. We believe it is important for the survival of the elephant that this should not be allowed to happen and propose therefore that Parties should not wait until the amendment formally comes into effect, but implement the stricter controls immediately.

Finally, it is important that the controls on ivory should be given the maximum publicity. It is often ignorance of the controls which leads people to buy and import into their own country articles made from ivory. We believe that all Parties should make every effort to publicize CITES as widely as possible in order to prevent this often unintentional violation of controls.

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Trade in Ivory from African Elephants

RECOGNIZING that in the last ten years the population of the African elephant (Loxodonta africana) has declined by about 45%;

RECOGNIZING that the species is now seriously endangered;

RECOGNIZING that controls of trade in ivory agreed at previous meetings of the Conference of the Parties, in particular those in Resolution Conf. 5.12 adopted at the fifth meeting (Buenos Aires, 1985), have not been sufficient to halt the decline in the African elephant;

NOTING that the transfer of the African elephant from Appendix II to Appendix I has been approved;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE CONVENTION

URGES all Parties to support the uplisting of the African elephant to Appendix I by implementing strictly the controls applied by virtue of that listing; and

RECOMMENDS

- a) that all Parties implement controls on trade in African ivory under the Appendix I listing with immediate effect, in anticipation of the formal entry into force of the amendment to the appendices; and
- b) that all Parties review their publicity of CITES controls to ensure that members of the public are aware of them and in particular of controls on ivory.