

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

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Santiago (Chile), 3-15 November 2002

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Regular and special reports

Appendix-I species subject to export quotas

Leopard

AMENDMENT TO THE QUOTA OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

1. This document was prepared and submitted by the United Republic of Tanzania.

Proposal

2. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.21, Interpretation and application of quotas for species included in Appendix I, paragraph a), the United Republic of Tanzania requests the Conference of the Parties to increase its export quota for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use, indicated in Resolution Conf. 10.14, to 500.

Supporting statement

Background

3. The leopard *Panthera pardus* was included in Appendix I at the plenipotentiary conference at which CITES was concluded (Washington, D.C., 1973). This listing was not based on any scientific data and was done in the absence of any listing criteria, as for most of the species included in Appendices I and II at that time. At that time however, the leopard, like other spotted cats, was still heavily harvested for the fur trade, although already at a decreasing level following actions that led to an agreement with the fur industry to stop the use of such species. Whether the leopard was globally endangered at that time is contestable, although it might have been in some locations, not necessarily because of its exploitation but rather owing to habitat destruction and deterioration.
4. In November 1982, at a regional meeting of Africa on the Ten Year Review of the Appendices, the participants considered, on the basis of scientific evidence and of suitable management, that the leopard populations under consideration were not endangered and that their inclusion in Appendix I was not justified [Proceedings of the 4th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP4)]. It was however too late to prepare a proposal for transfer to Appendix II for consideration at CoP4 (Gaborone, 1983). Nevertheless, on their own initiative, Zambia and Zimbabwe had submitted a proposal to transfer the populations of eastern and southern Africa to Appendix II and Mozambique had done the same for its own population.
5. In view of the concern of a number of Parties that such transfers could lead to a new upsurge of the commercial trade in leopard skins, the above-mentioned countries, which were not promoting a re-opening of such trade, accepted, as a compromise, to replace their proposals by a Resolution on the

trade in leopard skins. The purpose of the Resolution was not to open the trade in an Appendix-I species contrary to Article III of the Convention but only to simplify the procedures provided for by that Article, in particular regarding non-detriment findings.

6. In adopting Resolution Conf. 4.13, the Conference of the Parties recognized that “the killing of specimens of leopard may be sanctioned by countries of export in defence 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”. It recognized also “the overwhelming desire of the Parties that the commercial market for leopard skins should not be reopened”.
7. The Tanzanian quota, as well as the others, was not based on actual scientific data but, as stated by the delegation of Zimbabwe, if scientific data would be available, the quotas would have been undoubtedly much higher. In most cases the quotas took into account trophy hunting.
8. This was confirmed at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP5) (Buenos Aires, 1985), where a new Resolution, Conf. 5.13, was adopted, which was essentially identical to the previous one, except that it provided that the countries with quotas should report to the Secretariat rather than direct to the Conference of Parties. In addition, the quotas of three countries, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe were increased, the Tanzanian quota being fixed at 250 skins, a quota which has not been changed since then.
9. To justify the increase of that quota, the following summarized information was provided:
 - a) more than 90 per cent of the Tanzanian territory constituted an excellent habitat for the leopard, i.e. 855,000 km²;
 - b) leopard hunting was limited to tourists and control hunting; and
 - c) from 1978 to 1983, between 301 and 645 leopards were killed annually to protect lives and properties, without taking into account killings not made by government people, which were estimated as doubling the official figures, and without any negative effect on the leopard population. On the other hand, there was no evidence of illegal trade.
10. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP6) (Ottawa, 1987) was significant with respect to the leopard, owing to the presentation of the report of Rowan Martin and Tom de Meulenaer, in which the authors presented an evaluation of the leopard population of sub-Saharan Africa, based on the habitat available in each country and the average rainfall. Although the time available for the study was too short to allow more precise work, the following may be drawn from the report and was illustrated in the presentation by the authors, and is still largely valid 15 years later.
 - a) The leopard belongs to the category of ‘populations with full compensation’, i.e. populations able to compensate easily a reasonable harvesting. Even if a population has been decreased to a very low level, it will recover its maximal density when the off-take is stopped.
 - b) The populations of predators are in general limited by the food resources and, in Africa, these resources are determined by the biological productivity, itself determined by the rainfall.
 - c) On the basis of the habitats available, the total sub-Saharan leopard population was estimated through mathematical models at around 700,000 with a confidence interval between 600,000 and 850,000. For Kenya, the estimation was close to that obtained by Patrick Hamilton with a totally different method.

- d) The authors estimated the off-takes of leopard at that time at around 6,000, when the total of granted quotas amounted to 1,140. They estimated that an off-take of 5 to 10 per cent of the total population would be without any danger.
 - e) The fact that the species was listed in Appendix II and the commercial trade prohibited represented a loss of profit of at least USD 30 million, and the listing in Appendix I was not appropriate.
 - f) Concerning the United Republic of Tanzania, the leopard population was estimated slightly above 39,000 (21,600 – 71,600) and the number of leopards killed annually at 390, while the potential safe harvest was established at 5 per cent, i.e. 1,827 animals.
 - g) The leopard was much more valuable through sport hunting than it could be through commercial trade and this was an appropriate form of land use in non-protected uninhabited areas.
11. During the discussion, the observer from IUCN supported the approach adopted by the authors and the Chairman of the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group stated that this was the first serious effort of scientific assessment of the leopard population, although he noted the need for caution until further studies were made, in particular regarding a reopening of a commercial trade.

Quotas

12. As noted by the Secretariat in its report to the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP11), the quotas granted are generally not fully used. As it appeared from the table produced for 1994 to 1998, this was in particular the case for certain countries and for various reasons. In other countries, where sport or tourism hunting is well developed and organized, the quotas have been more effectively used. This applies in particular to the United Republic of Tanzania.
13. From the whole history of the system, it appears that the quotas were not established to reflect the optimum level of use of the resource, while keeping it sustainable. They were more often determined to take into account leopard skins in stock from control hunting, the trade in which was expected to occur but rather rarely did, or to reflect the expected level of sport hunting in individual countries. Thus, quotas were not set on the basis of the actual leopard population in a country but on the basis of other factors. This led Parties to request quotas much lower than the potential that could be produced by leopard populations but, in a number of cases, much higher than the actual possibilities for export from the country. This was either because tourist hunting was not developed, or was subject to negative influences, or because tourists were either not interested in buying leopard skins as souvenirs or were discouraged from doing so by the applicable procedures, e.g. need for an import permit.
14. Nevertheless, some countries requested increased quotas at several meetings of the Conference of the Parties and these quotas were granted on the basis of limited data and information, obviously because the Conference recognized that they were remaining at levels that could in no way be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild and to its role in the ecosystems. The increases were not requested in relation to the evolution of the leopard population but rather in order to adapt the quota to the development of and potential for hunting activities. This certainly applies to the quota requested with the present proposal.

Review of leopards in the United Republic of Tanzania

15. In preparation for this proposal, the Wildlife Division of the Tanzanian Government called for a review (Leopards in Tanzania – A Review), which was conducted by Ian Games and E.L.M. Severre and completed in February 2002. The purpose was not to attempt to establish absolute numbers of leopards. Such a task would be enormous, extremely difficult and costly, owing to the size of the country and the nature of the species concerned. In addition, the status of the species in the country and its economic potential owing to its listing in CITES Appendix I are such that the authorities are not in a position to devote considerable means to assess the actual population. This is also valid for many other countries,

in particular in eastern and southern Africa and explains why no such study exists, except possibly that of Hamilton (1981) in Kenya and that mentioned above of Martin and de Meulenaer, which was based on a population model and would have required refinements that were never undertaken. In terms of conservation needs and sustainable use, the leopard is certainly not a priority species.

16. The Review therefore concentrated on a study of habitat and on other indirect methods of assessing the status of the leopard population in the United Republic of Tanzania. Thus, the various studies and analyses made give an indirect picture of the health of the leopard population. The Review leads to the conclusion that, given the size of the country, the extent of available habitat and the relative ease of hunting leopards in many areas, the current quota of 250 animals could easily be increased without detriment to the survival of the leopard population. This confirms the evaluations of Martin and de Meulenaer, as well as the information related to official and unofficial off-takes reported by the United Republic of Tanzania when it requested an increased quota at CoP5.
17. We may add that the increased resources provided would create an additional incentive to manage the species properly and to maintain it at appropriate levels, to conserve it in certain areas in spite of existing conflicts and to prevent illegal killing in protection of life and property. A copy of the Review has been sent to the CITES Secretariat, which may feel free to communicate it to the Parties, e.g. as an annex to this proposal. Most of the information that follows was extracted from the document.

Habitat

18. Of the total surface of the country, which is about 1 million square kilometres, nearly 60 per cent still contains habitat that is relatively intact. Semi-intensively cultivated areas cover 32 per cent of the country and probably also harbour leopards, although these areas are in the process of slowly being converted to intensively cultivated areas.
19. Hunting blocks cover approximately 250,000 km². The majority of these blocks are situated in the north-east, south-east and west of the country and, although some signs of disturbance may be noticed in some places, the leopard habitat in hunting blocks is actually in good condition.
20. Woodland is generally considered to be more suitable leopard habitat than grassland, although grassland may also be suitable if riverine forest and rock outcrops exist. Woodland and thickets make up nearly 40 per cent of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Protected areas

21. The United Republic of Tanzania has six main categories of land, on which wildlife-related activities are carried out, five of which are legally established protected areas. The six areas range from National Parks, where no consumptive use is allowed, to Open Areas, where a variety of utilization activities are permitted. In total these areas cover about 385,000 km². National Parks and Game Reserves (more than 140,000 km²) are staffed by government officials, whose duties include management of tourism (including hunting where permitted) and anti-poaching. Within almost all of these areas there has been little evidence of poaching of leopards.
22. The Selous Game Reserve is the largest single protected area, with about 50,000 km². It includes 45 hunting blocks with a quota of 180 leopards in 2001. The hunting companies regard it as prime leopard habitat.

Hunting in the United Republic of Tanzania

23. The country is an important destination for tourists interested in various activities. They are in particular attracted by its abundant and varied wildlife, including for sport hunting. The latter generates about USD 10 million in direct revenue to the government, through game fees, trophy fees, conservation fees and observer fees. Hunting companies are allocated hunting blocks by the Wildlife Division. The hunting

season extends from 1 July to 31 December. In recent years, the government has been pursuing a policy of community involvement in wildlife management and utilization. This has resulted in the tabling of legislation that will allow local communities to benefit more directly from the use of wildlife, including leopards, in their areas.

24. The Wildlife Division, prior to the start of each season, grants leopard quotas. Each block is given a quota ranging from zero to five leopards. The total may exceed the CITES quota but the number shot normally does not. In order for a client to hunt a leopard, the government requires him/her to book and pay for a 21-day safari, i.e. the longest period. This makes the leopard a high value species for both the government and hunting companies, as well as the local communities. Only male leopards may be shot, and the animal must measure at least 1.3 metres from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail. Scouts from the Wildlife Division accompany all sport hunters to ensure that the regulations are adhered to.
25. On average, it takes about eight days to secure a leopard in the United Republic of Tanzania. This is a clear indicator of the fact that the population is not under undue pressure from the safari industry and provides an additional justification for an increased quota. However, some areas are easier than others and the range is between four days (sometimes even three only in the Selous Game Reserve) and 14 days. This of course will have to be taken into account when increased quotas are allocated.
26. What would also have to be taken into consideration is the percentage of the area available in hunting blocks actually used to hunt. When it is considered easy to use less than 30 per cent of the area, as leopards occur in certain blocks, and the quality of the trophies remains good, then these areas may well be able to have an increased quota without any detrimental effect on the population.
27. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the hunting season, as seen above, does not coincide with the calendar year and this has created problems in the past. With the adoption of Resolution Conf. 10.14, this was solved. From 1997 to 2001, the following numbers of tags were issued and the following numbers of skins (trophies) were exported:

		Quota year in which tags were issued						Total
		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
Calendar year of CITES special report on leopard tags	1997	69	195	–	–	–	–	264
	1998	1	50	227	–	–	–	278
	1999	–	1	22	236	–	–	259
	2000	1	–	–	10	238	–	249
	2001	1	–	1	4	10	244	260
	TOTAL	72	246	250	250	248	244	

Data supplied by Wildlife Division and Traffic, United Republic of Tanzania

28. From the questionnaires issued for the Review, it appears that hunters believe that the leopard population in most blocks is high and that the quotas could be increased in many blocks without detriment to the population. Nevertheless, for about 10 per cent of the blocks for which responses were received, the hunters believe that the quotas should not be increased.

Problem animals

29. Every year there are reports of incidents involving people, livestock and wildlife with respect to a wide variety of animal species. The leopard is no exception and, between 1993 and 1999, 30 people are on record as having been killed by leopards. In addition, 49 people were injured. In the same period, there

were 504 domestic animals killed and 203 injured by leopards. In retaliation, the authorities killed 58 leopards. (Data provided by TRAFFIC, Tanzania).

30. These numbers are impressive but it is likely that they do not reflect the whole truth. It is more than likely that not all incidents are reported, since they are not subject to compensation. This must be particularly true for injured people and injured or killed domestic animals, and even more for leopards killed as problem animals, as noticed in the Tanzanian supporting statement for its request for an increased quota at CoP5. At that time, the number of unreported killings was estimated at twice the number of legal killing by the authorities, i.e. an annual average close to 1000 animals. It must however be indicated that, at that time, hunting was officially prohibited in the United Republic of Tanzania.

Why an increased quota?

31. In recent years in particular, unlike some of the other countries benefiting from a quota for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use under Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties, the United Republic of Tanzania has fully used its quota, which has remained fixed at 250 since CoP5. Certain other countries, i.e. Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, have each a 500 quota and, to our knowledge, this has not raised any problem and the populations of these countries are still sound.
32. If the case of Ethiopia may be considered as somewhat special, it is certainly possible to make a comparison between Zimbabwe and the United Republic of Tanzania as far as wildlife and hunting is concerned. In particular, the surface of the latter is much larger than that of the former and, if we compare, with all the necessary precaution, the numbers of leopards estimated by Martin and de Meulenaer (1987), it appears that there were more than twice as many in the United Republic of Tanzania than in Zimbabwe. There is no sound reason to believe that the proportion has significantly changed since then.
33. Up to the time of adoption of CITES, the leopard was subject to heavy hunting for the fur trade and this was the reason why the species was included in Appendix I, although no data were provided to justify the listing and indicate that the species was actually endangered. The leopard was then recognized as not endangered in certain sub-Saharan countries, including the United Republic of Tanzania, and as not meeting the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I. Logically, it should have been transferred to Appendix II but the Conference of the Parties, including the range States, did not want to reopen the commercial trade in the species and maintained it in Appendix I.
34. As stated above, the quotas granted by the Conference of the Parties for non-commercial trade were not actually determined on the basis of scientific data but were based on the potential capacity or expectation of the countries concerned to export skins for personal use, in particular sport-hunting trophies. The quotas were therefore very low compared to the status of the species and were easily increased for several countries. The only opposition to such quotas was essentially from those who were concerned that the adoption of the system might favour an increase in illegal activities. The whole history of the system has demonstrated that this was not the case, on the contrary, at least regarding poaching and illegal killing in the countries with quotas, such as ours.
35. The development of tourism in the United Republic of Tanzania, in particular of hunting safaris, is important for the economy of the country, and more and more to the benefit of local communities living in or close to areas that are wildlife habitat. The leopard, as one of the 'big five', plays a significant role and an increase of the quota will have a positive effect. It will augment the potential offer to hunters, in particular in areas where wildlife-viewing tourism is not practicable, for various reasons, including the nature of the terrain and the lack of infrastructure. For a country like the United Republic of Tanzania, the combination of both forms of tourism is important and perfectly compatible.
36. As we have seen also, the leopard remains a problem animal in certain regions and either sport hunting or control hunting has to be practised to meet the legitimate requirements of the local communities. The reopening of hunting has considerably reduced illegal activities, in particular to eliminate problem

animals, and an increased quota should make possible a further reduction. In addition, the association of the local communities in sharing the benefits of wildlife utilization is an additional guarantee that they will ensure the prevention of illegal activities in their regions.

Why a quota of 500?

37. We understand that the doubling of the quota may appear excessive to some people. It must be understood however that this number has not been determined without any reasons. It is considered to be still very conservative and, as for any quota, it is an upper limit, not an objective that must be met in any circumstances. In particular in the next few years, one may expect that the quota will not be reached, or at least not every year. We can not expect that our hunting industry will be able to develop so quickly and, as for tourism in general, tourist hunting is subject to external influences beyond our control. The quota therefore is reflecting the potential we feel appropriate in the foreseeable future. In any case, at the national level, quotas are granted on an annual basis and the Wildlife Division, therefore, may react quickly to any difficulties in specific areas, whenever necessary. Finally, considering the efforts necessary to submit a proposal such as this one to the Conference of the Parties, we assume that the new quota would be established for a number of years, as was the quota that was established at CoP5.

Conclusion

38. At CoP11, in Gigiri, Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania submitted a proposal for the maintenance of its population of Nile crocodiles in Appendix II with a quota of 1,600 animals. The proposal was considered by the Conference as a model and adopted by consensus. Today, there is nothing to indicate that the decision was wrong. On the contrary, and the Tanzanian competent authorities, in particular the Wildlife Division, have demonstrated their capability to implement and enforce the national legislation applicable to the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife. The same legislation is valid for the conservation and management of the leopard, and there is no reason to doubt that the same capability will not be demonstrated again. Therefore, we ask with confidence to the Conference of the Parties to continue to trust the United Republic of Tanzania in granting it the proposed quota of 500 leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use in the framework of Resolution Conf. 10.14.

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. In its report to CoP12 on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.14 on quotas for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use (document CoP12 Doc. 23.1.1) the Secretariat recommends that the Conference of the Parties consider repealing the Resolution and agreeing to the voluntary establishment of quotas by range States. The Resolution is contrary to the general principle of CITES that each Party should decide for itself on the levels of exports that are not detrimental to the survival of species in the wild.
- B. If, however, the Conference of the Parties decides to retain the establishment of quotas by means of a resolution, the Secretariat supports the United Republic of Tanzania's request for an increase.