

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



Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
The Hague (Netherlands), 3-15 June 2007

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation issues

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL AFRICA BUSHMEAT WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Decision 13.102 the CITES Bushmeat Working Group was renamed as the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group and was encouraged to:

*continue its work and report through the CITES Secretariat at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on progress made in implementing national action plans relating to the trade in bushmeat and other initiatives it takes regarding this subject.*

3. The coordinator of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group, Mr Marcellin Agnagna from Cameroon, has provided the Secretariat with a report of its activities which is contained in the Annex to this document.

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The report of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group suggests that although some progress has been made in supporting national action plans relating to the trade in bushmeat, a lack of funds has prevented the Working Group from taking substantial initiatives. This occurred despite the fact that in Decision 13.101, governments and intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and other donors were encouraged to support the work of the Working Group. This may indicate that the Working Group is not easily sustainable as a separate initiative and that its activities need to be merged into broader programmes in order to obtain better support.
- B. In accordance with Decision 13.103, the CITES Secretariat has been in contact with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). CBD informed the CITES Secretariat that its liaison group on non-timber forest resources was preparing a report on *Reducing wild meat (bushmeat) hunting in tropical forests to sustainable levels*, which would be published as part of the CBD Technical Series. The CITES Secretariat wrote to FAO inviting it to consider convening an international workshop to facilitate the development of an action plan tackling the issues of poverty, habitat degradation, human population growth and utilization of natural resources associated with the unsustainable trade in bushmeat. FAO replied that it was interested in convening such a workshop but that so far their fund-raising efforts had been rather unsuccessful. The Secretariat considers that its obligations under Decision 13.103 have been fulfilled.
- C. If it is the will of the Conference that the mandate of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group be extended, then a further decision will be required. However, the Secretariat suggests that it might be more effective for the Working Group to collaborate with the CBD liaison group on non-timber forest resources, should the work of this CBD body be ongoing, or with other initiatives related to

sustainable forest management rather than with CITES, which is primarily concerned with international trade. Consequently, the Secretariat suggests that the Conference of the Parties adopt the following decision:

***Directed to the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group***

14.XX The Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group is encouraged to collaborate with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in its work and is invited to draw to the attention of the Standing Committee and/or the Conference of the Parties, to any matters relating to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.11.

If this were agreed, then the Conference of the Parties could consider maintaining Decision 13.101 directed to Parties, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and other donors which reads:

*Governments and intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and other donors are encouraged to support the work of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group and its member States to implement national action/management plans and to develop a database regarding trade in bushmeat.*

Global report on the activities of the Bushmeat Working Group in central Africa

Following Decision 11.166 adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th meeting held in Kenya in April 2000, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened a Bushmeat Working Group in order to analyse and reflect on the bushmeat crisis, and to propose solutions to range States. The Working Group's mandate was renewed at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in November 2002 in Santiago, Chile.

From 2000 to 2002, the Working Group drew up an action plan and developed a pilot programme for central Africa. Six countries are included in this programme: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

The implementation of the programme started in July 2002 and was completed in December 2004. Actions taken during that period cover legislative and political issues and assistance to administrations responsible for the management of wild fauna. A study on policies and legislation relating to wild fauna in the subregion was conducted and made available to the administrations. This study serves as a reference for the redrafting of wild fauna policies and laws that some States have started.

The study has also been made available to COMIFAC (*Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale* – Central Africa Forest Commission) and serves as a reference for the convergence plan on the management of the Congo basin forests. A framework comprising fauna directors, national focal points, civil society representatives, donors, resource people and other partners has been established and meets regularly to address bushmeat issues in the subregion.

A process to draw up bushmeat national strategies and action plans has been started, and at least three countries have adopted an action plan and a national strategy that are yet to be implemented.

Some strategies and national action plans were presented at CoP13 in Bangkok.

The bushmeat issue has been integrated and become an important issue in most subregional initiatives dealing with biodiversity management.

The Working Group fulfilled its CITES mandate up to CoP13.

Nevertheless, owing to the persistence and magnitude of the bushmeat issue in the subregion, a five-year programme was elaborated and submitted at CoP13 that was based essentially on the implementation of the national action plans.

The Working Group prepared and submitted to the CITES Secretariat a draft resolution and two draft decisions for consideration at CoP13. These drafts were discussed and adopted at CoP13 in Bangkok, Thailand, in October 2004, thereby allowing the Bushmeat Working Group to continue its activities in central Africa and to develop a second series of activities on the basis of the five-year programme.

The regular donors, particularly the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Mac Arthur Foundation and DEFRA of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, have expressed their intention to continue their financial support to the Working Group's activities. Other interested donors have also expressed their intention to participate in this financial effort (WWF International, IFAW, etc.).

Following CoP13, from 2004 to the beginning of 2007, the Working Group minimized its activities owing to a lack of funding.

During this period, the Working Group worked at the country level by assisting in the improvement of new legislation on wild fauna. The Working Group helped Gabon take into account provisions relating to combating illegal trade and to regulating local consumption of bushmeat. The Working Group also assisted the Congo in the drafting and enactment of a new law on the management of wild fauna, and it successfully pressed for the inclusion of legal provisions on the use of and trade in bushmeat, in particular the regulation on products of wild fauna.

The Working Group has also contributed to the harmonization of the different national action plans on other issues linked to bushmeat, in particular plans to combat epizootics such as the Ebola virus hemorrhagic fever and various campaigns initiated by local and international NGOs.

Finally the Working Group has continued to seek funding to implement certain actions deemed priorities in national action plans (Cameroon and the Congo).

Some actions followed by the Working Group, e.g. the organization of villages' hunting areas amongst communities, are currently being implemented with financial assistance from the States.

These actions will continue as long as problems remain.

Moreover other countries such as Equatorial Guinea require support to draft and implement action plans. The Working Group assists them in this task.

The Working Group continues to function in a regular manner in collaboration with public administrations responsible for fauna and protected areas.

The Coordinator.

Mr Agnagna