

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



Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September – 5 October 2016

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE
DRAFT RESOLUTION ON LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY

This document has been submitted by Namibia, in relation to agenda item 17 on *Livelihoods and food security**.

All nations have an individual and collective responsibility to ensure that hunger is eradicated. Since CITES has an impact on the consumption of wildlife for food, it follows that its decisions should take account of international instruments, agreements and initiatives that are designed to tackle global hunger and nutrition issues. This is increasingly the case as CITES moves to list a greater number of species that are commercially exploited for food.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has primary responsibility for combating global hunger. It was established on 16 October 1945 and has 197 Member States. Most Member States of CITES are also Member States of the FAO. With 870 million people officially designated as hungry today, the FAO Vision and Mission are inevitably and inextricably tied into considerations by international instruments that could impact the consumption of food.

At its 38th Conference in June 2013, the FAO adopted five Strategic Objectives:

- Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable
- Reduce rural poverty
- Enable inclusive and efficient agriculture food systems; and
- Increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters

Decisions at CITES should be consistent with these Strategic Objectives. The Strategic Objectives are especially important to developing nations where food supplies can be restricted by many factors, such as low income, poor infrastructure and climate. A diverse food supply from terrestrial and marine living resources can help to alleviate hunger in developing nations, as well as maintain valued national, regional and local identities and cultures. It is therefore important that CITES formally acknowledges and recognizes, through a Resolution, the importance of livelihoods and food security.

In drafting the Resolution, the proponents invoke Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, stating the right of all persons to an adequate standard of living including food. Access to food is not distributed equally among nations and many challenges still need to be overcome to ensure its availability.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

The Resolution builds on the Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and the FAO on commercially-exploited aquatic species. The MoU provides a role for the FAO in providing technical views on particular listing proposals. However, the scope of the MoU is limited and does not explicitly outline the rationale for, and need for, broad cooperation with the FAO.

Formally recognizing the need to cooperate with the FAO is a natural step for CITES to take. The Strategic Vision of CITES calls for cooperation with relevant international development organizations and specifically calls for cooperation with other relevant international organizations and agreements dealing with natural resources to achieve a coherent and collaborative approach.

With regard to marine species, the proponents invoke paragraph 158 of the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 “The Future We Want”, 20-22 June 2012). This conveys the “importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through their contributions to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security and creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change.”

The Resolution makes no attempt to adopt the FAO’s vision or mission into CITES or in any way dilute or subvert the existing CITES *raison d’être*. Instead, it recognizes the importance of cooperation with the FAO on the basis that CITES can be a complement to the FAO on issues of global hunger and nutrition. The proponents accept that the FAO has primacy on global hunger and nutrition issues.