

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

Species specific mattersGUIDELINES TO DETERMINE THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF TRADE IN
AFRICAN WILD DOGS (*LYCAON PICTUS*) ON THE CONSERVATION OF THE SPECIES

1. This document has been submitted by Burkina Faso*.

Background

2. African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) have dwindled in numbers and disappeared from a large portion of their historical range. The population is estimated at around 6,600 adults, distributed among 39 sub-populations (Woodroffe, R. & Sillero-Zubiri, C., 2012).
3. According to the most recent assessment by the IUCN Red List, the species has been practically eradicated from North and West Africa, and has dropped considerably in numbers in Central and North-East Africa.
4. Wild dogs are native to Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The species may be extinct in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Togo and Uganda. African wild dogs are regionally extinct in Burundi, Cameroon, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Swaziland (Woodroffe, R. & Sillero-Zubiri, C., 2012).
5. The population is dropping in size owing to ongoing fragmentation of habitat, human encroachment and infectious diseases. The decline in the population of African wild dogs *in situ* is unlikely to be reversible in most of the species' range.
6. There are at present no data on international trade in African wild dogs.
7. The 2012 assessment of the species by the IUCN Red List states that "across most of its geographical range, there is minimal utilization of this species. There is evidence of localized traditional use in Zimbabwe (Davies and Du Toit 2004), but this is unlikely to threaten the species' persistence. There are also some reports of trade in captive and wild-caught animals from South Africa; the possible impact of such trade is currently being assessed." However, to date no such assessment has been published.
8. African wild dogs have been listed in Appendix II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS; Bonn Convention) since 2009. Under the CMS, Appendix II lists the migratory species "which have an unfavourable conservation status and which require international agreements for their conservation and management, as well as those which have a conservation status which would significantly benefit from the international cooperation that could be achieved by an international agreement." (Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 2015).

* 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 species was designated for cooperative actions under Resolution CMS 11.13 at the 11th Conference of the Parties in November 2014.

The first assessment on the population status of African wild dogs was carried out in 1985-8 (Frame and Fanshawe, 1990) and updated in 1997 (Fanshawe *et al.*, 1997) and 2004 (Woodroffe, McNutt and Mills, 2004). These assessments revealed a reduction and fragmentation of the populations, including elimination of the species from a large part of Central and West Africa, and a major shrinking in Southern and East Africa. However, the data having to do with the distribution of the species, which were primarily gathered by mail, somewhat favoured the protected areas, whereas there was little information on non-protected areas. By 1997, African wild dogs had disappeared from most of the protected areas in Africa, surviving only in the largest reserves (Woodroffe *et al.*, 1998). In 2008, it was estimated that the species amounted to fewer than 800 packs. It is classified as “Endangered” by the IUCN (IUCN, 2011).

The decline in the population of African wild dogs has been related to the difficulty that the species encounters in living in an environment dominated by mankind. Where there is a high human density and habitat is consequently fragmented, African wild dogs have to deal with hostile farmers and breeders who set snares to catch wild ungulates, as well as with fast road traffic and with domestic animals that are carriers of potentially fatal diseases (Woodroffe and Ginsberg, 1997a). Even though those are everyday threats to large carnivores, the low population densities of African wild dogs and their very extensive ranges make them more vulnerable and increase their exposure to the impacts of human beings, by comparison with most other species (with the possible exception of the leopard).

Despite the impacts of humans on their population, African wild dogs can in fact, under favourable circumstances, coexist very well with man. (Woodroffe *et al.*, 2007b). In fact, African wild dogs rarely kill cattle in locations where wild prey is present, even if at relatively low density (Rasmussen, 1999; Woodroffe *et al.*, 2005c). Furthermore, the traditional cattle-breeding techniques form a very effective means of prevention (Woodroffe *et al.*, 2006). Tools have been created in order to lessen the impact of conflicts with cattle-breeders and game-breeders, accidental captures, and road accidents. However, there are still no guaranteed safe and effective tools against diseases (Woodroffe *et al.*, 2005a).

Taken from “Action Plan for the Conservation of Large Carnivores under the World Anti-Piracy Observatory, West African Economic and Monetary Union, February 2014”¹

Recommendations

9. The authors of the present document thus recommend that the Conference of the Parties adopt the draft decisions in the Annex to the present document.

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat notes that *Lycaon pictus* is not included in the Appendices of CITES, and has not been the subject of a listing proposal in the past. Subsequent IUCN Red List assessments have classified the species as “Endangered” since 1990. The latest assessment (2012) justifies this by a population, estimated at 6,600 adults in 39 subpopulations, that is continuing to decline as a result of ongoing habitat fragmentation, conflict with human activities, and infectious disease. It states that the causes of African wild dogs’ decline are reasonably well understood. Trade or other forms of utilisation (local or international) are not mentioned as potential or actual causes of decline or threats. As such, the possible role of CITES is the conservation of this species remains unclear.

¹ Woodroffe, R. & Ginsberg, J.R. (1997a). Past and future causes of wild dogs’ population decline. In *The African wild dog: Status survey and conservation action plan* (eds R. Woodroffe, J.R. Ginsberg & D.W. Macdonald), pp. 58-74. IUCN, Gland.

Woodroffe, R. & Ginsberg, J.R. (1998) Edge effects and the extinction of populations inside protected areas. *Science*, 280, 2126-2128.

Woodroffe, R., Davies-Mostert, H., Ginsberg, J.R., Graf, J.A., Leigh, K., McCreery, E.K., Mills, M.G.L., Pole, A., Rasmussen, G.S.A., Robbins, R., Somers, M., & Szykman, M. (2007a) Rates and causes of mortality in endangered African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*): lessons for management and monitoring. *Oryx*, 41, 1-9.

Woodroffe, R., Ginsberg, J.R., & Macdonald, D.W. (1997b) *The African wild dog: Status survey and conservation action plan* IUCN, Gland.

Woodroffe, R., Lindsey, P.A., Romaniach, S.S., & ole Ranah, S.M.K. (2007c) African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) can subsist on small prey: implications for conservation. *Journal of Mammalogy*, 88, 181-193.

Woodroffe, R., McNutt, J.W., & Mills, M.G.L. (2004). African wild dog. In *Foxes, wolves, jackals and dogs: status survey and conservation action plan*. 2nd edition (eds C. Sillero-Zubiri & D.W. Macdonald), pp. 174-183. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland

- B. The information provided in the document does not seem to justify the significant amount of intersessional work that is proposed in the draft decisions on this non-CITES listed species, which does not appear to be threatened by trade. As the document indicates, African wild dogs are included in CMS Annex II, and a species designated for cooperative actions during 2015-2017 pursuant to CMS Resolution 11.13. The implementation of these actions may be a more effective way for the international community to act in favour of the conservation of the species.
- C. The Secretariat notes that the cost implications and the external sources of funding for implementing the proposed draft decisions are not considered in the document. They could be in the region of USD 50,000 to 70,000.

PROPOSED DECISIONS

Directed to the Animals Committee

Decision 17.AA At its 29th session, the Animals Committee shall order a study, subject to the availability of external funds, to investigate the trade in African wild dogs and its actual and potential impacts on the conservation status of the species and make recommendations for future actions.

Decision 17.BB At its 30th session, the Animals Committee shall examine the results of the study referred to in Decision 17.AA, and draw up a report and make recommendations for the following session of the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

Decision 17.CC The Standing Committee shall examine the report and the recommendations of the Animals Committee and make its own recommendations for examination by the Conference of the Parties at its 18th meeting.

Directed to the Secretariat

Decision 17.DD The Secretariat shall seek to obtain the necessary funding for implementation of Decisions 17.AA-17.CC.

Directed to Parties and donors

Decision 17.EE Parties and donors are urged to supply funds to the Secretariat to finance the activities provided for in Decisions 17.AA – 17.CC.