

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



Eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Geneva (Switzerland), 17 - 28 August 2019

Summary record of the first session for Committee I

18 August 2019: 09h15 - 11h55

Chair: R. Hay (New Zealand)

Secretariat: T. De Meulenaer
K. Gaymor

Rapporteurs: J. Caldwell
J. Gray
C. Stafford
E. Vovk

Following introductory remarks, the Chair announced that the order of the listing proposals would follow the order set out on the CITES website, starting with CoP18 Prop. 1 in the afternoon session of 21 August, with the exception of the following:

CoP18 Props. 50 to 54 on plants would be addressed on the morning of Wednesday 21, and CoP18 Props. 55 to 57 in the afternoon of the same day. CoP18 Props. 42 to 45, for all marine fish including teatfish, would be discussed together on Sunday 25 in the morning. CoP18 Props. 10 to 13 on elephants would be addressed on the afternoon of Thursday 22. All other proposals would flow around the above.

The Chair of the Credentials Committee reported 160 Parties had registered, and 131 credentials had been accepted, with 14 pending.

The United States of America wished to disassociate itself from the acceptance of the credentials of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. The latter did not accept these comments; highlighted the need to ensure a constructive dialogue at the meeting and asked for its declaration to be put on record.

Species specific matters

96. African Carnivores Initiative

The Secretariat introduced document CoP18 Doc. 96 outlining the rationale for the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI). The Initiative being proposed was in line with Resolution Conf. 13.3 on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)*, and acts upon the implementation of the CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2015-2020. The first meeting of ACI range States, funded by Belgium, Germany and Switzerland, took place in November 2018 in Bonn, Germany, where 31 of the 47 African range States attended.

CMS announced that the results of CoP18 would be presented at CMS COP13 in February 2020 (Gandhinagar, India), and informed that Germany was funding a Junior Professional Officer to work on the ACI, who is expected to join the CMS Secretariat in early 2020.

The United States of America supported the adoption of the draft decisions outlined in document CoP18 Doc. 96. They raised questions about possible overlap between the ACI and the Big Cats Task Force being

proposed in document CoP18 Doc. 76.1 (Rev. 1), as well as the level of involvement of the Standing Committee; and proposed amendment to the draft decisions for this purpose.

The European Union supported the draft decisions proposed by the Secretariat, but considered that draft decisions 18.DD, 18.EE and 18.FF would be more appropriate framed in a resolution, as they were not time-bound, or incorporated in Resolution Conf. 13.3.

Burkina Faso, Chad, China, Ethiopia, Gabon, India and Niger expressed support for the ACI and draft decisions put forward by the Secretariat, as did Algeria, the Central African Republic, Mali, Senegal, Togo and Zimbabwe, who stressed the importance of funding and capacity-building.

Conservation Force queried how the Joint Initiative would apply to the three range States that were not Parties to CMS or the two range States that had reservations on CMS Decisions. The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) were ready to support any future Programmes of Work of the ACI established at this meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The six draft decisions presented in Annex 2 to document CoP18 Doc. 96 were agreed with the following amendments proposed by the United States of America: insert the following at the end of draft decision 18.AA b) i) “and submit the draft Programme of Work to the Standing Committee for its review and appropriate revision: and”; and replace draft decision 18.BB by the following: “The Standing Committee shall review the draft Programme of Work submitted by the Secretariat under Decision 18.AA b) i) and make appropriate recommendations or revisions and consider any reports of the Secretariat on its implementation of Decision 18.AA, and formulate guidance and recommendations, as appropriate, to range States and the Secretariat.”

76. African lion (*Panthera leo*)

76.1 Report of the Secretariat

The Secretariat introduced document CoP18 Doc. 76.1 (Rev. 1), which reported on intersessional activities addressing Decisions 17.241 to 17.245, and reviews thereof by the Animals and Standing Committees. It drew attention to the outcomes of the First Meeting of Range States for the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI1), in Bonn, in November 2018.

Following interventions from Israel, Mali and Niger regarding consideration of agenda items 76.1 and 76.2, the Chair determined that these would be addressed separately. Mexico, supported by Israel and Nigeria, argued that the scope of the Task Force referred to in the draft decisions in the document should cover and be specific for three geographical regions.

China, the European Union, South Africa and the United States, supported the general intent of the draft decisions in document CoP18 Doc. 76.1 (Rev. 1), with some suggesting various amendments. The European Union supported the proposed deletion of Decisions 17.241 to 17.245.

Niger, supported by Benin, Chad, Kenya, Togo, Born Free Foundation (speaking also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free USA, CATCA Environmental Wildlife and Conservation Society, Center for Biological Diversity, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Eurogroup for Animals, Humane Society International, Pan-African Sanctuary Alliance, ProWildlife, Robin des Bois and Species Survival Network), the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (speaking also on behalf of TRAFFIC and the Zoological Society of London), all supported the proposal to form of a working group to address the issues raised about the document.

The Chair established a working group comprising: Switzerland (Chair), Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, China, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Rwanda, South Africa, Slovakia, Spain, Togo, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Zimbabwe, the Convention on Migratory Species, International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), AsiaCats, Born Free Foundation, Born Free USA, Cheetah Conservation Fund, China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation, Conservation Alliance of Kenya, Conservation Force, Creative Conservation Solutions, Eurogroup for Animals, the European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), Flora and Flora International (FFI), Humane

Society International (HSI), , the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), the International Professional Hunters Association (IPHA), the South African Predator Association, Species Survival Network (SSN), San Diego Zoo Global, TRAFFIC, Safari Club International Foundation, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Wildlife Conservation Society, the Zoological Society of London. The Chair stated that the terms of reference would be set following discussion of agenda item 76.2.

76.2 Conservation of and trade in African lions

Togo introduced document CoP18 Doc. 76.2, highlighting pressure faced by the species from illegal trade as a result of emerging demand in Asia for lion bones and recommending the adoption of the draft resolution contained in Annex 1 of the document. Niger and Nigeria echoed this, summarising recent information on the conservation status of lions and arguing that adoption of the draft resolution would further strengthen efforts to cooperate with other biodiversity-related conventions, particularly the CMS.

Botswana, the United Republic of Tanzania, the European Union and South Africa did not support the proposed resolution, noting that they believed the draft decisions in Annex 1 to document CoP18 Doc. 76.1 (Rev. 1) adequately addressed concerns raised in the present document. The United Republic of Tanzania, echoed by South Africa, considered that the contents of document CoP18 Doc. 76.2 should not be discussed by the working group established during agenda item 76.1 and believed there been insufficient consultation with other range States in the development of document CoP18 Doc. 76.2. South Africa argued that the resolution contained unscientific information and ignored stable and increased lion populations in South Africa.

The Chair acknowledged that there was no broad agreement on this matter, and set out the terms of reference for the working group established during agenda item 76.1 as follows:

The working group on African lions shall:

- a) review draft decisions in Annex 1 to document CoP18 Doc. 76.1 (Rev. 1), taking account of amendments proposed in-session; and
- b) take into consideration relevant aspects of the discussion on document CoP18 Doc. 76.2 in this review.

The meeting was adjourned at 11h55.

Declaration by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Mr President,

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, we would like to express our condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka and thank the Swiss Government for hosting this CoP18 as well as the Secretariat for preparing the documents.

Mr President,

Regarding the statement made by the Delegation of the United States, we express our strongest rejection of this type of declaration.

Government recognition issues are not the subject of this meeting. On the contrary, we must take advantage of all spaces to ensure the success of the meeting. As the President of the CoP pointed out, this CoP involves 20% more work than other CoPs and this type of declaration distorts the spirit and the objectives of the Conference and the CITES Convention by attempting to politicize it.

Our Delegation wishes to underline that we will not instigate this type of disruptive behaviours aimed at undermining the purposes of this CoP. In addition, we demand respect for our delegation, other Parties, representatives of civil society and the other actors present here.

We urge everyone to carry out consensus-based and professional work. We hope that this meeting will yield the expected results, which require leading a constructive dialogue that will guarantee the success of this CoP in the conservation and appropriate management of the diversity of flora and fauna.

Thank you very much.