

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 eighth session for committee II

21 August 2019: 9h15 - 12h00

Chair: C. Hoover (United States of America)

Secretariat: I. Higuero
T. Carroll
D. Morgan
B. J. van Rensburg
J. Stahl

Rapporteurs: J. Caldwell
E. Jennings
F. Davis
J. Vitale

Species specific matters (cont.)

The Chair of the Credentials Committee informed the Committee that 152 Parties had been accredited.

69. Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

69.2 Report on Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE)

The Secretariat introduced document CoP18 Doc. 69.2 and its Addendum, acknowledging the funding received from the European Union, and the support for the implementation of the MIKE Programme in Africa received from Japan.

Burkina Faso, supported by Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Israel, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo called for greater transparency and independent peer review of the analysis provided by MIKE. They emphasized their commitment to tackle poaching of elephants. Kenya also queried the removal of the 0.5 threshold used in previous reports to indicate PIKE levels of concern. China considered that the high heterogeneity in the number of elephant carcasses reported indicated a need for improvements to the methodology and site selection criteria.

Botswana, supported by Liberia, Malawi, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, supported the outcomes of the MIKE report and reiterated their commitment to the programme. Japan expressed its continued commitment to supporting the MIKE Programme. Fondation Franz Weber, also on behalf of David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Humane Society International, and Robin des Bois, echoed support for the MIKE programme.

Regarding requests for greater transparency, the Secretariat pointed out that the programming code used in the PIKE (proportion of illegally killed elephants) trend analysis and the Report on the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) analysis for CoP18 had been shared via a Notification to the Parties. Regarding the 0.5 threshold, the Secretariat reported that it had been omitted from the report based on advice from the Technical Advisory Group as the impact of a given level of illegal killing on a population

varies between sites and over time. The Secretariat reported that MIKE had initiated an independent review of the analytical methodology used and that the Secretariat would report on the progress made at the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee.

Document CoP18 Doc. 69.2 was noted.

69.3 Report on the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS)

The Secretariat introduced document CoP18 Doc. 69.3 containing an analysis of Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) data in Annex 1 to document CoP18 Doc. 69.3. It drew Parties' attention to the tentative budget outlined in Annex 4 and thanked the European Union, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's African Elephant Conservation Fund, Belgium, and the Netherlands for providing funding for this analysis.

Gabon and Zimbabwe expressed concern that only approximately 20% of ivory seizures had been assessed forensically. They drew attention to methods described in information document CoP18 Inf. 81 and urged Parties to conduct these tests and to communicate the results to law enforcement agents in probable source countries. The European Union called on Parties to submit their ETIS data as soon as possible.

Singapore, echoed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates, disagreed with their designation in Category C. Bahrain, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kuwait, Malaysia, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, and Zimbabwe felt that the process for categorising countries was unclear and requested a review of ETIS methodology, Malaysia noting displeasure at its designation in Category A but stating it would increase efforts to combat illegal trade

Angola noted its progress in prosecuting the organised criminal network in the country, but sought more support and collaboration from Viet Nam. The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) welcomed Viet Nam's progress in tackling wildlife trafficking but remained concerned that the government's response had been insufficient.

The United Republic of Tanzania noted, as agreed at the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee, it had achieved its NIAP and could exit the process, and asked conservation partners to continue to support existing efforts.

Document CoP18 Doc. 69.3 was noted.

69.1 Implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17) on *Trade in elephant specimens*

The Secretariat introduced document CoP18 Doc. 69.1 and drew attention to its addendum. Document CoP18 Doc. 69.1 contained a number of draft decisions and proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17) on *Trade in elephant specimens*.

Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, India, Israel, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, and the United States of America expressed disappointment at the delay in publication by the Secretariat of guidance on ensuring effective stockpile management.

With regards to the Guidelines to the National Ivory Action Plans (NIAPs) Process in Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17), India suggested that it could be amended so that the Standing Committee consider other relevant information beyond ETIS when it decides on the involvement of new countries; that, in Step 4, implementation should be more directly linked to impact indicators; and that the engagement of experts, via for instance the establishment of a NIAP technical advisory group, could be envisaged.

The European Union also suggested amended text for draft decision 18.AA as follows:

"The Standing Committee at its 73rd meeting (SC73) shall review and consider for approval the practical guidance prepared by the Secretariat for the management of ivory stockpiles, including their disposal and make recommendations as appropriate for consideration at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The European Union also proposed the addition of a draft decision 18.AA Bis

“The Secretariat shall disseminate the practical guidance for the management of ivory stockpiles, including their disposal, once approved by the Standing Committee.”

Indonesia supported the adoption of draft decisions 18.BB and 18.CC in Annex 1 to the document and noted its willingness to collaborate with other Asian elephant range States, the Secretariat, and international organizations toward the improved conservation of Asian elephants. Similarly, India committed to facilitate range State cooperation to afford the species with better protection. The United States of America also supported the draft decisions, and the European Union and Israel highlighted the importance of timely reporting to the Secretariat in implementing CITES Decisions.

The European Union expressed support for the proposed draft decisions 18.FF and 18.GG regarding financial and operational sustainability of the MIKE and ETIS programmes and urged Parties to submit information in response to the Notification No. 2018/077 regarding Asian elephants.

The European Union and the United States of America also expressed support for the proposed draft decision 18.AA in the addendum. The European Union, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates expressed support for the amendments proposed to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17). The European Union and TRAFFIC expressed support for the draft ETIS terms of reference in Annex 4.

Regarding NIAPs, India highlighted the importance of the ETIS report, and believed the Standing Committee should consider other information in deciding which Parties to include in the NIAP process, and that Parties should encourage the Secretariat to retain experts as an advisory group. China believed that the ETIS report should not be the basis for participation in NIAP and China encouraged the Secretariat to seek external funding to support the NIAP staff position.

The United Arab Emirates, supported by Saudi Arabia, requested as a transit country that its NIAP Category C status be removed, and proposed that this category be renamed “Parties impacted by illegal trade in ivory”. Israel considered that transit countries should remain within the NIAP process.

The World Wildlife Fund, also on behalf of Environmental Investigation Agency, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Zoological Society of London, suggested that the revisions proposed to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev.CoP17) did not go far enough. It underlined the positive impact of the NIAP process but stated that the process could be more transparent and include further Parties. ‘

Stop Ivory drew attention to their guidelines for the ivory stockpile management system.

The draft decisions in Annex 1 to document CoP18 Doc. 69.1, including the two additional ones proposed by the Secretariat, with the amendment to draft decision 18.AA as proposed by the European Union and with the addition of a new draft decision 18.AA Bis Directed to the Secretariat were accepted. Draft decision 18.AA in the addendum to document CoP18 Doc. 69.1 was also accepted. It was agreed to delete Decisions 17.70 to 82 and 17.171.

With respect to the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17) on *Trade in elephant specimens*, contained in Annex 3, the Chair requested that an in-session document showing only the further changes proposed by China, India, Kenya and the United Arab Emirates be returned to the Committee for consideration later in the meeting.

69.4 Ivory stockpiles: Implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17) on *Trade in elephant specimens*

Burkina Faso introduced document CoP18 Doc. 69.4 and noted the challenges of assessing and sharing information on the increasing stocks held by range States and transit countries and called for the Secretariat to rapidly translate and publish the practical guidance in information document CoP18 Inf. 72. They expressed support for the Secretariat’s proposed amendment to paragraph 6 e) of Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev.CoP17), noting that this amendment would make proposed draft decision 18.AA redundant.

Angola, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Liberia, Mali and Niger expressed support for the proposals within the document. Liberia also welcomed the findings of TRAFFIC shared in information document CoP18 Inf.

72. Gabon, as a co-author of the document, also noted the urgency of implementing Resolution Conf.10.10 (Rev.CoP17) paragraph 10 b) and Decision 17.171.

With regard to the proposal to gather information on the quantities of any ivory stolen and/or missing from government-held ivory and, where possible, significant privately held stockpiles, the European Union felt this could be a useful exercise but agreed with the assessment of the Secretariat that such a provision would be better placed in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17).

South Africa and Zimbabwe did not support proposed draft decisions 18.BB and 18.CC. They noted that draft decision 18.BB a) had been addressed under the preceding agenda item 69.1.

India noted that it had a complete ban on trade in ivory and was implementing an ivory stockpile inventory system.

The amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP17) on *Trade in elephant specimens* in paragraph E of the comments of the Secretariat were accepted. Draft decisions BB b) and c) and 18.CC were accepted, noting that discussions under agenda item 69.1 had rendered draft decisions 18. AA and 18.BB a) redundant.

The session was adjourned at 12h00.