



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2024/078

Geneva, 3 July 2024

CONCERNING:

CITES Dialogue meeting on *Trade in live African elephants*
(Decision 19.167) and other issues related to African elephant conservation

1. Pursuant to Decision 19.167 on *Trade in live African elephants* (*Loxodonta africana*), at its 77th meeting (SC77; Geneva, November 2023), the Standing Committee called for the CITES dialogue meeting for African elephant range States as per Resolution Conf. 14.5 on *Dialogue meetings* and welcomed Botswana's offer to host the dialogue meeting, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee and range States.
2. The Standing Committee also noted the draft terms of reference found in the Annex to [document SC77 Com. 7](#), and instructed the Secretariat, on the basis of the draft terms of reference, to support the organization of a dialogue meeting in the second half of 2024, in collaboration with Botswana, the Chair of the Standing Committee, and the African regional representatives of the Committee, in accordance with the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.5.
3. This Notification serves to inform Parties and other stakeholders that the dialogue meeting will be held in Maun, Botswana, from 23 to 26 September 2024. The draft terms of reference agreed for the dialogue meeting as per [document SC77 Com. 7](#) and the draft proposed agenda of the meeting based on those terms of reference and Resolution Conf. 14.5 are included in the Annex to the present Notification.
4. In accordance with the draft terms of reference, the African elephant range States have agreed at SC77 that the participation to this dialogue meeting will be as follows:
 - African elephant range States, in line with Paragraph 1 of the Rules of Procedure of Resolution Conf. 14.5 on *Dialogue Meetings*;
 - Other African Parties subject to availability of funding;
 - IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group and the United Nations Environment Programme as Secretariat of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee as technical experts and resource persons; and
 - African Union Commission as the meeting observer.

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

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5. Parties and stakeholders will be informed in due course regarding the outputs of the dialogue meeting. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.5, this will include a communiqué that will serve as the official record of the outcome and possible draft proposals related to the implementation of Decision 19.167.
6. To date, the Secretariat has not been able to raise sufficient funds to support a representative and an alternate representative of all African elephant range States to attend the dialogue meeting. The Secretariat would welcome additional contributions from donor Parties to allow for all African elephant range States to be sponsored to attend the meeting. The Secretariat regrets that participation in the dialogue meeting will not be extended to other African Parties given the funding constraints.

CITES Dialogue meeting on *Trade in live African elephants* (Dec. 19.167)
and other issues of African elephant conservation

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE (as per [SC77 Com.7](#))

Mandate

Decision 19.167 on *Trade in live African elephants* (*Loxodonta africana*):*The Standing Committee shall call a CITES dialogue meeting as per Resolution Conf. 14.5 on Dialogue meetings for African elephant range States to consider a harmonization of the conditions to trade in live African elephants and propose relevant changes to Resolutions to CoP20 as well as relevant changes to annotation 2 (after CoP19, footnote annotation A10), including changes to streamline and simplify the annotation; and recommend other Parties, the CITES Secretariat and technical experts to participate in the meeting in accordance with the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.5 on Dialogue meetings.*

Timing

The meeting is planned to be held in second half of-2024. The proposed duration of the meeting is 4 days with possible ministerial segment on the fourth day.

Host country

The host country is Botswana, and the venue and exact dates for the meeting will be communicated in due course.

Participation

- African elephant range States: Paragraph 1 of the Rules of Procedure states, *“Each Party that is a range State of an extant population of the species (or group of species) to be discussed shall be entitled to be represented at a dialogue meeting by a representative and an alternate representative, who shall be government officials designated to attend by the Management Authority of the Party that they represent.”*
- Other African Parties subject to availability of funding.
- Following the recommendations of the range States, the Secretariat to invite the IUCN AfESG and UNEP as Secretariat of the AEFSC-to attend-the meeting as technical experts and resource persons.
- Further, through a consensus of the range States, African Union Commission (AUC) was approved to attend the Dialogue meeting as observer.
- The Dialogue meeting will be conducted in both open and closed sessions
- CITES Secretariat: Paragraph 3 of the Rules of Procedure states, *“The CITES Secretariat shall participate in dialogue meetings in order to advise the Parties and to serve as Secretary and organizer of the meeting.”*

Chair and vice-chairs

According to the Rules of procedure for CITES dialogue meetings (Resolution Conf. 14.5, Annex, paragraph 11), the Chair of the Standing Committee serves as the Chair of the dialogue meeting. Two vice-chairs shall be elected at site from among the participants during the meeting.

Objectives of the meeting

Implement Decision 19.167, i.e.,

- To consider a harmonization of the conditions to trade in live African elephants and

- To propose to CoP20, relevant changes to Resolutions as well as relevant changes to Annotation #2 (after CoP19 footnote annotation A10), including changes to streamline and simplify the annotation and prepare a common document to CoP20

Address additional salient issues of elephant conservation that will include inter alia:

- 1 Status of African elephant populations and related assessments
2. Implementation of the revised (2nd Edition) of the African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) approved by the range States in 2022
3. Sustainable financing for the African elephant conservation and management.
 - a) Administration of the African Elephant Fund for the implementation of the AEAP
 - b) Access to Funding
 - c) [Non –Commercial] disposal of ivory stockpiles
4. Structure and mechanisms for building regional cohesion and coordination across the range States and in the region
 - a) Regional coordination in meetings of CITES bodies
 - b) Regional coordination in implementation of AEAP

Expected outcomes

- Draft Proposal for the consideration of CoP20 on implementation of Decision 19.167
- A Communique from the Dialogue Meeting as official record of the outcome



**CITES African Elephant Dialogue
23-26 September 2024 | Maun, Botswana**

Draft Provisional Agenda¹

- 1. Opening statements**
 - Welcome remarks: Minister of Environment and Tourism, Botswana
 - Opening statement: CITES Standing Committee Chair
 - Opening statement: CITES Secretary-General
 - (Opening statement: AUC representative)
- 2. Election of the co-Vice Chairs**
- 3. Adoption of the agenda**
 - Overview of the meeting objectives and conduct of the meeting
 - Identification of closed session(s)
- 4. Status of African elephant populations and related assessments**
 - Introduction
 - Latest MIKE data assessment
- 5. Harmonization of Conditions for Trade in Live African Elephants (Dec. 19.167)**
 - Overview of issues, and relevant Resolution, Annotation
- 6. Implementation of the revised (2nd Edition) African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP), 2023**
 - Introduction on AEAP
 - Administration of the African Elephant Fund
 - Regional coordination for the implementation of AEAP
- 7. Sustainable financing for the African elephant conservation and management**
 - Access to Funding
 - [Non-Commercial] disposal of ivory stockpiles
- 8. Structure and mechanisms for building regional cohesion and coordination across the range States and in the region**
 - Regional coordination in meetings of CITES bodies
 - Regional coordination in implementation of AEAP
- 9. Agreement of the communique (for submission to the Ministerial session)**
- 10. Concluding remarks**
- 11. Ministerial session** (to be confirmed and elaborated in a separate agenda)

¹ In accordance with the terms of reference agreed by the CITES Standing Committee at its 77th meeting (November 2023) and Res. Conf. 14.5 *Dialogue meetings*