



NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2024/139

Geneva, 17 December 2024

CONCERNING:

20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20)
Preparatory activities in the African region

1. Pursuant to paragraphs 20 through 22 of the communiqué of the recent CITES African Elephant Dialogue meeting (Maun, September 2024), published through Notification to the Parties [No. 2024/111](#), the Secretariat has been in discussion with the African Union Commission (AUC) to explore how AUC can support the coordination and preparedness of African Parties for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 20).
2. Accordingly, AUC has issued a Note Verbale (as attached) to inform its Member States regarding the following preparatory activities:
 - a) **Virtual information session, 22 January 2025:** AUC, in partnership with the CITES Secretariat, will convene a virtual information session aimed at supporting African Parties, particularly CITES authorities, in their preparation for CoP20. This includes information regarding registration and accreditation, the operation of the CoP meetings, important deadlines and preparing their submissions of documents to CoP20.
 - b) **Africa regional preparatory meeting, 24-26 March 2025 (venue to be confirmed):** A three-day in-person preparatory meeting for CITES CoP20 will take place at a venue to be confirmed. The meeting will focus on discussing documents relevant to African elephant range States, consulting and sharing information on working documents and proposals under preparation, coordinating positions among African Parties, developing joint submissions, and fostering stronger multilateral engagement under the CITES framework to enhance regional coordination and unity.
3. Parties in the African region are strongly encouraged to liaise with their respective African Union focal points so that they can benefit from the above-mentioned opportunities.
4. Nominations and queries regarding the above should be sent to: Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Director of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, African Union Commission (NyambeH@africa-union.org), with copy to: Dr. Jihane El Gouzi (ElgouziJ@africa-union.org), Ms. Caroline Tagwireyi (TagwireyiC@africa-union.org), and Mr. Oldman Koboto (koboto1705@gmail.com).

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

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The African Union Commission presents its compliments to the Africa Group of Negotiators on the successful African Elephant range States Dialogue that took place in Maun, Botswana in September 2024.

The African Union notes the progress made towards advancing the interests of Africa participation in CITES negotiations and the need for effective coordination of the African negotiators ahead of the Conference of Parties (COP) and during the Conference of Parties as per article 21 of the Maun Africa Elephant range States Communique.

Further, article 21 of the Communique enjoins the African Union Commission to lead in coordinating the preparedness of the African continent towards CITES COP 20.

Pursuant to the above, the African Union Commission is pleased to inform member states that a three (3) Day CITES COP 20 preparatory meeting will be conducted from 24-26 March 2025 at a venue to be announced. This will enable the parties to better coordinate their efforts and submissions to CITES ahead of the closing date for submission of documents. Most importantly, the meeting will serve as the inaugural meeting for CITES Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN) as characteristic of most of multilateral engagements.

In order to prepare adequately for the above mentioned meeting, as well as prepare compliant documents for submission to CITES, the African Union Commission in partnership with CITES Secretariat will convene a virtual information session for all the member states on the 22 January 2025. This meeting will assist the member states in ensuring that their documents are compliant with the CITES requirements.

Your country is therefore invited to the virtual meeting of 22 January 2025. Your country is further requested to nominate 3 Officials to be supported to attend the physical pre-cop meeting in March consisting of 1 Senior Official, 1 Technical expert and a CITES focal person.

The annotated draft agenda is attached for your information.

Kindly send your nominations to Harsen Nyambe, Director for Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy at NyambeH@africa-union.org copying Dr. Jihane El Gouzi at ElgaouziJ@africa-union.org, Mrs Caroline Tagwireyi on TagwireyiC@africa-union.org and Mr Oldman Koboto on koboto1705@gmail.com, on or before 10 December 2024.

The African Union Commission avails this opportunity to renew to the Africa Group of Negotiators the assurances of its highest consideration.

Addis Ababa, 25 November 2024

- Africa Group of Negotiators
- Regional Economic Communities

