



WWF

POSITION
PAPER

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SUMMARY OF WWF'S POSITIONS ON PRIORITY AGENDA ITEMS FOR CITES COP16

1. Since CITES CoP15, a number of international fora, such as the INTERPOL General Assembly and the Rio +20 Summit, have acknowledged the status of wildlife crime as a serious crime. Moreover, wildlife crime has been recognized as one that is frequently associated with other types of serious crime, including corruption and money laundering. It is also known to destabilize society, fuel regional conflicts, degrade the rule of law, hinder economic development and deprive communities of natural resources. WWF urges all governments at CITES CoP16 to recognize the serious nature of wildlife crime, and the extent to which certain parties have failed to implement their commitments under CITES, which has allowed such damaging and often organized crime to flourish. WWF calls on all parties to uphold their commitments and hold other parties to account in cases of non-compliance.
2. CITES parties need to renew their commitment to the convention's core scientific principles, including respect for the criteria for inclusion of species on Appendices I and II, and the need for rigorous non-detriment findings.
3. WWF's position summaries found here are being issued in advance of the publication by IUCN and TRAFFIC of their analyses of proposals to amend Appendices I and II. WWF commends these organizations for their work in this regard and urges parties to take the results of these analyses into account when they become available.
4. WWF is issuing these positions before all the CoP agenda documents are available. WWF will consider updating or supplementing these positions in the light of receipt of new agenda documents or other new information.

**For further information
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| SPECIES / ISSUE | ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION | WWF POSITION |
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| <p>African and Asian elephant Agenda item 53.2.2</p> | <p>ETIS Report: It is expected that this report will, once again, note that a number of countries are falling seriously short of their commitments with regard to implementation of the Action plan for the control of trade in elephant ivory (Decision 13.26 (Rev. CoP15)), including the obligation to regulate domestic ivory markets with a view to eradicating trade in ivory of illegal origin. The report will likely point to the need for greater efforts by CITES as a whole to improve the level of compliance with this decision.</p> | <p>SUPPORT: This is the key issue that CITES needs to address at CoP16. Poorly regulated domestic ivory markets and poor enforcement of laws against ivory trade in source, transit and consumer countries are currently among the main drivers of the current elephant crisis. Parties committed to rectifying this as long ago as CoP13 in 2004 and agreed in 2007 that non-compliant countries should be subject to recommendations for suspension of trade in CITES-listed species. However, these compliance provisions have not been effectively used and most of the countries highlighted in the ETIS report have been implicated at successive meetings of the CoP and Standing Committee. <i>Parties should be prepared to use the ETIS report and other relevant information to assess countries' compliance with Decision 13.26 (Rev. CoP15) and to recommend a suspension of trade in CITES-listed species for countries where progress is not made.</i></p> |
| <p>African elephant, <i>Loxodonta africana</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer of Tanzania population from Appendix I to Appendix II (Tanzania); • Amendment of existing listing to prevent any further international ivory sales until after 2017 (Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali and Togo) | <p>OPPOSE: While an expert panel has yet to scrutinise Tanzania's proposal, the ETIS data already indicate that Tanzania fails to meet at least some of the criteria for transfer of the population to Appendix II (CITES Resolution Conf. 10.9); in particular, sufficient enforcement to ensure that no significant amounts of ivory taken or traded illegally from other countries are traded within or through the territory.</p> <p>WWF also opposes the proposal to prevent legal ivory sales until after 2017 as it could facilitate international ivory trade without regulatory oversight. This could happen because any elephant range or consumer country would be able to enter reservations to the annotation that would result from this proposal, meaning that those countries would be able to legally trade ivory with each other completely outside any CITES control.</p> <p><i>In addition, both proposals will only serve to generate a divisive debate that will do nothing to address the more fundamental causes of the current poaching and illegal ivory trade crisis. WWF, accordingly, urges the proponents to withdraw them.</i></p> |
| <p>African and Asian rhinoceroses Agenda item 54</p> | <p>Report of Standing Committee Rhino working group:</p> <p>Recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring Viet Nam to report to forthcoming Standing Committee meetings on progress in tackling illegal rhino horn trade; and • Development of a demand reduction strategy • Report of the secretariat, annexing a report from IUCN and TRAFFIC on the status and conservation of, and trade in, African and Asian rhinoceroses, submitted in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) | <p>SUPPORT: WWF identifies Viet Nam's failure to act against illegal rhino horn trade within the country as the main factor driving the present poaching crisis in southern Africa, as well as resulting in the loss of the last of Viet Nam's indigenous rhinos. Viet Nam's report on its activities to control such illegal trade is neither convincing nor reassuring.</p> <p>WWF supports the development of a demand reduction strategy for rhino horn. The outline presented in the rhino working group report represents an excellent starting point for this work.</p> <p><i>Parties should be prepared to use the IUCN-TRAFFIC report and other relevant information to assess relevant countries' compliance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP15) and to recommend a suspension of trade in CITES-listed species for countries where progress is not made.</i></p> |

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| Southern white rhinoceros, <i>Ceratotherium simum simum</i> | Impose a moratorium on trophy hunting exports from South Africa and Swaziland, at least until CoP18 (Kenya) | <p>OPPOSE: WWF opposes this proposal because if it were passed, any rhino range or consumer country would be able to enter reservations to the annotation, meaning that those countries would be able to legally trade rhinos and their products with each other completely outside any CITES control. In any event, whilst so-called “pseudo-hunting” (engaging in trophy hunts for the purposes of obtaining horn to trade commercially) has been a contributing factor to the current crisis, it is no longer the main driver. South Africa has banned trophy exports to Viet Nam and consultations are underway to ensure that such trophies do not reach Viet Nam via third countries. While there are further actions that South Africa needs to take, CITES should focus its attention on the main consumer market: Viet Nam. In addition, this proposal would serve to render rhino ownership economically unviable for the private sector in South Africa, with long-term negative consequences for the continued growth of the rhino population in that country.</p> |
| Oceanic whitetip shark, <i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i> | Inclusion in Appendix II (Brazil, Colombia, USA) | <p>SUPPORT: Once among the more abundant pelagic sharks, available catch data indicates that the species has undergone severe historic and recent declines. This species is heavily exploited when caught incidentally in many pelagic fisheries across the world, with fins removed and retained because of their high value in international trade. Inclusion of the species in Appendix II is needed to help stop the significant and continuing declines driven by the international fin trade.</p> |
| Scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead and smooth hammerhead sharks <i>Sphyrna lewini, S. mokarran and S. zygaena</i> | Inclusion in Appendix II (Brazil, Costa Rica, Denmark – on behalf of the EU, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico) | <p>SUPPORT: The greatest threats to scalloped hammerhead shark worldwide are due to the international fin trade and bycatch, which have caused historic declines of at least 15-20% from the baseline for long-term time series in multiple ocean basins. Based upon rates of exploitation, this species is likely to become threatened by extinction unless international trade regulation provides an incentive to introduce or improve monitoring and management measures to provide a basis for non-detriment and legal acquisition findings.</p> <p>Great hammerhead and smooth hammerhead sharks share many life history characteristics with scalloped hammerhead, and stock assessments in the North Atlantic show marked levels of declines in all species. Scalloped hammerheads fins are traded along with those of the other two species that are proposed here for look-alike reasons in Appendix II.</p> |
| Porbeagle shark, <i>Lamna nasus</i> | Inclusion in Appendix II (Brazil, Comoros, Croatia, Denmark – on behalf of the EU – and Egypt) | <p>SUPPORT: International demand for, and trade in, the high-value meat and fins of porbeagle is causing massive declines in its populations. Stock assessments identified historical population declines of up to 94% from historical baseline levels (1926) in the Northeast Atlantic. This fishery collapsed in 1960 leading to redirected effort in the Northwest Atlantic, which in turn collapsed within six years. Population declines in the Northwest Atlantic are between 73–78% of 1961 levels; despite catch restrictions, only limited stock recovery has occurred. Inclusion of this species in Appendix II is needed due to the scale of declines in some stocks and international demand for the species.</p> |
| Freshwater sawfish <i>Pristis microdon</i> | Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I | <p>SUPPORT: This species was proposed for inclusion in Appendix I at CoP 14 when the rest of the sawfish family was included in that Appendix. It was retained in Appendix II at the request of Australia for the purpose of allowing continued trade for the aquarium market. Now Australia has concluded that commercial trade is unsustainable and is seeking to place the species in Appendix I.</p> |
| Manta rays <i>Manta spp.</i> | Inclusion in Appendix II (Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador) | <p>SUPPORT: Increasing fishing pressure driven by international trade in manta gill rakers has led to significant rates of decline in population sizes in recent years. Additionally evidence of intensified fishing effort on already depleted populations has been documented in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, two of the largest documented manta fisheries. Several manta populations already, in fact, qualify for listing in Appendix I. These species are only protected in a few range states and there are no management measures in the range states with the largest documented manta fisheries. Without prompt regulation of international trade, all manta species will likely qualify globally for Appendix I listing in the near future.</p> |

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| Madagascar populations of ebony, <i>Diospyros spp.</i> , and rosewood, <i>Dalbergia spp.</i> | Inclusion in Appendix II (Madagascar) | SUPPORT: These groups of tree species, some of which are endemic, have undergone alarming declines in Madagascar, driven primarily by illegal logging for the international market, due to the high value of their timber. The Plants Committee has encouraged Madagascar to bring forward these proposals. Their adoption is an essential component in efforts to combat illegal logging and habitat degradation in that country. |
| Black, granadillo and Honduras rosewoods, <i>Dalbergia retusa</i> , <i>D. granadillo</i> and <i>D. stevensonii</i> | Inclusion in Appendix II (Belize) | SUPPORT: These species were previously the subject of proposals at CoP14, when WWF supported the Appendix II listing of the black and granadillo species. The subsequent inclusion of all three species in Appendix III has provided trade data that, together with information provided subsequently to the Plants Committee, corroborate the case for listing all three species in Appendix II. |
| Tortoises and freshwater turtles (11 proposals) | Various: inclusion in Appendix II, inclusion in Appendix II with a zero quota, or transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I | SUPPORT: These proposals follow broadly the outcomes of specialist regional workshops in Singapore and the USA for the Asian and North American species respectively, the former of which was part of ongoing work on Asian tortoises and freshwater turtles in the Animals Committee. |
| Polar Bear (<i>Ursus maritimus</i>) | Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I | OPPOSE: The polar bear does not currently meet the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I. Even the most precautionary projections indicate that these criteria will not be met in any proximate timeframe that would justify an Appendix I listing at this time. Habitat loss from climate warming, not international trade, is the primary driver of this anticipated population decline. WWF acknowledges that there are concerns about the management of and off take from some polar bear sub-populations. However, these concerns can be adequately addressed within the provisions of the current Appendix II listing, backed up by existing international agreements and national legislation. WWF is actively supporting work on the ground in all range states to improve the conservation and management of for this species, for example by expanding the knowledge base and reducing conflict between people and bears. |
| Introduction from the Sea (IFS) (Agenda Item 32) | Adoption of a revised resolution | SUPPORT: The draft resolution tabled for adoption represents two years of intersessional work. The proposal that IFS certificates be issued only when the flag state and port state are the same, and that export permits be issued in other cases, resolves the issue of responsibility for making non-detriment findings. The exception granted for chartered vessels in certain circumstances is a very narrow one and, therefore, not of concern. |
| Non-detriment findings (NDFs) (Agenda Item 33) | Adoption of a resolution | SUPPORT: The adoption of a resolution on the principles of non-detriment findings is long overdue. The draft tabled for adoption is the latest stage in the process that began in 2008 with the convening of an expert workshop on the making of NDFs in Mexico in 2008. The text was the subject of detailed and intensive negotiation at the joint meeting of the Animals and Plants Committees in Dublin in 2012, where it was finally agreed by consensus. |
| Improving cooperation on permit and certificate verification (Agenda Item 35) | Adoption of a resolution (China) | SUPPORT: China's proposals for addressing suspicious or fraudulent permits represent good practice and common sense and should be welcomed. |
| CITES and livelihoods (Agenda Item 19) | Adoption of a resolution with decisions for further work and a toolkit | SUPPORT: WWF commends Peru for its stewardship of this process, which has led to a well-balanced outcome. |



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