



WWF®

BRIEFING

2016

CITES COP 17

SUMMARY OF WWF POSITIONS ON PRIORITY
AGENDA ITEMS FOR CITES COP17

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UNITING AGAINST WILDLIFE CRIME

Since CoP16, international momentum has been building against wildlife crime, with a raft of global declarations and commitments to tackle poaching and wildlife trafficking, including the UN General Assembly Resolution 69/314, the London and Kasane conferences, and the Sustainable Development Goals. CoP17 represents an opportunity to put these commitments into action through strong measures on wildlife crime, corruption, demand reduction and compliance. Countries that fail to meet their commitments must be held to account under CITES, facing trade suspensions if necessary.

MAKING CITES WORK

The agenda for this CoP is the largest ever. However, there is a widening gap between the ambition of CITES on the one hand, and the resources available to the Secretariat and the Committees on the other. The expanded ambitions of CITES will not be realised without significant additional resources.

FOCUS ON NATIONAL IVORY ACTION PLANS

At successive CITES CoPs, the issue of countries identified as playing a role in illegal ivory trade has received inadequate attention because the deliberations have

been monopolized by proposals to reinforce the existing de facto ban on the international ivory trade and counter-proposals from countries that wished to sell ivory. At CoP16, all such proposals were withdrawn and much more attention was given to the issue of those countries whose inadequate implementation of CITES rules was contributing to illegal ivory trade, resulting in the development of the National Ivory Action Plan process. We believe that this process has led to some progress, should continue to be supported, and should be the major focus of CITES efforts. Unfortunately, the process is at risk of stalling, due to the burden of work involved in ensuring adequate oversight of the quality of the plans and progress with their implementation.

Science-based decision making: Decisions on listing proposals must be made by reference to the criteria set out in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16). While these may be interpreted in a precautionary manner, they should not be wilfully set aside because of political considerations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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CITES CoP17:

<https://cites.org/cop17>

Provisional agenda:

<https://cites.org/eng/cop/17/doc/index.php>

Proposed amendments to Appendice I & II:

<https://cites.org/eng/cop/17/prop/index.php>

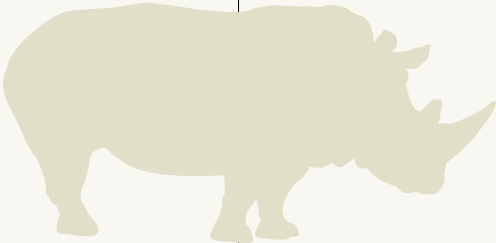


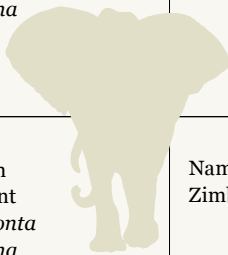
IUCN/TRAFFIC analyses:

<http://citesanalyses.iucn.org/>



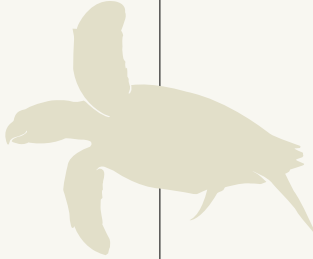


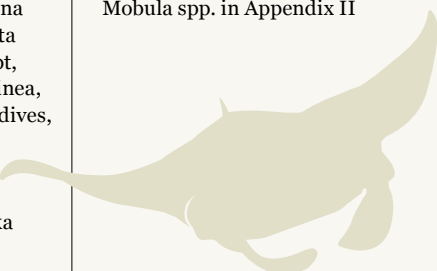


A. PROPOSALS TO AMEND APPENDICES I AND II

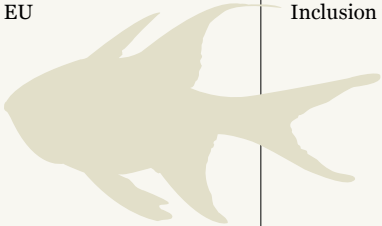


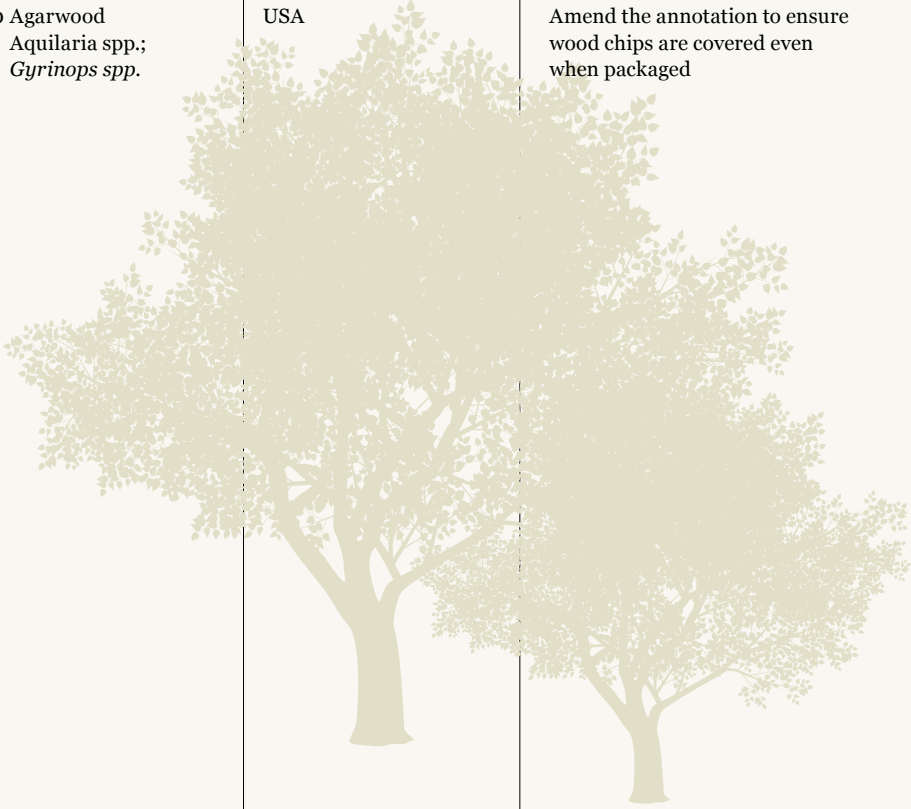
For proposals other than those included here WWF will follow the TRAFFIC recommendations arising from the IUCN-TRAFFIC analyses of all listing proposals

PROPOSAL NAME & NUMBER	PROPONENT(S)	PROPOSAL	WWF POSITION
7 Southern white rhinoceros <i>Ceratotherium simum simum</i> 	Swaziland	To alter the existing annotation on the Appendix II listing of Swaziland's white rhino, adopted at CoP13, so as to permit a limited and regulated trade in white rhino horn, which has been collected in the past from natural deaths or recovered from poached Swazi rhino, as well as horn to be harvested in the future in a non-lethal way from a limited number of white rhino in Swaziland	OPPOSE WWF acknowledges that the rising cost of protecting rhino herds is an issue but we do not believe that allowing legal trade in rhino horn will address this problem. It is not apparent that sufficient horn can be made available to meet potential demand in consumer markets, nor that any likely consumer countries can manage a regulated horn trade without allowing significant quantities of illegal horn into the market. As such, legal trade runs the risks of exacerbating the current poaching crisis rather than resolving it.
9 Indian pangolin <i>Manis crassicaudata</i>	Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and USA	Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I	SUPPORT WWF considers that the Appendix I criteria are met for all Asian species and that the current zero quota arrangement has failed to stem illegal trade
10 Philippine pangolin <i>Manis culionensis</i> 	Philippines and USA	Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I	SUPPORT WWF considers that the Appendix I criteria are met for all Asian species and that the current zero quota arrangement has failed to stem illegal trade
11 Sunda pangolin, Chinese pangolin <i>Manis javanica, M. pentadactyla</i>	India, USA and Viet Nam	Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I	SUPPORT WWF considers that the Appendix I criteria are met for all Asian species and that the current zero quota arrangement has failed to stem illegal trade
12 Long-tailed pangolin, White-bellied pangolin, Giant pangolin, South African pangolin, <i>Manis tetradactyla, M. tricuspis, M. gigantea, M. temminckii</i>	Angola, Botswana, CAR, Chad, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo and USA 	Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I	SUPPORT WWF concludes that a precautionary reading of the available data justifies Appendix I listings for all four African pangolin species
14 African elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i> 	Namibia	Delete the annotation to the listing of the Namibian African elephant population in Appendix II, which would allow Namibia to trade elephants, ivory and other elephant products freely under Appendix II	OPPOSE Adoption of this proposal would allow legal trade to markets where there are insufficient controls to prevent laundering of illegal ivory. See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
15 African elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i>	Namibia and Zimbabwe	Amend the present Appendix II listing of the Zimbabwean African elephant population by removing the annotation in order to achieve an unqualified Appendix II listing	OPPOSE Adoption of this proposal would allow legal trade to markets where there are insufficient controls to prevent laundering of illegal ivory. See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
16 African elephant <i>Loxodonta africana</i>	Benin, Burkina Faso, CAR, Chad, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Uganda	Inclusion of all populations in Appendix I through the transfer from Appendix II of the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe	OPPOSE The populations on Appendix II do not meet the criteria for inclusion on Appendix I, and the proposed amendment would only serve to weaken the National Ivory Action Plan process. See our overall position on elephant issues in annex

A. PROPOSALS TO AMEND APPENDICES I AND II





PROPOSAL NAME & NUMBER	PROPONENT(S)	PROPOSAL	WWF POSITION
17 Peregrine falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Canada 	Transfer from Appendix I to Appendix II	SUPPORT WWF considers that the Appendix I criteria are no longer met for this species. At a global level the population is stable and most trade is in captive bred birds. The credibility of CITES depends on its ability to alter listings in response to positive trends as well as negative ones.
19 African grey parrot <i>Psittacus erithacus</i> 	Angola, Chad, EU, Gabon, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo	Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I	SUPPORT This species has undergone serious declines in recent decades, largely due to the failure of key range States to implement Appendix II. Despite a growing trade in captive bred birds, considerable trade in wild-caught birds remains a conservation concern.
36 • Nubian flapshell turtle <i>Cyclanorbis elegans</i> • Senegal flapshell turtle, <i>Cyclanorbis senegalensis</i> • Aubry's flapshell turtle <i>Cycloderma aubryi</i> • Zambezi flapshell turtle, <i>Cycloderma frenatum</i> • Nile soft-shell turtle <i>Trionyx triunguis</i> • Euphrates soft-shell turtle, <i>Rafetus euphraticus</i>	Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Togo and USA 	Inclusion of these six species of the Family Trionychidae in Appendix II	SUPPORT This proposal addresses the boom and bust nature of the freshwater turtle trade. Now that Asian species have been severely depleted, attention is shifting to other regions; in this case Africa and the Middle East.
42 Silky shark <i>Carcharinus falciformis</i>	Bahamas, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Egypt, EU, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritania, Palau, Panama, Samoa, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Ukraine 	Inclusion in Appendix II	SUPPORT International trade in highly valued silky shark fins – from largely unmanaged fisheries – has driven serious declines in the populations of these vulnerable species
43 Thresher sharks <i>Alopias spp.</i>	Bahamas, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Egypt, EU, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Maldives, Mauritania, Palau, Panama, Samoa, Senegal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Ukraine 	Inclusion of the genus <i>Alopias</i> spp. in Appendix II	SUPPORT International trade in thresher shark fins – from largely unmanaged fisheries – has driven serious declines in the populations of these vulnerable species
44 Devil rays <i>Mobula spp.</i>	Bahamas, Bangladesh, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Comoros, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, EU, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Maldives, Mauritania, Palau, Panama, Samoa, Senegal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and USA 	Inclusion of the genus <i>Mobula</i> spp. in Appendix II	SUPPORT Unmanaged mobula fisheries occur globally supplying meat to domestic markets, and gill plates to China, where they are a traditional tonic. <i>Mobula</i> have extremely low productivity and available information indicates serious declines in <i>Mobula</i> species populations – justifying the new listing. The <i>Mobula</i> listing will also support the existing listing for Manta rays, since their meat and gill plates look so alike.

A. PROPOSALS TO AMEND APPENDICES I AND II

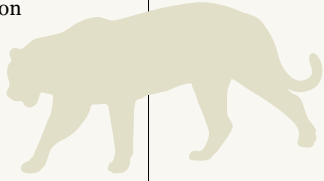
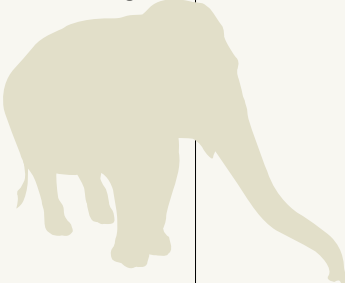



PROPOSAL NAME & NUMBER	PROPONENT(S)	PROPOSAL	SUGGESTED LINE TO TAKE
46 Banggai cardinalfish <i>Pterapogon kauderni</i>	EU 	Inclusion in Appendix II	SUPPORT This endangered species was proposed for Appendix II back in 2007 and the IUCN-TRAFFIC analyses indicated that it met the criteria. It was not listed because of opposition by the sole range State (Indonesia) but there has been no overall improvement in the management of the fishery since then.
48 Nautilids <i>Nautilidae</i>	Fiji, India, Palau and USA	Inclusion of the Family Nautilidae in Appendix II	SUPPORT International trade in chambered nautilid shells as jewellery and decoration is a major threat to these biologically vulnerable species
55 Rosewood <i>Dalbergia spp.</i>	Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala and Kenya 	Inclusion of the genus <i>Dalbergia</i> in CITES Appendix II with the exception of the species already included in Appendix I	SUPPORT Adoption of this proposal will be critical to efforts to halt the unsustainable rosewood trade. While many species are not in demand in trade, a genus wide listing is justified by reference to Criterion 2 b A and B in Annex 2 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16)
56 Bubinga <i>Giubourtia tessmannii</i> ; <i>G. pellegriniana</i> , <i>G. demeusei</i>	EU and Gabon	Inclusion in Appendix II	SUPPORT Demand for these timber species has escalated in Asia and regulation is required to prevent unsustainable trade
57 Kosso or African rosewood <i>Pterocarpus erinaceus</i>	Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, EU, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo 	Inclusion in Appendix II without annotation	SUPPORT With many other rosewood species nearing commercial extinction, this species has now become the most heavily traded hong mu species, with serious negative impacts on West African dry forests and the communities that depend on them
60 Agarwood <i>Aquilaria spp.</i> ; <i>Gyrinops spp.</i>	USA 	Amend the annotation to ensure wood chips are covered even when packaged	SUPPORT This amendment closes an enforcement loophole for trade in this very valuable aromatic timber

B. WORKING DOCUMENTS



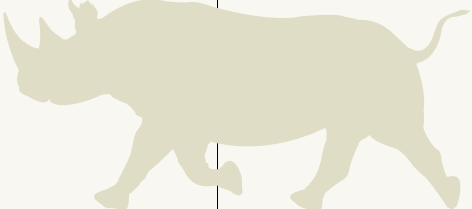
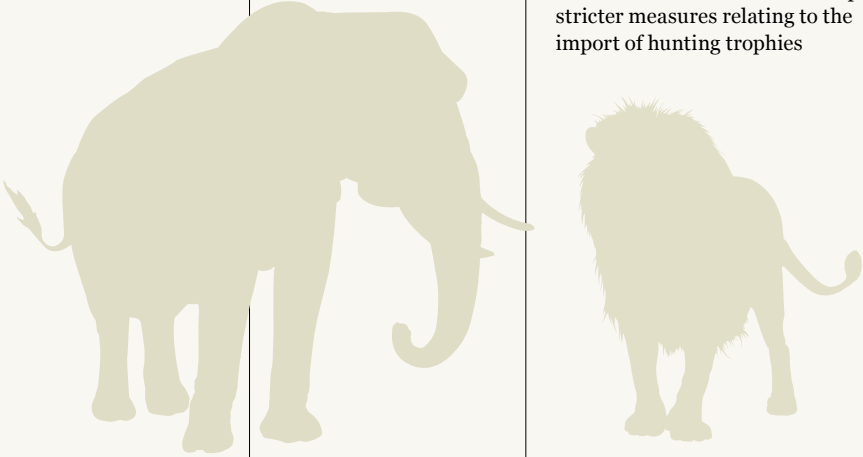
WWF is issuing these positions before all the CoP agenda documents are available. We will consider updating or supplementing these positions in the light of receipt of new agenda documents or other new information.

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
7 Administration, finance and budget of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties	CoP 17. Docs 7.1-7.5 	Sets out the current administrative financial situation in the Secretariat	CALL FOR MORE RESOURCES WWF notes that the core budget and staff resources of the Secretariat have declined while the workload – not least in terms of the volume of business conducted at CITES meetings – has grown. WWF calls on Parties and other donors to match their ambition for the Convention with sufficient resources.
8 Sponsored delegates project	CoP17 Doc. 8	Draft Resolution calls on donors to provide funds to the Sponsored Delegates Project as the preferred means of funding participation by delegates from developing countries. It further calls on countries who did not benefit from the project to disclose any other sources of funding	SUPPORT This measure will improve the transparency of the CoP voting process
13 Establishment of the rural communities committee of the Conference of the Parties	CoP17 Doc. 13	Document proposes the establishment of a rural communities committee to provide advice to representatives of legally recognized organisations of rural communities or Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBRNM) organisations on issues pertaining to wildlife conservation	QUALIFIED SUPPORT Unfortunately, a proposal to establish another CITES Committee is difficult to justify on cost grounds, but the CoP should look at any practical means of giving rural community groups an enhanced voice in CITES.
17 Livelihoods and food security 	CoP17 Doc. 17	Draft Resolution demands that greater account be taken of livelihood and food security issues in CITES decision-making	QUALIFIED SUPPORT Could be supported if amendments are made to ensure that the scientific criteria for consideration of listing proposals and other issues are not diluted. For example, the third operative paragraph should be amended to read: “URGES the Parties to take into account the need for inter alia, food and nutrition security, preservation of cultural identity and security of livelihoods when implementing CITES listings.”
18. Demand reduction 18.1 Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species 	CoP17 Doc. 18.1	Draft Resolution urges Parties to develop evidence-based demand reduction strategies where there is a significant market for illegal wildlife products	SUPPORT While the assumption that consumers will respond positively to information about the conservation impacts of illegal trade may not always be true, the wording of this Resolution is generally good. Other methods of achieving behaviour change should also be explored, and this should be discussed jointly with CoP17 Doc. 18.2
18.2 Development of CITES demand-reduction guidelines ¹ 	CoP17 Doc. 18.2	Document proposes a suite of decisions aimed at development and sharing of demand reduction guidelines	SUPPORT WWF supports these draft decisions, which emerged from consideration of demand reduction with respect to rhinos. But this document should be considered jointly with CoP17 Doc. 18.1

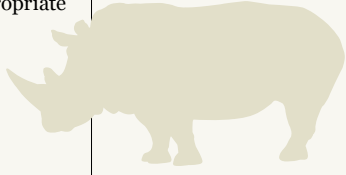

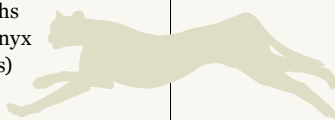




B. WORKING DOCUMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
22 National laws for implementation of the Convention 	CoP17 Doc. 22	Document reports on progress relating to Parties' compliance with CITES. While it includes a recommendation for Parties in Category 1 to "look at loopholes" in their legislation, it fails to mention that the legislation in a number of Category 1 countries only covers species that are indigenous to the country in question.	CALL FOR GREATER SCRUTINY When assessing Parties compliance with CITES requirements, e.g. by ensuring that the legislation affords adequate protection to non-native species, and that the provisions for timber and marine species are adequate
24 National ivory action plans process	CoP17 Doc. 24	Document not yet available	See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
26 Illegal international trade in wildlife	CoP17 Doc. 26	Draft Resolution calls for actions to combat illegal international trade, including enhanced information sharing and analysis, and support for local communities	SUPPORT This Resolution will embed some of the key policies developed at the international conferences in London and Kasane into the CITES process
27 Actions to combat wildlife trafficking 	CoP17 Doc. 27	(i) Incorporates amendments to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) providing for closure of domestic ivory markets; (ii) Proposes draft Decisions on a study of consumer markets for trade in specimens of CITES-listed species where international trade is predominantly illegal; and (iii) Proposes draft Decisions on a study into synthetic substitutes made from synthetic or cultured DNA of CITES-listed species	QUALIFIED SUPPORT On the proposed revisions to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev) CoP16, see our overall position on elephant issues in annex. The wording of this Resolution would require clarification to align with that position. The draft Decisions for studies on consumer markets and synthetics represent a good way forward on these issues.
28 Prohibiting, preventing and countering corruption facilitating activities conducted in violation of the Convention 	CoP17 Doc. 28	Draft Resolution calls on Parties, regional and International bodies to incorporate corruption explicitly into their anti-wildlife trafficking work, and calls on CITES to respond to allegations of corruption as a compliance issue	SUPPORT This is a strong text incorporating most of the best practice on fighting corruption. It would benefit from language on tracking financial flows and combatting money laundering.
29 Combating wildlife cybercrime 	CoP17 Doc. 29	Proposes a suite of draft decisions aimed at sharing information on cybercrime and the creation of a Standing Committee Working Group	SUPPORT These draft Decisions are a good way of taking this important issue forward.
32 Implementation of the Convention relating to captive-bred and ranched specimens 	CoP17 Doc. 32	Document proposes a review mechanism for oversight of trade in captive bred specimens when there are prima facie doubts about the veracity of the captive-bred certification	SUPPORT It is becoming increasingly prevalent for supposedly captive-bred specimens to appear in trade in response to restrictions on trade in wild specimens imposed by the Review of Significant Trade or stricter measures from importing countries. In many cases, the captive-bred certification is not credible so CITES needs to take steps to curtail the trade.

B. WORKING DOCUMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
<p>33 Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade</p>	<p>CoP17 Doc. 33</p> 	<p>Draft Resolution proposes significant amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) to make the evaluation of significant trade faster and more consistent</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>The slow pace of the review of significant trade has been a major obstacle to its effectiveness. We suggest the following amendments:</p> <p>(i) There should be a report back from the Standing Committee to the scientific committees;</p> <p>(ii) There should be “rolling” agenda items for species/countries that were excluded more than five years previously, and countries that set zero quotas; and</p> <p>(iii) The Animals Committee should follow the Plants Committee in appointing a coordinator for the process.</p>
<p>38 Identification of elephant and mammoth ivory in trade</p>	<p>CoP17 Doc. 38</p> 	<p>Document proposes draft Decisions and a Resolution to regulate trade in mammoth ivory</p>	<p>QUALIFIED SUPPORT</p> <p>WWF questions the proportionality and practicality of some of the measures, such as the proposed domestic market ban. However, the measures to improve identification techniques and to establish penalties for mislabelling of specimens – where such penalties do not already exist – are merited.</p>
<p>39 Hunting trophies</p> <p>39.1 Hunting trophies of species listed in Appendix I or II</p>	<p>CoP17 Doc. 39.1</p> 	<p>Draft Resolution sets out guidance for the issuance of export permits for hunting trophies, including the elements of a non-detriment finding and a requirement that the hunt provides tangible benefits to local communities, where relevant, as well as providing overall conservation benefits for the species, in the case of trophies of Appendix I species. There are also proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 13.7 (Rev. CoP16) to exclude hunting trophies from the definition of personal and household effects.</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>We favour merging the draft Resolutions in Documents 39.1 and 39.2. WWF agrees that hunting trophies should not in general be considered as personal and household effects.</p>
<p>39.2 Trade in hunting trophies of species listed on Appendix II</p>	<p>CoP17 Doc. 39.2</p> 	<p>Draft Resolution also advocates sound non-detriment findings for export of Appendix II hunting trophies and recommends that Parties take into account the effect on local communities when adopting stricter measures relating to the import of hunting trophies</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>WWF favours merging the draft Resolutions in Documents 39.1 and 39.2. While the effect on local communities should be taken into account in adopting stricter measures, it should not override real conservation concerns.</p>

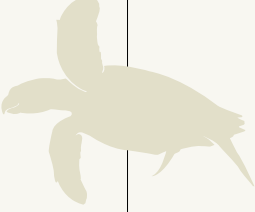
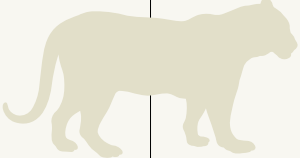


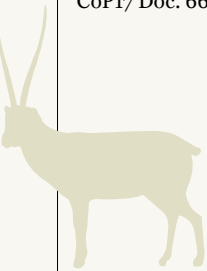
B. WORKING DOCUMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
40 International trade in live Appendix-II animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations	CoP17 Doc. 40 	Document proposes amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.20 on the export of live animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations, stipulating that such exports should provide benefits to in situ conservation, and that the exported animals and their offspring should not be used for commercial purposes nor be hunted	SUPPORT Some of the exports of elephants and rhinos under the existing Resolution have given cause for concern; the proposed wording would better reflect the spirit of the original measure and would take account of increased demand for the parts and derivatives of these animals.
42 Draft revision of Resolution Conf. 16.8 on frequent cross-border non-commercial movements of musical instruments	CoP17 Doc. 42 	Amendments extend the scope of the Resolution to instruments not personally owned by the musician, requiring presentation of the instrument on request only, and call on Parties to implement the derogations for musical instruments and to make relevant staff aware of them.	SUPPORT The credibility of CITES is not enhanced by over-regulating trade where there is a low conservation risk. Such over-regulation can create an unfavourable climate for enacting new regulatory measures that are warranted.
49 Illegal trade in cheetahs (<i>Acinonyx jubatus</i>)	CoP17 Doc. 49 	Report of a workshop on cheetah trade sets out recommendations for collaboration between range and consumer countries, and presents draft Decisions on the development of a cheetah trade resource kit	SUPPORT Although some of the recommendations could be stronger and could be presented in the form of draft Decisions
51 Conservation of and trade in <i>Anguilla</i> spp	CoP17 Doc. 51 	Document presents a suite of draft Decisions aimed at producing a study on trade in European eel and how the listing has affected trade in other <i>Anguilla</i> species	SUPPORT The fact that European eel is the only <i>Anguilla</i> species listed on Appendix II has always been a risk, in terms of identifying specimens in trade and in terms of trade shifting to other species
52 Review of precious corals in international trade [Order Antipatharia/family Coralliidae]	CoP17 Doc. 52	Document proposes that the Secretariat undertakes a survey of trade in precious red and black corals, and that FAO be contracted to undertake a study on such trade	SUPPORT This offers a measured way forward in terms of assessing the conservation impacts of trade in precious corals
54 Humphead wrasse (<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>)	CoP17 Doc. 54 	Document includes a draft Decision recommended by the Secretariat requiring a further report on work in this species at one of the Standing Committee meetings in the next intersessional period	SUPPORT The Standing Committee needs to retain oversight of trade in this species and, in particular, to monitor illegal trade in consumer markets.
55 Ebonies (<i>Diospyros</i> spp.) and palisanders and rosewoods (<i>Dalbergia</i> spp.) 55.2 Implementation of the Convention for trade in Malagasy ebonies (<i>Diospyros</i> spp.) and palisanders and rosewoods (<i>Dalbergia</i> spp.)	CoP17 Doc. 55.2 	 Document proposes new Decisions to reinforce cooperation among Parties in implementing the CoP16 action plan for Malagasy ebonies, rosewoods and palisanders	SUPPORT These Decisions are important to combat the ongoing illegal export of precious timbers from Madagascar






B. WORKING DOCUMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
56 Sharks and rays (<i>Elasmobranchii</i> spp.)			
56.1 Report from the Secretariat	CoP17 Doc. 56.1	Document not yet available	COMMENT There are legal and implementation issues in relation to the existing shark listings, including the role of Regional Fisheries Bodies, that need to be taken forward in the Standing Committee as a matter of urgency.
57 Elephants (<i>Elephantidae</i> spp.)			
57.1 Implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in elephant specimens	CoP17 Doc. 57.1	Document not yet available	See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
57.2 Closure of domestic markets for elephant ivory	CoP17 Doc. 57.2	Stand-alone draft Resolution calls on Parties and non- parties to close domestic markets for commercial trade in raw and worked ivory	OPPOSE For the sake of clarity, any provisions on domestic ivory markets should be integrated into Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), as proposed in Document CoP17 Doc. 27, rather than being placed in a stand-alone Resolution. With respect to the content of this proposal, see our overall position on elephant issues in annex. The operative text of this draft Resolution would require amendment to align with our position.
57.3 Ivory stockpiles: proposed revision of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in elephant specimens	CoP17 Doc. 57.3	Proposes an amendment to Resolution Conf. 10.10 calling for destruction of ivory stockpiles	QUALIFIED SUPPORT See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
57.4 Trade in live elephants: Proposed revision of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in elephant specimens	CoP17 Doc. 57.4	Proposes an amendment to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) to confine the definition of “appropriate and acceptable destinations” with respect to elephants to in situ conservation programmes or secure areas in the wild, within the natural range of the species	OPPOSE Favour the proposal under agenda item 40, which also encompasses rhinos
57.5 Report on Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE)	CoP17 Doc. 57.5	The MIKE Programme documented a considerable increase in levels of illegal killing of elephants in Africa between 2006 and 2011. Although average poaching levels have declined and stabilized since 2011, they remain higher than they were in the 2000s, and may still be having a negative impact on elephant populations in many parts of the continent. Although moving in the right direction, elephant poaching trends in 2015 remain a cause for concern. The MIKE Programme has found no evidence that levels of elephant poaching increased or decreased as a direct result of CITES decisions concerning the trade in elephant ivory. Instead, MIKE has documented strong correlations between: poaching levels and the quality of human livelihoods at the site level; the quality of governance at the country level; and demand for ivory at the global level.	SUPPORT WWF supports the conclusions of MIKE. See our overall position on elephant issues in annex.

B. WORKING DOCUMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
58 International trade in <i>Encephalartos</i> spp	CoP17 Doc. 58 DoP17 Doc. 59	Proposes a suite of draft Decisions directing Parties to report seizures of these cycad species, and directing the Secretariat to produce a document for SC69	SUPPORT Coordinated action and better oversight by CITES is necessary to stem illegal trade in these very rare species
59 Hawksbill turtle, <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> 		This document includes a suite of draft Decisions leading to a study on trade in marine turtles and enhanced cooperation with other relevant multilateral agreements, including CMS	QUALIFIED SUPPORT While the scale of illegal international trade in marine turtles is difficult to quantify, such trade is ongoing and needs to be addressed. However, since there is already a report on illegal trade in the IOSEA region, there is scope for the CoP already recommending actions in that region rather than waiting for the global study.
60 Asian big cats (<i>Felidae spp.</i>) 60.1 Report of the Standing Committee 	CoP17 Doc. 60.1	This document includes recommendations and a suite of draft Decisions agreed by the Standing Committee, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction to the Secretariat, in consultation with range States and ICCWC, to prepare a report for the Committee on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP16); and • Review of captive breeding facilities for tigers. 	SUPPORT These recommendations were the outcome of intensive negotiations before and during the last Standing Committee meeting, and should not be altered. In particular, there is an urgent need to quantify the conservation risks posed by captive breeding facilities.
60.2 Proposal of India	CoP17 Doc. 60.2	Proposes a suite of draft Decisions on sharing photographic databases, with a view to tracing the origin of seized tiger skins	SUPPORT This is a worthwhile and feasible enforcement measure
61 Great apes (<i>Hominidae spp.</i>) 	CoP17 Doc. 61	Unfortunately, a report mandated by the Standing Committee, to be prepared by the IUCN Primate Specialist Group and the GRASP Secretariat, could not be finalised in time for the CoP	COMMENT While important, the issue of trade in live apes should be viewed in the context of wider threats to ape populations, including the domestic bushmeat trade, disease, human-ape conflict and habitat loss
62 International trade in rosewood timber species	CoP17 Doc. 62	This document includes draft Decisions on a proposed study of trade in rosewood species not currently listed on the Appendices, including the genera <i>Pterocarpus</i> , <i>Millettia</i> and <i>Cassia</i>	SUPPORT Demand for rosewood is fuelling over-exploitation of a range of genera, and the need for CITES listing should be evaluated
63 Pangolins (<i>Manis spp.</i>) 	CoP17 Doc. 64	This document includes a draft Resolution on pangolins calling for improved capacity building, better oversight of captive breeding facilities, improved enforcement efforts, demand reduction work and international cooperation, as well as a draft Decision calling upon ICCWC to commission a report on pangolin trade for SC69	SUPPORT These documents and the listing proposals reflect the outcomes of a range State workshop in 2015. CITES needs to be more pro-active in its scrutiny of illegal trade in these very vulnerable and heavily traded species.
64 Tibetan antelope (<i>Pantholops hodgsonii</i>) enforcement measures 	CoP17 Doc. 66	Proposes an amendment to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP13) requiring Parties to report seizures to the Secretariat, which should bring these to the attention of the Standing Committee, and a Draft Decision directed at India and other relevant Parties calling for scaled up investigations of illegal trade	SUPPORT Recent trends in the production of cheaper shahtoosh products make it essential for the Standing Committee to have more active oversight of illegal trade trends, despite a favourable trend in the wild population

B. WORKING DOCUMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	DOCUMENT	SUMMARY	WWF POSITION
68 Rhinoceroses (<i>Rhinocerotidae spp.</i>) 	CoP17 Doc. 68	Supports extensive amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15) including strong new provisions on fake horn, illegal possession of horn, deterrent sentencing, organised crime, corruption and demand reduction, as well as scrutiny of countries implicated in illegal trade	SUPPORT This new text will address the issues of most concern to WWF since the emergence of the current poaching crisis.
69 Illegal trade in the helmeted hornbill (<i>Rhinoplax vigil</i>)	CoP17 Doc. 69	Draft Resolution calls for prohibition of the display of, or domestic trade in, helmeted hornbills, and sets out a suite of enforcement and reporting measures for follow-up in the Standing Committee	SUPPORT Illegal trade in this Appendix I species has escalated significantly in recent years and an enhanced response by CITES is required
71 Snake trade and conservation management (<i>Serpentes spp.</i>) 	CoP17 Doc. 71	This document includes a draft Resolution advocating a traceability system for snake skins and a suite of Decisions aimed at addressing illegal and unsustainable trade	SUPPORT The document is the outcome of long discussions in the Animals and Standing Committees and addresses key problems identified in the snake trade
74 Totoaba (Totoaba macdonaldi): Opportunities for international collaboration within the CITES framework 	CoP17 Doc. 74	Reports on nascent efforts to breed totoaba in captivity, and recommends a suite of information sharing and enforcement measures.	QUALIFIED SUPPORT WWF welcomes this document but feels that the recommendations must be strengthened in order to curtail the illegal fishing and trade of totoaba and the associated threat of extinction to the Vaquita
77 International trade in African tree species 	CoP17 Doc. 77	Proposes a suite of draft Decisions aimed inter alia at information sharing, identifying capacity gaps, and consideration of additional species that could benefit from CITES listing	SUPPORT Lack of capacity and CITES coverage in Africa is emerging as a key issue in the conservation and sustainable use of African timber species
78 Sharing existing written science-based rationales and scientific information for non-detriment findings made for trade in CITES-listed species	CoP17 Doc. 78	Proposes an amendment to resolution Conf. 16.7 on the making of non-detriment findings, calling for sharing of experience and examples via CITES website	SUPPORT This measure provides an important capacity building resource and enhances the transparency of CITES
80 CITES Appendix III: An added-value for the conservation of threatened wildlife with restricted distribution 	CoP17 Doc. 80	Presents draft Decisions to undertake a study on which species with restricted distributions might benefit from Appendix III listing.	SUPPORT Appendix III is under-utilised at present and this proposal could benefit many species in international trade
84 Decision-making mechanism for a process of trade in ivory			
84.1 Report of the Standing Committee	CoP17 Doc. 84.1	Document not yet available: The Standing Committee noted that the Working Group on this issue has been unable to conclude its work and agreed to seek advice from CoP17 whether the mandate should or should not be extended.	See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
84.2 Proposal of Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Niger and Senegal	CoP17 Doc. 84.2	This document questions the merits of a decision-making mechanism and argues for suspension of discussion on the topic	See our overall position on elephant issues in annex
84.3 Proposal of Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe	CoP17 Doc. 84.3	Proposes an amendment to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) setting out a decision-making mechanism	See our overall position on elephant issues in annex

ANNEX: WWF POSITION ON AFRICAN ELEPHANT ISSUES AT CITES COP17

1. Some Parties and organisations subscribe to the view that the current elephant poaching crisis was caused by the 2008 one-off ivory sale and is driven by speculation about the possibility of future legal international commercial trade in ivory. This conclusion is not borne out in repeated analyses by the MIKE programme (Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants) or the ETIS programme (Elephant Trade Information System), both of which are rigorously reviewed by donors and by the CITES Parties. It must also be said that neither is the thesis of some pro-trade advocates that a legal sale would reduce the incentive to poach. Most studies, including MIKE, ETIS and UNODC (in its recent wildlife crime report) conclude that the causes of elephant poaching are more complex. Nevertheless, they agree that corruption in range, transit and consumer countries, together with the growth of wealthy elites in East and Southeast Asia are fundamental drivers. As with rhinos and tigers, where there has been no legal trade since 1977 and 1987 respectively, poaching and illegal trade persist because of these factors, and because the relevant countries are complicit through corruption or neglect.
2. At successive CITES CoPs, the issue of countries that are complicit in illegal trade has received inadequate attention because the deliberations have been monopolized by proposals – coming in some cases from countries whose inadequate legislation and enforcement are contributing to illegal trade – to reinforce the existing de facto ban on ongoing ivory trade or counter-proposals from countries that wished to sell ivory.
3. At CoP16 all such proposals were withdrawn, and much more attention was given to the issue of those countries whose inadequate implementation of CITES rules was contributing to illegal trade. The National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process in CITES was one that identified complicit countries and forced them to draw up plans to combat illegal ivory trade. We believe that this process should be supported and should be the major focus of CITES attention. Unfortunately, it is at risk of stalling, due to the burden of work involved in ensuring adequate oversight of the quality of the plans and progress with their implementation.
4. We are concerned that CoP17 is likely to be a rerun of the old pattern, with proposals and counter-proposals on legal international ivory trade and related matters, all diverting the attention of Parties from the real issues.
5. With this in mind WWF is calling for:
 - a) A suite of Decisions that would give added vigour to the National Ivory Action Plan process;
 - b) Withdrawal of both the Appendix I listing proposal and the two counter-proposals to allow ivory trade; and
 - c) Support in principle for the closure of domestic ivory markets, recognising that pragmatic exemptions could be made where it is clearly demonstrated that a regulated domestic trade in a narrow category of product would have no impact on the illegal ivory market (e.g. musical instruments).

On the question of the Decision making mechanism, WWF recognises that the discussions on this issue were mandated by consensus Decision at a previous CoP. However, we question (i) whether it should be a priority at this time, and (ii) whether there is any prospect of developing a mechanism that will be acceptable to a sufficient number of Parties.

On the question of destruction of ivory stockpiles, WWF encourages steps to put ivory stockpiles – especially those of illegal or unverifiable origin – beyond use. However, there is a need for research as to whether or not high profile destruction events have a perverse impact on consumer behaviour in key demand countries.

1. A research paper by Hsiang and Sekar published in June 2016 by the US National Bureau of Economic Research without peer review, which argued that there was a correlation between the sale and poaching patterns, received considerable media coverage. Its analysis has been called into question by a number of statisticians and others for a number of reasons, including that it overlooks other possible causes of the observed trends, and that it fails to explain the increase in rhino poaching in the absence of any one-off sale.

Cites Cop 17 in numbers

17

CITES 17th
Conference of
the Parties

62

Proposals to
amend Appendices
I & II



182

Parties to CITES
including 181
State Parties
and the EU

35,000

Species of animals
and plants are
currently protected
under CITES



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To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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