

International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

European Parliament resolution of 24 May 2007 on the EU strategic objectives for the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held in The Hague, 3-15 June 2007

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP 14) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held from 3 to 15 June 2007 in The Hague, the Netherlands,
- having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas CITES is the largest global wildlife conservation agreement in existence, preventing the over-exploitation of wild fauna and flora through international trade, with 171 parties, including the 27 Member States of the European Union,
- B. whereas human consumption of natural resources, habitat destruction, climate change, over-exploitation of wild species and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora are the main causes of the impoverishment of the earth's biodiversity,
- C. whereas scientific reports predict that climate change will exacerbate the loss of biodiversity and the situation of endangered species,
- D. whereas public awareness in consumer countries has been, and remains, essential to the control of poaching and illegal international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora,
- E. whereas illegal trade seriously undermines the global agenda of environmental and developmental sustainability,
- F. whereas the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy provides the framework for responsible and sustainable management of natural resources,
- G. whereas a UK Presidency workshop on 'EU Wildlife Trade Law Enforcement Coordination', held from 25 to 27 October 2005, resulted in a widely endorsed draft Action Plan for Combating Illicit Wildlife Trade in the European Union (2006-2010),
- H. whereas CITES has a complementary role to that of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and other international bodies in the conservation of marine species which may be threatened by international trade,
- I. whereas the International Whaling Commission (IWC), recognised by CITES as the body having authority to regulate the conservation and management of whales, has decreed a worldwide moratorium on commercial whaling,
- J. whereas Japan has proposed in CoP 14 Doc. 51 that all cetaceans in Appendix I that are

managed by the IWC be included in the Periodic Review of the Appendices, that the CITES Resolution Conf. 11.4 setting out the relationship between the IWC and CITES be amended and that the IWC provide scientific data and advice on CITES listings of whale species,

- K. whereas the European Parliament in its resolution of 7 July 2005 on speeding up implementation of the EU action plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)¹ expressed its disappointment regarding the ‘extraordinarily slow progress’ in the FLEGT process; whereas in the absence of compulsory and comprehensive regulations prohibiting the importing of illegal and unsustainably harvested timber into the EU, CITES initiatives to regulate international trade in timber species are essential,
- L. whereas at CoP 12, contrary to the European Parliament recommendation, a decision was adopted to allow a one-off sale of government-owned ivory stocks from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, subject to conditions, and whereas the conditions for trade laid down in those decisions have still not been fulfilled,
- M. whereas seizures of illegal ivory have increased significantly since CoP 13, and 20 000 or more elephants are estimated to be killed annually; whereas further opening of the ivory trade would have a detrimental impact on already depleted and fragmented elephant populations in other countries across Africa and Asia,
- N. whereas the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals has listed the Great White Shark in Appendices I and II of that convention, whereas Australia listed the species in CITES Appendix III in 2001, with reservations from Norway and Japan, and whereas the World Conservation Union (IUCN) has listed the species as ‘vulnerable’ on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species since 1996,
- O. whereas Asian big-cat populations are under increasing threat and there has been a disappointing lack of progress in taking firm action to halt the decline of tigers and other big cats,
- P. whereas universal caviar labelling requirements were introduced in May 2005 to regulate the caviar trade,
- Q. whereas species conservation must remain the grounds for justifying listing decisions and whereas considerations on the impact on people’s livelihoods should be taken into account in implementing listing decisions,
- R. whereas there is nothing to prevent the EU from adopting stricter measures internally on imports of wild animals, based on species-conservation objectives or other grounds, such as concerns for animal welfare,
- 1. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to use the precautionary principle as the leading principle for all their decisions on working documents and listing proposals, also taking into account the user-pays principle, the ecosystem approach and traditional conservation principles;
- 2. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that any decisions aimed at enhanced coordination between CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions do

¹ OJ C 157 E, 6.7.2006, p. 482.

not undermine the nature of CITES as a global conservation agreement or CITES' strict conservation measures;

3. Strongly opposes the use of secret ballots and is disappointed that the CITES Standing Committee has not come forward with proposals to exclude the possibility of using secret voting in the decision-making process of the Convention;
4. Welcomes the proposals by Kenya and Mali to establish a 20-year moratorium on all ivory trade, supported by Togo and Ghana, as well as the Accra Declaration, which calls for a ban on the ivory trade and is signed by representatives of 19 African countries;
5. Recalls that the proposed moratorium will not affect the decision taken at CoP 12 to allow, subject to conditions, a one-off sale of government-owned ivory stocks from Botswana, Namibia and South Africa;
6. Stresses that acceptance of the proposal by Kenya and Mali would give time to refine MIKE (Monitoring Illegal Killing of Elephants) and allow the international community to change the focus of the debate from the ivory trade to the real threats to elephants and their habitats;
7. Urges that the decision taken at CoP 13 for the implementation of an action plan for the control of trade in African elephant ivory, including reporting requirements, be fully executed by African governments in collaboration with NGOs;
8. Calls on the Commission to support efforts to improve and monitor tiger conservation, for example by identifying legislative gaps, implementation difficulties, and enforcement and capacity weaknesses;
9. Calls on the Commission to report on progress in implementing the caviar labelling requirements, to encourage other key producing and consuming states in Europe, North America and Asia to implement the labelling system, and to strengthen the process for establishing sustainable export quotas based on the most reliable and up-to-date scientific information;
10. Urges the EU to support the following proposals for the CoP:
 - the transfer of *Nycticebus spp.* (slow loris) from CITES Appendix II to Appendix I;
 - the rejection of the deletion of *Lynx rufus* (bobcat) from CITES Appendix II owing to the look-alike problem with the European lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and the Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*);
 - the listing of the two shark species *Lamna nasus* (porbeagle) and *Squalus acanthias* (spiny dogfish) in CITES Appendix II tabled by Germany on behalf of the Member States;
 - the listing of *Pristidae spp.* (sawfish) which are all listed as Critically Endangered by IUCN in CITES Appendix I;
 - the listing of *Anguilla anguilla* (European eel) in CITES Appendix II tabled by Germany on behalf of the Member States;

- the listing of *Pterapogon kauderni* (Banggai cardinalfish) in CITES Appendix II;
- the listing of tropical tree taxa brazilwood (*Caesalpinia echinata*), rosewood (*Dalbergia retusa*, *Dalbergia granadillo* and *Dalbergia stevensonii*) and cedar (*Cedrela spp*) in CITES Appendix II;
- the listing of *Lycaon pictus* (African wild dog) in CITES Appendix II;
- the working document on compliance and enforcement tabled by Germany on behalf of the Member States;
- the working document on internet trade in specimens of CITES listed species tabled by Germany on behalf of the Member States;
- the four proposals by Algeria to list *Cervus elaphus barbarus* (Barbary red deer), *Gazella cuvieri* (Atlas Mountain gazelle), *Gazella dorcas* (dorcas gazelle), *Gazella leptoceros* (slender-horned gazelle) in CITES Appendix I;
- the working document on trade in traditional medicines tabled by Australia;
- the proposal by Kenya and Mali to establish a 20-year moratorium on all ivory trade;

11. Urges the Commission and the Member States to reject:

- CoP 14 Doc. 51 on cetaceans by Japan;
- export quotas for *Diceros bicornis* (black rhinoceros) for Namibia and South Africa;
- the replacement of all existing annotations to the listings of the Botswana, Namibian, South African and Zimbabwe elephant populations in CITES Appendix II to allow the establishment of annual export quotas for trade in raw ivory;
- the amendment to the annotation to the listing of the Botswana elephant population in CITES Appendix II to allow for the establishment of annual export quotas for trade in raw ivory, trade in live animals for commercial purposes, trade in leather goods for commercial purposes, trade in hides for commercial purposes and trade in hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes;
- the proposal expanding trade in wool from *Vicugna vicugna* (vicuña) to nine populations in Bolivia, as some of these populations are very small;
- the proposal to transfer the Brazilian population of *Melanosuchus niger* (black caiman) from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II;
- the proposal to downlist the leopard (*Panthera pardus*) population to Appendix II of CITES and to increase the export quota for hunting trophies from Mozambique;

12. Understands that CITES can best contribute to the livelihoods of the poor through ensuring implementation and enforcement of the convention and preventing unregulated and illegal trade, and therefore calls on the Commission and Member States to withdraw

CoP 14 Doc.14, 'CITES and Livelihoods';

13. Calls on the Commission and Member States to step up international cooperation in the implementation of CITES by developing a strategy with identified priorities to facilitate implementation and by providing additional incentives and financial support, particularly for training and technical assistance in species identification and enforcement measures;
14. Recalls that the European Union is one of the largest markets for the illegal wildlife trade and that compliance varies between Member States, and calls on the Commission and Member States to step up coordination of their efforts to enforce EU wildlife trade legislation;
15. Urges those parties to CITES which have not done so to ratify the Gaborone Amendment, which would allow the European Community to become a contracting party to CITES;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parties to CITES and the CITES Secretariat.