



2022/2681(RSP)

22.4.2022

DRAFT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B9-0000/2022 and B9-0000/2022

pursuant to Rule 136(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the EU strategic objectives for the 19th 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 Panama from 14 to 25 November 2022

(2022/2681(RSP))

Lídia Pereira

on behalf of the PPE Group

César Luena

on behalf of the S&D Group

María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos

on behalf of the Renew Group

Ville Niinistö

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Pietro Fiocchi

on behalf of the ECR Group

Anja Hazekamp

on behalf of The Left Group

B9-0000/2022

European Parliament resolution on the EU strategic objectives for the 19th 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 Panama from 14 to 25 November 2022 (2022/2681(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the unprecedented global decline of nature, which is the direct result of human activity and which is threatening around 1 million animal and plant species with extinction¹,
 - having regard to the key function of forests, which provide a habitat for more than 80 % of the world's terrestrial biodiversity², offering countless ecosystem services and ensuring a livelihood for many communities, including indigenous people,
 - having regard to the important role of oceans as one of the biggest carbon sinks, regulating the climate and absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere,
 - having regard to marine and coastal biodiversity,
 - having regard to the risks that the legal and illegal international trade in wild animals poses to the health of humans and animals,
 - having regard to the forthcoming 19th 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 from 14 to 25 November 2022 in Panama,
 - having regard to UN General Assembly Resolution 75/311 of 26 July 2021 on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife,
 - having regard to the questions to the Council and the Commission on key objectives for the Conference of the Parties to CITES in Panama from 14 to 25 November 2022 (O-[000000/2022] – B[9-0000/2022] and O-[000000/2022] – B[9-0000/2022]),
 - having regard to Rule 136(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the vast majority of species in trade are not protected by CITES; whereas international trade in such species remains unregulated, driving wild populations towards extinction;
- B. whereas the destruction of natural habitats and both the illegal and legal trade in and the use of wildlife contributes significantly to biodiversity decline, undermines global

¹ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services*, May 2019.

² UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), *State of the World's Forests 2020*.

efforts to combat climate change and induces corruption;

- C. whereas wildlife trade poses a potentially high risk of the emergence of zoonoses;
- D. whereas the EU is a major hub, transit point and destination for legally and illegally sourced wildlife, whether imported alive or as products;
- E. whereas pelagic shark populations have dropped by 71 % since 1970, and more than 50 % of shark species are threatened or near threatened with extinction³;

Introduction

- 1. Underlines the clear need for a more precautionary approach to the protection of wildlife given the continued threat posed by the wildlife trade to individual animals, species, and human and animal health;

Implementation, compliance and enforcement

- 2. Regrets the inadequate enforcement of bans and restrictions on the trade in protected species due to a lack of capacity and resources dedicated by the parties; calls on all parties to step up their enforcement of the convention;
- 3. Calls on all parties to increase protection for whistle-blowers, who play an essential part in putting a stop to the illegal wildlife trade;
- 4. Insists that transnational wildlife crime should be recognised as serious organised crime, which should be reflected in the allocation of resources and entail the active involvement of specialised police and customs investigation agencies;

Decision-making, transparency and reporting

- 5. Welcomes the annual illegal trade reports as a significant step towards developing a better understanding of wildlife trafficking and urges the EU and all parties to submit them in a timely manner;
- 6. Urges all parties and the EU to ensure transparency in the CITES Secretariat's activities and operations, including by publishing the annual illegal trade reports, and that data is uploaded to the CITES Trade Database;
- 7. Welcomes the amendments to Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 and the revised guidance document on the EU regime governing trade in ivory and urges the Commission to strictly monitor their implementation by the Member States; calls on the Commission and the Member States to transform these rules into legally binding legislation to close the remaining gaps;

Funding

- 8. Calls on all parties to guarantee sufficient funding for the proper implementation of the

³ International Fund for Animal Welfare, *Supply and demand: the EU's role in the global shark trade*, 2022.

entire convention, including its enforcement; calls on the Commission and the Member States to increase their financial support to the implementation of CITES decisions;

9. Calls for the EU and all parties to the convention to explore mechanisms for ensuring that external funding for CITES decisions is consistent with the priorities of their work programmes;

CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030

10. Welcomes the recognition of the interlinkages between CITES and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
11. Urges parties to achieve the aim of ensuring that all trade in wild fauna and flora is legal and sustainable by 2025; emphasises that the goal should be to eliminate illegal trade in CITES-listed wildlife species, not only to reduce it;
12. Stresses that CITES decisions should be based on scientific criteria aimed at the conservation of species and on the precautionary principle;

Strengthening the EU's role in the global fight against wildlife trafficking

13. Urges the EU to review and expand the existing legislation regulating the wildlife trade to reduce illegal trade by making it illegal to import, export, sell, acquire or buy wild animals or plants that are taken, possessed, transported or sold in violation of the law of the country of origin or transit;
14. Reiterates its call for the EU Member States to establish an EU-wide positive list of exotic animals that can be kept as pets without harm to populations in the wild and to European biodiversity;
15. Urges the Commission and the Member States to take urgent action in the framework of its commitments outlined in the EU biodiversity strategy to ban the import of hunting trophies derived from CITES-listed species;

EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking

16. Welcomes the revision and continuation of the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking; calls on the Commission to publish it without delay;
17. Calls on the Commission and Member States to tackle both online and offline trade in the revised EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking, ensuring that wildlife cybercrime is given the same level of priority as other cybercrimes that threaten human health, the economy, security and education;

Organised crime, cybersecurity and confiscated animals

18. Urges the Commission and the Member States to promote the development and adoption of an ambitious and robust protocol under the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which would include a provision criminalising the import of and trade in wildlife that has been taken illegally from its country of origin;

19. Strongly welcomes the proposal for the revision of the Environmental Crime Directive (2008/99/EC) to include most forms of environmental crime offences and additional penalties and sanctions;

One Health approach and role of CITES in reducing the risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with the international wildlife trade

20. Expresses its deep concern about the increasingly frequent emergence and spread of zoonotic diseases that are transferred from animals to humans (anthropozoonoses);
21. Emphasises the important role that CITES should play in preventing future pandemics as the international wildlife trade regulator;
22. Calls for the adoption of a new resolution that encourages parties to adopt a One Health approach to wildlife use and trade when implementing the convention, and to undertake appropriate risk analyses with respect to animal, human and environmental health;

Amendments to the CITES Appendices

23. Expresses its strong support for the listing proposals submitted by the EU and its Member States;
24. Calls for the EU and all parties to CITES to adhere to the precautionary principle with regard to species protection in all their formal positions on working documents and listing proposals, taking account, in particular, of the user-pays principle, the principle of preventive action and the ecosystem approach;
25. Supports the recommendations to strengthen the conservation of species, including sharks and rays, marine turtles, seahorses, Tibetan antelope and saiga antelope;

Species-specific matters

Sharks

26. Welcomes the Commission proposal for a Council decision which includes an Appendix II proposal that would bring the entire family of hammerhead sharks under CITES regulation;
27. Urges the EU to support the proposal led by the host country of the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Panama, to list requiem sharks (family *Carcharhinidae*) in Appendix II;

Big cats

28. Urges the EU to establish a Big Cat Species Conservation Fund that would, inter alia, support the implementation of recommendations arising from the CITES Big Cat Task Force Decisions;
29. Urges all parties to prohibit trade in the five species in the *Panthera* genus (tigers, lions, jaguars, leopards and snow leopards), which have an unfavourable conservation status varying from 'near threatened' to 'endangered';

Trade in live African elephants

30. Calls on the Commission to fully support and actively advocate the inclusion of all African elephants in Appendix I of CITES;

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31. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parties to CITES and the CITES Secretariat.