

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Bangkok (Thailand), 2-14 October 2004

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Other themes and issues

BUSHMEAT

1. This document has been submitted by Ireland (on behalf of the Member States of the European Community).

Background

2. At its 11th meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 11.166 as follows:

The Secretariat shall:

- a) *note the concerns, issues and suggestions contained in document Doc. 11.44 'Bushmeat as trade and wildlife management issue' and, taking this document as a starting point, convene a working group of interested range and donor States to examine issues raised by the trade in bushmeat, with the aim of identifying solutions that can be willingly implemented by range States; and*
 - b) *contact organizations such as the International Tropical Timber Organization, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and others that can make a contribution to achieve better and sustainable management of the bushmeat trade under their own mandates, and invite them to participate in the above-mentioned working group.*
3. The CITES Bushmeat Working Group was subsequently established and consists of representatives from Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. These Parties agreed to form a case study region to identify the scope of work and possible solutions to what is now commonly described as the 'bushmeat crisis'.
 4. At its 12th meeting, the Conference of the Parties noted document CoP12 Doc. 12.62 and subsequently adopted Decisions 12.19 and 12.20 as follows:

The Bushmeat Working Group shall be maintained with its current balance of membership and approximate size until the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties and shall continue, using external funding, to examine issues raised by the trade in bushmeat and to implement its action plan, with a view to proposing solutions.

Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall continue to facilitate and overview the work of the Bushmeat Working Group and shall report on its activities at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

5. At its 5th meeting in Douala, Cameroon, in January 2004, the Group discussed a draft resolution that could be submitted to the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which would incorporate the lessons learned by the Group during its work and identify the issues that the Group believes must be addressed if bushmeat is to be regulated in a sustainable manner and illicit trade is to be effectively combated. The draft resolution was subsequently submitted to the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties by the Secretariat on behalf of the CITES Bushmeat Working Group.

Consideration

6. The Member States of the European Community believe that the CITES Bushmeat Working Group has fulfilled the mandate it was given by the Conference of the Parties and broadly welcomes the recommendations set out in its draft resolution. However, given that the bushmeat trade is restricted mainly to domestic markets and that many of the species involved are not actually controlled by CITES, much more needs to be done to encourage other international organisations to recognize the important role they can play in providing assistance, especially to range states, in regulating the trade in bushmeat. The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), for example, should be urged to develop policies that will address this issue by protecting native habitats and promoting sustainable utilisation of forest resources.
7. Those organisations whose remits cover the many issues related to the bushmeat trade that fall outside of CITES need to work together to develop a co-ordinated approach to tackle the issues of poverty, habitat degradation, human population growth and utilization of natural resources associated with this problem. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has considerable experience and expertise in facilitating discussions between different organisations on the sustainable harvesting of natural resources. We therefore believe that the CITES Parties should call on the FAO to convene an international workshop to facilitate the development of an action plan, whereby the problems underlying the unsustainable trade in bushmeat can be addressed in a synergistic fashion.

Recommendations

8. Ireland (on behalf of the Member States of the European Community) therefore recommends that the CITES Parties should instruct the CITES Secretariat to:
 - a) write to the Secretariat of the Convention Biological Diversity (CBD) to draw their attention of the growing concern at the unsustainable trade in bushmeat species and to urge the Parties to CBD to make recommendations that will help to address this issue by developing policies to protect native habitats and promote sustainable utilisation of forest resources.
 - b) invite the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to consider if it would be prepared to convene an international workshop to facilitate the development of an action plan to develop a co-ordinated approach to tackling the issues of poverty, habitat degradation, human population growth and utilization of natural resources associated with the unsustainable trade in bushmeat;
 - c) invite the FAO to write to the Secretary Generals of international organisations such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the International Tropical Timber Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, including its Great Apes Survival Project, and the United Nations Population Fund to participate in this workshop and encourage other states who participate in these organisations to become involved in this workshop; and

- d) subject to the agreement of the FAO, invite all CITES Parties and other interested bodies to provide the necessary funding to support this workshop.