

PROPOSAL BY SOUTH AFRICA TO AMEND THE APPENDIX II LISTING OF THE SOUTH
AFRICAN POPULATION OF AFRICAN ELEPHANT, *LOXODONTA AFRICANA* TO INCLUDE
THE SALE OF LEATHER GOODS FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES

A. Proposal

Proposal by South Africa to amend the Appendix II listing of the South African population of African elephant to allow for commercial trade in leather goods.

B. Proponent

Republic of South Africa.

The South African population of *Loxodonta africana* is listed in Appendix II with the following conditions attached:

- 1) Trade in hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes
- 2) Trade in live animals for *in situ* conservation programmes
- 3) Trade in hides
- 5) Trade in leather goods for non-commercial purposes
- 6) Trade in registered raw ivory of whole tusks and cut pieces of ivory that are both 20 cm or more in length and one kilogramme or more in weight, subject to the following conditions:
 - i) only registered government-owned stocks, originating from the Kruger National Park;
 - ii) only to trading partners that have been verified by the Secretariat, in consultation with the Standing Committee, to have sufficient national legislation and domestic trade controls to ensure that the imported ivory will not be re-exported and will be managed in accordance with all requirements of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. 12) concerning domestic manufacturing and trade;
 - iii) not before May 2004, and in any event not before the Secretariat has verified the prospective importing countries, and the MIKE programme has reported to the Secretariat on the baseline information;
 - iv) a maximum of 30,000kg of ivory may be traded, and dispatched in a single shipment under strict supervision of the Secretariat;
 - v) the proceeds of the trade are used exclusively for elephant conservation and community conservation and development programmes within or adjacent to the elephant range;
 - vi) only after the Standing Committee has agreed that above conditions have been met. On a proposal from the Secretariat, the Standing Committee can decide to cause this trade to cease partially or completely in the event of non-compliance by exporting or importing countries, or in the case of proven detrimental impacts of the trade on other elephant populations. All other specimens shall be deemed to be specimens of species included in Appendix I and the trade in them shall be regulated accordingly.

At CoP 11 the South African population was transferred to Appendix II to allow for commercial trade in hides and leather goods, hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes, trade in live animals for re-introduction and a zero quota in ivory. At CoP 12 the conditions attached to the Appendix II listing of the South African population was amended to include the conditional sale of 30 000 kg of ivory. The proposal that was put to the vote at CoP 12 inadvertently changed the wording relating to trade in leather goods from "commercial" to "non-commercial". This proposal is submitted to rectify this mistake.

C. Supporting statement

1. Taxonomy

- 1.1 CLASS: Mammalia
- 1.2 ORDER: Proboscidea
- 1.3 FAMILY: Elephantidae
- 1.4 GENUS, SPECIES, AND SUBSPECIES: *Loxodonta africana africana*
- 1.5 SCIENTIFIC SYNONYMS: None
- 1.6 COMMON NAME: African elephant. (Ansell (1974) recognizes four subspecies of African elephant of which *L. a. africana* occurs in the southern African subregion.)

2. Utilisation and Trade

2.1 National Utilisation

South African National Parks maintains a large stockpile of elephant products in the Kruger National Park (currently over 30 000 kg of raw ivory, and approximately 50 000 kg of hides). Most of this has been accumulated during past population control operations, and from elephants that have died of natural causes.

Within South Africa utilisation of elephant products is limited. Hides from the Kruger National Park is sold to local dealers who tan and die these hides and then export almost 60% of the worked leather and leather goods. The rest of the leather is used to manufacture bags, shoes and other leather products but these have a limited market in South Africa. The biggest market for these leather goods is outside South Africa.

2.2 Legal International Trade

For the period 1989 (CoP 7) to 2000 (CoP 11), the South African population elephant was listed on Appendix I, and therefore no legal commercial international trade in elephants or elephant products (ivory or hides) was allowed. However, this population's status was changed at CoP 11 when it was transferred to Appendix II under the condition that no international sales of ivory would be undertaken before CoP 12.

Following the outcome of CoP 11 a total of 50 000 kg of elephant hide from the Kruger Park stockpile were sold during 2001/2002 by tender. The successful bidder, the Eastern Cape Company, Exotan, paid a total of R2.56 million for the seven lots of hides making up the total of 50 000 kg. Prices varied between lots from R32.80 per kg to R65.60 per kg. The total

quantity of hides sold amounts to roughly one third of Kruger Park's stockpile (a limit of 50 000 kg was set so as not to over-supply the market.

In 2002/2003 a further 50 000kg of elephant hide were sold. When the company exported some of the leather goods in early 2003 they were informed that South Africa could no longer sell leather goods for commercial purposes as the proposal accepted at CoP 12 stated trade in leather goods was for non-commercial purposes only. This created a problem for the local companies who manufacture leather goods from elephant hides, as they could no longer export these products for commercial purposes. This has a profound impact on the economy of the country and subsequently also on the biodiversity conservation community.

The current proposal therefore proposes that the conditions attached to the Appendix II listing of the South Africa population of *Loxodonta africana* reflects the conditions relating to trade in leather goods as adopted at CoP 11 and thereby rectifying the situation inadvertently created at CoP 12.

D. Summary

South African National Parks has accumulated a large stockpile of elephant products in the Kruger National Park since the transfer of the African elephant to Appendix I in 1989 (currently over 30 000kg of raw ivory, and over 50 000kg of hides). Most of this has been acquired during past population control operations, and from elephants that have died of natural causes. The record keeping and database comply with CITES specifications.

Within South Africa utilization of elephant products is limited. Hides and ivory from the stockpile in the Kruger National Park are occasionally sold to local dealers.

The gradual reduction in South African government funding of SANParks has left the organization suffering from budgetary deficiencies which could be considerably redressed should the current legal stockpile of ivory be sold. Revenues from the sale would all be used in the interests of elephant conservation.

The South African elephant population was transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II at CoP 11, on condition that it would not trade ivory internationally until after CoP 12. The conditional listing in Appendix II was amended at CoP 12.

Through this proposal, the South African Government, now seeks the approval of CITES Parties at CoP 13 to trade commercially in elephant leather products as was originally decided at CoP 11.

References

Ansell, W.F.H. 1974. Order Proboscidea Part II pp. 1-5, in *The Mammals of Africa, an identification manual*. Eds. J. Meester and H.W. Setzer. Washington D.C. Smithsonian Institution Press.

Owen-Smith, R.N. 1988. *Megaherbivores: The influence of very large body size on ecology*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Whyte, I.J., Biggs, H.C. Gaylard, A. and Braack, L.E.O. 1999. A new policy for the management of the Kruger National Park's elephant population. *Koedoe* 42 (1): 111-132.

Proposal 11.20 "Transfer of the South African population of *Loxodonta africana* (African elephant) from Appendix I to Appendix II (South Africa)" to the Eleventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Proposal 12.8 "Amendment of annotation 604 regarding the South African population of *Loxodonta africana*" to the Twelfth Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.