

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

This document has been submitted by Zambia.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

UPDATE ON ISSUES RAISED BY THE REPORT OF THE PANEL OF EXPERTS

(CoP15 Doc. 68 Annex 6b and CoP 15 Doc. 68 Addendum)

1.0 Introduction

The report by the Panel of Experts to Zambia to review its preparedness to downlist the African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) population from Appendix I to Appendix II has been published as CoP15 Doc. 68 Annex 6b. Also refer to CoP 15 Doc. 68 Addendum. The information in both documents indicates areas of major strengths and a number of weaknesses regarding the proposal to downlist Zambia's elephant population, Prop. 5.

Zambia wishes to inform the Parties that it has formulated strategies to enhance its preparedness to downlist and for future improvements in the conservation of the African elephant.

2.0 Proposal 5

Transfer the population of African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) of Zambia from Appendix I to Appendix II for the exclusive purposes of allowing:-

- a) trade in hunting trophies for non-commercial purposes;
- b) trade in live animals to appropriate and acceptable destinations, as defined in Resolution Conf. 11.20;
- c) trade in raw hides;
- d) trade in registered 21.6 tonnes of registered government-owned stocks of raw ivory originating from Zambia. This ivory excludes seized ivory, ivory from poachers and that of unknown origin, which is in compliance with CITES requirements

The proceeds of the trade will be used exclusively for elephant conservation and community development programmes within or adjacent to the elephant range in Zambia. Money generated from the sale of ivory, trophy hunting, the sale of hides and trade in live specimens would go a long way in financing conservation and management of wildlife resources, which is currently negatively affected by lack of resources.

3.0 Observations to the Panel of Experts Reports CoP15 Doc. 68 Annex 6b. Also refer to CoP 15 Doc. 68 Addendum

Status of the Elephant Population in Zambia

The elephant population is stable and viable, and possibly increasing in most protected areas in Zambia, except for the lower Zambezi ecosystem which has shown signs of decline. The population is about 27,000 individuals, estimated in 2008.

The case of Lower Zambezi whose population is reported to be declining coupled with a high carcass ratio is twofold. Firstly, the area is along a shared border with Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia. This ecosystem has an elephant population which is shared and migratory throughout the year. It is very possible to report increases and decreases on the population depending on the time of the counts. It is for this reason that the three countries have come up with a transfrontier approach to the conservation of wildlife resources along this shared landscape. Secondly, the high carcass ratios reported in the 2008 lacked the categorisation of carcasses (old, recent, fresh). With this lack of information, the data collected was a sum of all visible carcasses during the count. Actual mortalities have been obtained from the local Zambia Wildlife Authority Office and from a credible resident Non-governmental organisation (Conservation Lower Zambezi) who both reported a total of 38 carcasses between 2007 and 2008.

Zambia Wildlife Authority has since intensified law enforcement efforts in Lower Zambezi. A joint law enforcement patrol group which included the Para-military wing of the Zambia Police Service for concerted operations was undertaken in Lower Zambezi. Additional Zambia Wildlife Authority has increased patrol staff and patrol equipment support which has resulted in the low poaching incidences since 2009. Future anti-poaching methods will include aerial patrols to meet the geographic challenges during ground patrols.

The existing Elephant Management Plan which was formulated to enhance Elephant management is now under review to encompass strategies to meet the emerging challenges in elephant conservation.

Status of Law Enforcement

Areas that receive donor funding like the south Luangwa and Kafue protected areas have shown low levels of poaching. In these areas, funds from donors cater for patrol equipment and other law enforcement requirements. Lower Zambezi has very minimal donor funding and relies mostly on institutional support. The variation in availability of resources has resulted in the corresponding variation in law enforcement effectiveness.

Sustainability of total levels of offtake

The combined levels of legal offtake (natural mortality, Problem Animal Control and trophy Hunting) and illegal offtake is considered sustainable, falling within the 0.5 – 1% offtake level. The panel also reported that a proposed increase in the sport hunting quota to 120 animals would still be within this limit. The Panel noted that removals through Problem Animal Control (PAC), natural mortality and illegal killing would still be within this limit. Zambia's plan of action since 2008 is to intensify law enforcement in the area (lower Zambezi) which has been reported to have high levels of off-take. Zambia will further institute the annual quota of 120 elephants for sport hunting gradually as a precautionary approach not to add negatively to the declining trophy quality. Trophy quality will be accompanied by close monitoring.

Ivory stockpile management

The Panel reported tremendous improvements in the ivory stock pile management. It observed that ZAWA had made progress in documentation, ivory marking, storage, registration, maintenance of an electronic database to manage the stockpile and a good security system. The Panel also commended the sufficient security and stores facilities, adequate ivory marking and separation of legal and illegal ivory, including an operational computerised register.

Conclusion

The government of Zambia has other pressing social economic challenges such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, child mortality among others and therefore there is need for the government to venture into other sustainable means to get finances to fund conservation programmes. The elephant is one of the few economic resources that Zambia has, therefore, the prohibition of trade from one of its valuable resources would be iniquitous and detrimental to the elephant's own existence. It is also important to note that further financial stress is incurred in the storage of the ever increasing ivory stockpile.

Zambia wishes to inform the Parties that it has very limited resources to conduct monitoring of elephant populations due to the huge costs involved. Zambia, therefore, assures Parties that the revenues that will be realised from the once off sale of ivory and sale of other specimens will be used exclusively for elephant conservation such as enhancing the capacity to undertake monitoring activities and while the other funds will be used to support communities in order to improve livelihoods. The Zambian law provides for benefit sharing between the Zambia Wildlife Authority, the government institution mandated to conserve Zambia's wildlife resources for biodiversity and socioeconomic enhancement and the local communities where sustainable utilisation of wildlife takes place. The benefit sharing is on a fifty percent (50%) basis between the two partners. Benefits to local communities have been used for a number of projects such as building of schools and health centres. Financial benefits are further used by community resource boards to employ community wildlife scouts to enhance conservation efforts in Game Management Areas. The wildlife institution has created jobs to more than 500 community scouts due to this partnership. It is worth noting that a number of community scouts were engaged in illegal wildlife activities before.

An account exclusively for elephant revenues was opened in 2008 to increase accountability. All financial interfaces in Zambia Wildlife Authority are audited by the State's Auditor General's Office.