

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



Fifty-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 6-10 July 2009

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

GREAT APES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Conservation of and trade in great apes), the Conference of the Parties directs the Standing Committee to "review the implementation of this Resolution at each of its regular meetings on the basis of the Secretariat's reports."

Alert

3. In September 2008, the Secretariat published a six-page Alert on combating illicit trade in great apes. This contained information gathered as a result of an initiative by the CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force.
4. The Secretariat has published several similar Alerts, which seek to describe the nature of species-specific illegal trade, the countries involved, what motivates such trade, the characteristics of cross-border trade, smuggling techniques, etc. It understands that a number of agencies around the world regularly use the CITES Alerts in their risk-assessment, targeting and profiling, especially for border control.

Awareness raising

5. In November 2008, the Secretariat attended a meeting of the World Customs Organization's Regional Contact Points for Asia-Pacific, which was held in Seoul, the Republic of Korea. Eighteen countries and territories were represented at the meeting.
6. The meeting was attended by senior Customs officials who deal with international issues. It was, therefore, an excellent opportunity to emphasize the vital role that Customs and other border control agencies play in combating illegal trade in CITES-listed species. The input provided by the Secretariat appeared to be well-received and, because the meeting related to the Asia-Pacific region, the illegal trade in orang-utans was given particular emphasis.
7. The Secretariat includes information on illegal trade in great apes in all its enforcement-related presentations, so that the law enforcement community is reminded that such trade continues to be a threat to these species.

Capacity building

8. Capacity building for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and neighbouring countries, is described in the Secretariat's document relating to rhinoceroses for the present meeting (document SC58 Doc. 37). In its discussions with Interpol and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime on this subject, the

three organizations have noted that such capacity building should be of benefit to general enforcement of CITES and combating of wildlife crime. However, they believe that it should also be of particular benefit with regard to combating illegal trade in great apes, since many rhinoceros range States are also range States of great apes.

#### Conclusion

9. The Committee is invited to note the contents of this document.