

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



Sixty-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 August 2011

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 (CoP) directs the Secretariat to report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of the Resolution at each of its regular meetings and directs the Standing Committee to review the implementation of the Resolution at each of its regular meetings on the basis of the Secretariat's reports.
3. The Resolution contains a wide range of actions that Parties, the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and the international community should undertake. It does not, however, place any reporting requirement upon Parties or any entity, other than the Secretariat. The Secretariat does not suggest any change, but the absence of such a requirement places a potentially significant burden on the Secretariat in terms of contacting all great ape range States to seek relevant information.
4. The Secretariat suggests, therefore, that the Standing Committee consider what level of detail it wishes to be provided with by the Secretariat and whether it wishes, for example, that the Secretariat issue Notifications to the Parties prior to each meeting of the Committee, calling for information. The Committee may also wish to consider whether it requires a detailed report at each of its meetings, or whether such reports should seek simply to highlight current or urgent issues, whilst a comprehensive report is prepared for the Conference of the Parties.
5. For the present meeting of the Committee, the Secretariat has restricted its focus primarily to CoP Decisions relating to great apes and the most immediate threats to many populations of great apes, which appear to be poaching and illegal trade.
6. At its 15th meeting (CoP15, Doha, 2010), the Conference of the Parties adopted the following Decisions:

Directed to the Secretariat

15.44 *The Secretariat shall seek external funding to undertake, in conjunction with GRASP, ICPO-INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization, technical missions to a limited number of gorilla range States. The Secretariat shall report to the Standing Committee on the outcome of the missions.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

15.45 *The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the Secretariat and also consider:*

- a) *endorsing any relevant recommendation or measure that could be implemented prior to the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16); and*
- b) *requesting the Secretariat to prepare a report for consideration at CoP16.*

7. The Secretariat wishes to record its appreciation to the European Commission, which has provided funds to enable the technical missions to take place. GRASP, INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization have all indicated their willingness to participate. The CITES Secretariat's workload has not allowed it to organize the missions to date. However, it hopes to be able to do so in either late 2011 or early 2012. Having done so, it will report at the 62nd meeting of the Standing Committee on this subject.

Other related matters

8. In December 2010 and in January and February 2011, the Secretariat assisted the World Customs Organization as it coordinated Operation GAPIN. This was an initiative, funded by the Government of Sweden, intended to target illegal trade in great apes and also reinforcing integrity within Customs authorities. The operation began with a capacity-building workshop at which the following countries were represented: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.
9. The Secretariat assisted in delivering training to Customs officers and then provided species identification expertise during the operational phase where the countries in Africa, supported by Customs counterparts elsewhere in the world, targeted the smuggling of wildlife, with a special focus on great apes. The World Customs Organization also produced and distributed great ape identification materials. These drew upon work conducted previously by the CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force.
10. Operation GAPIN resulted in the seizure of more than 22 tonnes and 13,000 pieces of protected wildlife covering over 31 species, including one live Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*), two dead monkeys (bushmeat of macaque species), 295 pieces of ivory (statues, jewellery, chopsticks, etc), 57 kg of raw ivory, four rhinoceros horns, 4,726 kg of pangolin meat, 323 seahorses and one leopard skin.
11. In late March 2011, the Secretariat attended the First Technical Meeting of the CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and their Habitats, which was held in Kigali, Rwanda. Together with a representative of INTERPOL, it provided a briefing on the recently-established International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and explained how the Consortium might be able to assist countries in their efforts to conserve gorillas. A news item regarding the meeting can be viewed at:

http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2011/20110404_gorilla.shtml

12. The meeting was attended by nine of the 10 gorilla range States and the Secretariat learned, through country presentations, that poaching and illegal trade continue to be among the major threats facing this species. The Secretariat advised the Technical Committee of the planned technical missions that are required under Decision 15.44.

Recommendation

13. The Committee is asked to note this report and provide guidance in relation to future reporting by the Secretariat.