

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

Species trade and conservation issues

CONSERVATION OF AND TRADE IN GREAT APES

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

Background

2. There can be no doubt that great apes – our closest cousins in the animal world – are in desperate need of a coordinated and concerted conservation effort at the highest possible level if they are to have any chance of long-term survival in the wild. The Member States of the European Community are deeply concerned about their plight and have been active in urging that the most pressing problems, such as hunting for bushmeat and habitat destruction owing to illegal or indiscriminate logging, be addressed as a matter of urgency. Some member States have also directed resources in support of the World Summit on Sustainable Trade Great Ape Survival Project (WSSD GrASP), which is seeking to bring worldwide attention to the ape crisis, raise funds for conservation and develop a global conservation strategy for all great ape populations.
3. It would be a tragedy if great apes were to vanish from the wild. The Member States of the European Community therefore believe that all CITES Parties should fully support GrASP in its efforts to bring worldwide attention to the ape crisis, raise funds for conservation, and develop a global conservation strategy for all great ape populations. They would also urge all range states and relevant organizations to join the GrASP Partnership and call upon all Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to support the conservation of great apes and stop illegal trade in their specimens.

Recommendation

4. Ireland on behalf of the Member States of the European Community therefore calls upon the Conference of the Parties to adopt the draft resolution on the Conservation of and trade in great apes provided in Annex 1.
5. It has been decided to submit this draft resolution at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in its present form in view of the urgency of the situation concerning great apes. However, it is acknowledged that the first operative paragraphs concerning enforcement aspects have parallels in other Resolutions concerning Appendix-I species and that these issues would benefit from a more strategic approach. While this was too complex an issue to address in time for the present meeting of the Conference, it could be addressed at the following one. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Conference also adopt the draft decision outlined in Annex 2.

COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat supports the draft resolution and shares the belief that there is a need for a more strategic approach to Appendix-I species in a similar predicament in the longer term. It therefore also recommends the adoption of the draft decision.
- B. Where the text of the draft resolution is concerned, the Secretariat suggests the following changes:
1. in paragraph a) i), add “primarily” before “commercial purposes” in the first and second lines;
 2. in paragraph a) ii), replace “commercial trade” with “illegal trade”;
 3. in paragraph b), delete the words between “anti-smuggling measures” and “at international borders” as it is not clear what is meant by “centres where illegal trade in ape bushmeat and live specimens may take place”;
 4. delete the proposed paragraph c) under “DIRECTS the Secretariat to”, because the shipment of live specimens is dealt with in Resolution Conf. 10.21 and the disposal of confiscated live specimens in Resolution Conf. 10.7;
 5. add a new paragraph c) under “DIRECTS the Secretariat to” as follows:

c) report to the Standing Committee on the implementation of this Resolution at each of its regular meetings;
 6. in paragraph a), under DIRECTS the Standing Committee, replace “at each intersessional meeting” with “at each of its regular meetings” and add “on the basis of the Secretariat’s reports” at the end; and
 7. in paragraph b), replace “consider other measures including” by “consider measures such as”.

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES

Conservation of and trade in great apes

CONSCIOUS of the special importance of great apes, not only from a cultural and scientific point of view and as part of our natural heritage, but also as mankind's closest living relatives;

CONCERNED that wild populations of great apes [all sub-species of gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*), chimpanzees (*Pan spp.*) and orang-utans (*Pongo pygmaeus*)] in Africa and Asia are threatened by the combined effects of trade in live animals, poaching for bushmeat, disease and habitat loss caused by disturbance, fragmentation and destruction;

CONCERNED that almost all great ape populations continue to decline drastically;

AWARE that chimpanzees are now reported to be extinct in at least four of the 25 countries they once inhabited, that the Sumatran orang-utan *Pongo pygmaeus abelii* and three populations of gorilla are classified as Critically Endangered by IUCN and that the other species and sub-species of great apes are classified as Endangered;

RECALLING that all great ape species are included in Appendix I;

CONCERNED that illegal trade at international and national levels has been stimulated by opening up of forest habitats, increasing demand for ape meat, especially from urban populations both in range and non-range States and continuing global demand for live specimens, particularly juveniles;

COMMENDING efforts already made in a number of range and non-range States to tackle illegal poaching and trade, including repatriation of seized live specimens to the country of origin;

RECOGNIZING the need for international support to assist the 23 range States in protecting great ape populations, their habitats and related biodiversity resources;

ALSO RECOGNIZING the need for technical guidance to assist all Parties in prohibiting commercial trade in live specimens and products of great apes, including the confiscation and subsequent treatment of live animals;

NOTING that the World Summit on Sustainable Development Great Ape Survival Project (WSSD GrASP) Partnership led by UNEP and UNESCO draws on the scientific expertise of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and brings together range and non-range States, international conventions (including CITES and CBD), and a range of global and national NGOs;

NOTING further that GrASP convened an Inter-Governmental Preparatory Meeting at UNESCO headquarters in Paris (26-28 November 2003) to set the agenda for an inter-ministerial meeting to be held in Africa in early 2005;

AWARE of work to prepare and adopt National Great Ape Survival Plans (NGASPs) and their role in building capacity in range States;

NOTING the work undertaken by the CITES Bushmeat Working Group and other initiatives;

NOTING that the Ministerial Declaration made at the Ministerial Conference on Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (AFLEG) at Yaoundé, Cameroon, on October 16, 2003, included *inter alia* the intention to establish and strengthen laws and regulations for hunting and bushmeat trade in and around forest industry concessions and across borders, and to work through sub-regional as well as regional task forces on forest law enforcement and governance;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

URGES all Parties to:

- a) adopt and implement comprehensive legislation to protect great apes, including:
 - i) a prohibition of all international and domestic trade for commercial purposes, including sale, display, purchase, offer to purchase and acquisition for commercial purposes of wild-caught specimens of great apes; and
 - ii) deterrent penalties aimed at eliminating commercial trade in great apes and parts and derivatives thereof;
- b) strengthen enforcement controls, including anti-poaching measures in great ape habitats and anti-smuggling measures in centres where illegal trade in ape bushmeat and live specimens may take place and at international borders;
- c) pay specific attention to eliminating all sales of meat from great apes in consumer markets; and
- d) refrain from using great apes as diplomatic gifts;

DIRECTS the Secretariat to:

- a) work closely with Parties, and as a member of the GrASP Partnership, to develop and implement measures, including legislative and enforcement measures and regional and sub-regional initiatives, to halt or reduce and ultimately eliminate illegal trade in great apes;
- b) assist range States in the implementation of NGASPS where these include measures aimed at eliminating illegal trade; and
- c) in cooperation with GrASP, prepare guidelines, based on best scientific knowledge and practice, for the proper shipment and disposal of confiscated specimens of great apes, including repatriation, housing, welfare and transport;

DIRECTS the Standing Committee to:

- a) review the implementation of this Resolution at each intersessional meeting;
- b) consider other measures including technical missions, organized in cooperation with GrASP, followed by political missions if necessary; and
- c) report at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of this Resolution, with any recommendations for further action;

URGES the Secretariat, the Standing Committee and the Animals Committee to work closely with GrASP, and to explore and implement other measures through which the Convention can contribute to the conservation of great apes and to the promotion of public awareness of the threat posed to great ape populations by illegal trade;

URGES all range States, other Parties and relevant organizations to join the GrASP Partnership;

CALLS UPON all Parties to other relevant multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species to cooperate with GrASP in developing a common strategy to conserve great ape populations; and

CALLS UPON all Governments and intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations, as a matter of urgency, to assist the range States in any way possible in supporting the conservation of great apes – including the provision of funding, assistance with enforcement, training, capacity building, education, population monitoring, and the gathering and exchange of scientific, technical and legal information and expertise – and stop illegal trade in specimens of these species in order to ensure the long-term survival of all populations in the wild, particularly by working through GrASP and through measures taken to implement this Resolution.

DRAFT DECISION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Conservation of and trade in great apes

- 13.xx DIRECTS the Secretariat, in consultation with the Standing Committee, to examine all species-specific Resolutions concerning Appendix-I species with a view to preparing a consolidated resolution concerning the enforcement of trade controls of all Appendix-I species for consideration at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.