

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

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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 RHINOCEROSSES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. All range States of rhinoceros species, and all other Parties where applicable, are strongly urged in Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev.), to submit a report to the Secretariat, according to an agreed format, at least six months prior to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, detailing the following:
  - a) *the status of captive and wild rhinoceros populations;*
  - b) *a summary of incidents of illegal hunting;*
  - c) *a summary of incidents of illegal trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives;*
  - d) *the status, type, and frequency of law enforcement activities and monitoring programmes for all major rhinoceros populations;*
  - e) *the status of development and implementation of national legislation and national conservation action plans; and*
  - f) *the status of marking, registration and control of rhinoceros horn stocks.*
3. The Resolution furthermore directs the Secretariat:

*to develop a standard format for these reports, to evaluate the reports as well as any information it has received related to trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives, and to submit a written summary of these for consideration at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*
4. The present document is the report of the Secretariat in response to this directive.
5. The format of the reports to be submitted by the Parties has been established previously and they should contain the categories of information outlined in subparagraphs a) to f) of paragraph 2 above.
6. In its report for the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP12, Santiago, 2002) on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev.), the Secretariat expressed doubt about the value of the Resolution, in particular to the rhinoceros range States. The absence of reporting mechanisms meant that the status of implementation of the operative parts of the Resolution was particularly hard to evaluate and no role had been allocated to the Secretariat in this regard. The Secretariat recommended that the Resolution be repealed. During discussion of the matter at CoP12, the delegations of several Parties argued for the retention of the Resolution and the Secretariat withdrew its recommendation.
7. By the time of the deadline for submission of reports (2 April 2004) the Secretariat had not received from any Party the report called for in this Resolution. Subsequently the Secretariat received three reports from Parties. Swaziland briefly summarized the status of its southern white rhinoceros and

black rhinoceros populations. The numbers of both species are reproducing well and are fully protected both by legislation and physically within their area of distribution. Swaziland has reported no recent incidents of illegal rhinoceros poaching or rhinoceros-directed incursions into the protected areas where these animals are found. Namibia has provided detailed information on the status of captive and wild rhinoceroses within its territory together with details of population-monitoring activities, law enforcement measures and records and information on rhinoceros horn stock controls. Populations of both *Diceros bicornis bicornis* and *Ceratotherium simum simum* are increasing or have reached carrying capacity in their area of distribution in Namibia. Reported illegal activity appears to be at low level. China has reported that its rhinoceros horn stocks are under strict government control. All trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives is prohibited in China and since CoP12 no case of illegal trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives has been found.

8. The Secretariat thanks China, Namibia and Swaziland for their reports, the full texts of which can be found in documents CoP13 Inf. 21, 22 and 23. However, the Secretariat remains of the view that Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev.) is of doubtful value and that the reporting obligations placed on Parties are an administrative burden that brings little benefit. The fact that no Party submitted the report called for within the established timeframe and only three did so afterwards would seem to support this contention.

#### Recommendation

9. The Secretariat reiterates its recommendation that Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev.) be repealed or at least be amended to delete the paragraph starting with STRONGLY URGES and the second one starting with DIRECTS.