

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



Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 11-15 January 2016

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

ELEPHANT CONSERVATION, ILLEGAL KILLING AND IVORY TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16) on *Elephant conservation (Elephantidae spp.)* and Decisions 16.78 to 16.83 on *Monitoring of illegal trade in ivory and other elephant specimens (Elephantidae spp.)* as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

14.78 (Rev. CoP16)

In preparation for the 65th and 66th meetings of the Standing Committee, pending the necessary external funding, the Secretariat shall:

- a) *produce an updated analysis of MIKE data, pending the availability of adequate new MIKE data;*
- b) *invite TRAFFIC to submit an updated analysis of ETIS data and UNEP-WCMC to provide an overview of the latest elephant trade data;*
- c) *invite the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups to submit any new and relevant information on the conservation status of elephants, and on pertinent conservation actions and management strategies; and*
- d) *invite the African elephant range States to provide information on progress made in the implementation of the African elephant action plan.*

On the basis of the information specified above, the Secretariat shall recommend actions for consideration by the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Secretariat

16.78 *The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:*

- a) *convene a CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force, consisting of representatives from China (including Hong Kong SAR), Kenya, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam, in cooperation with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and, as appropriate, other Parties and experts, to:*

- i) *review existing strategies and develop new strategies to combat illegal trade in ivory; and*
- ii) *propose measures to African and Asian enforcement authorities to promote long-term collaboration between them, for example through exchange programmes or the secondment of law enforcement officers from destination or transit countries to source countries and vice versa;*
- b) *examine and advise about existing DNA-based and forensic identification techniques for sourcing and ageing ivory, identify relevant forensic facilities and research institutions, and consider the need for further research in these areas;*
- c) *convene a workshop for Parties on the use of controlled deliveries, in collaboration with ICCWC partner organizations, with the aim of expanding the application of this investigation technique, particularly in Africa and Asia; and*
- d) *develop, in cooperation with the World Bank and other ICCWC partners, an anti-money-laundering and asset recovery manual with a specific focus on wildlife crime, that can be used for the training of investigators, prosecutors and judges.*

The Secretariat shall report on progress on the implementation of the present Decision at the 65th and 66th meetings of the Standing Committee, with recommendations as necessary.

16.79 *The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:*

- a) *contact each Party identified in document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.2 (Rev. 1) (ETIS report of TRAFFIC) as being of 'secondary concern' (Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique and Nigeria) to seek clarification on their implementation of CITES provisions concerning control of trade in elephant ivory and ivory markets;*
- b) *based on its findings and in consultation with the Parties of 'secondary concern', develop country-specific actions and deadlines focused on ensuring significant progress by the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee on the implementation of measures to effectively control trade in ivory and ivory markets; and*
- c) *report its findings and recommendations at the 65th and 66th meetings of the Standing Committee.*

16.80 *The Secretariat shall contact each country identified in document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.2 (Rev. 1) (ETIS report of TRAFFIC) as being of 'importance to watch' (Angola, Cambodia, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates) to seek clarification on their implementation of CITES and other provisions concerning control of trade in elephant ivory and ivory markets, and report its findings and recommendations at the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee.*

16.81 *The Secretary-General of CITES, subject to any guidance from the Standing Committee, shall cooperate with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime regarding:*

- a) *the levels of illegal killing of elephants in Africa and the related illegal trade in elephant ivory; and*
- b) *the national security implications for certain countries in Africa of this illegal killing and trade.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

16.82 *The Standing Committee shall review the report and recommendations of the Secretariat concerning the implementation of Decisions 16.78-16.81 and Decision 16.83 at its 65th and 66th meetings, and determine whether any further actions are necessary.*

Directed to the Parties

16.83 *Parties involved in large scale ivory seizures (i.e. 500 kg or more) should collect samples from the ivory seized within 90 days of the seizure and, if possible, from all large seizures from the past 24 months. They should submit the samples for analysis to begin immediately to appropriate forensic-analysis facilities capable of reliably determining the origin of the ivory samples, with the aim of addressing the entire crime chain.*

3. In Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on *Trade in elephant specimens*, in the section “Regarding trade in elephant specimens”, the Conference of the Parties:

URGES those Parties in whose jurisdiction there is an ivory carving industry, a legal domestic trade in ivory, an unregulated market for or illegal trade in ivory, or where ivory stockpiles exist, and Parties that may be designated as ivory importing countries, to ensure that they have put in place comprehensive internal legislative, regulatory, enforcement and other measures to:

- e) *maintain an inventory of government-held stockpiles of ivory and, where possible, of significant privately held stockpiles of ivory within their territory, and inform the Secretariat of the level of this stock each year before 28 February, indicating: the number of pieces and their weight per type of ivory (raw or worked); for relevant pieces, and if marked, their markings in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution; the source of the ivory; and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year;...*

and

DIRECTS the Standing Committee to review actions taken by the Parties to implement the provisions of this Resolution, particularly – but not limited to – the provisions concerning trade in elephant specimens, and to report the results at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

DIRECTS the Secretariat to report at each regular meeting of the Standing Committee on any apparent problems in the implementation of this Resolution or in the control of trade in elephant specimens, and to assist the Standing Committee in its reporting to the Conference of the Parties.

4. At its 65th meeting (SC65, Geneva, July 2014), the Standing Committee adopted additional recommendations concerning elephants, based on its considerations of documents [SC65 Doc. 42.1](#), [SC65 Doc. 42.2](#) and [SC65 Doc. 42.7](#), which are presented in Annex 2 to this document.
5. The present document covers the status of implementation of the Decisions, recommendations and instructions referred to in paragraphs 2 to 4 above, with the exception of those relating to national ivory action plans, which are discussed in document SC66 Doc. 29 (i.e. Decisions 16.78, 16.79 and 16.80; and emanating from SC65: recommendations a), b), c), d) and n) based on document [SC65 Doc. 42.1](#), and recommendations a) to f) based on document [SC65 Doc. 42.2](#)).

Reports on elephant conservation status, the African Elephant Action Plan, MIKE and ETIS [Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16)]

6. In compliance with Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16), the Secretariat produced an updated analysis of data from Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE). It invited African elephant range States, TRAFFIC, the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), and the African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to submit the analysis and information that are referred to in paragraphs b) to d) of the Decision. The IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group was not able to respond to this invitation.
7. The contributions were integrated into a single report, which is presented in Annex 1 to the present document. It gives an overview of the status, threats and conservation actions concerning African elephants (*Loxodonta africana*); the African Elephant Fund and the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan; illegal killing of elephants (MIKE); legal trade in ivory; and illegal trade in elephant specimens (ETIS).
8. The report re-iterates the importance for Parties trading in elephant trophies of applying the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*¹ in order to assess adherence to quotas and compliance with the provisions of the Convention. It suggests in this regard that electronic permitting could facilitate an automated data transfer of trade data to the CITES Trade Database in near real-time, and could enhance transparency and traceability for all species with quotas and tagging/marking systems. Electronic permitting is discussed in more detail under agenda item 35 of the present meeting.
9. In the section on ETIS, the report recalls and stresses that Parties should provide information on seizures and confiscations of ivory or other elephant specimens to the Secretariat or TRAFFIC *within 90 days of their occurrence*. To remind Parties of this provision in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), the

¹ See Notification to the Parties [No. 2011/019](#) of 17 February 2011. These Guidelines are under review (See Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/058](#) of 2 November 2015) and document SC66 Doc. 30.1.

Secretariat regularly issues Notifications to the Parties, most recently in August 2015 through Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/044](#). In practice however, many Parties are submitting such data to ETIS with as much as 18 to 24 months delay, which seriously undermines the ability of the ETIS monitoring system to operate and track illegal ivory trade developments in a timely manner. Similar problems of late reporting are a recurrent concern for MIKE.

10. To address the issues of belated reporting indicated in paragraph 9 above, and make sure that as much data as possible in the correct format will be available for the MIKE and ETIS analysis to be presented at the 17th Conference of the Parties (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Standing Committee may consider the adoption of the following recommendation directed to all Parties:

In support of the MIKE and ETIS analysis and update for the 17th Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee urges all Parties to report comprehensive and accurate data as required by the MIKE and ETIS monitoring systems by 31 January 2016, and to conduct and release the results of elephant population surveys according to MIKE standards in a timely manner. It requests the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties to this effect.

11. The Secretariat notes that since 2008, the Standing Committee has received at each of its regular meetings updates on the conservation status of, and trade in elephants,² which have assisted the Committee in its decision-making and in monitoring the impacts of CITES measures concerning elephants. The Secretariat therefore considers that it would be important to renew Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16) at CoP17. Alternatively, the provisions in Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16) could be incorporated in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), and the Standing Committee could request the Secretariat to prepare a proposal to that effect for consideration at CoP17. The Secretariat stresses that, in all instances, robust and accurate reports can only be provided pending considerable external funding.

CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force [Decision 16.78, paragraph a)]

12. To date, the Secretariat has not been able to raise the necessary funding to convene a CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force and implement Decision 16.78, paragraph a).
13. However, the objectives of such a meeting may have been partially or largely met through the development and implementation of national ivory action plans, and the exchanges that occurred amongst the Parties involved (see document SC66 Doc. 29), as well as through the targeted support from, and collaboration with partners from the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC), as reported in this document (see sections below).
14. The Secretariat suggests that the Standing Committee recommend to CoP17 that Decision 16.78, paragraph a) be replaced by a decision, calling for a meeting, as necessary, of Parties concerned by the development and implementation of National Ivory Action Plans, in cooperation with ICCWC partner organizations and, as appropriate, other Parties and experts as follows:

17.xx The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:

- a) *convene a meeting of representatives from Parties concerned with the development and implementation of National Ivory Action Plans, in cooperation with partner organizations in the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) and, as appropriate, other Parties and experts, to:*
 - i) *review the development and implementation of National Ivory Action Plans and, inter alia, exchange experiences and best practices;*
 - ii) *identify opportunities for cross-border collaboration and regional cooperation, joint actions, and resource mobilisation; and*
 - iii) *discuss shared challenges and technical assistance needs.*
- b) *report on the implementation of the present decision to the Standing Committee at its 69th or 70th meeting, with recommendations as appropriate.*

15. At SC65, in relation to document SC65 Doc. 42.1, the Standing Committee endorsed a recommendation to request the CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force to examine the trade in pre-convention ivory and the

² See documents [SC57 Doc. 33.1](#), [33.2](#) and [33.3](#); [SC58 Doc. 36.1](#) and [36.2](#); [SC61 Doc. 44.1](#) and [44.2 \(Rev. 1\)](#); [SC62 Doc. 46.1](#); [SC65 Doc.42.1](#); and the present document.

possible laundering of illegal ivory into this trade and report its findings and recommendations to SC66 or SC67.

16. In light of the Secretariat's suggestion in paragraph 14 above, the Standing Committee may wish to request the Secretariat to consider the matter of trade in pre-convention ivory in its reporting at CoP17.

Ivory identification techniques [Decision 16.78, paragraph b)]

17. At SC65, the Secretariat reported that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), on behalf of ICCWC, was leading the development of "Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis".³ These guidelines were finalized and released in November 2014, and are available from the CITES website.
18. The Parties are reminded that, at SC65, the Standing Committee agreed to the following recommendation concerning forensics (based on its discussions of document SC65 Doc. 42.1; see Annex 2):
- e) *encourage all Parties to make full use of the "Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis" developed by UNODC, to promote the use of forensic analysis to the fullest extent possible to combat the illegal ivory trade;*
19. The Standing Committee furthermore agreed to:
- f) *request the Secretariat to compile a list of appropriate forensic-analysis facilities capable of reliably determining the age or origin of ivory, or both, for distribution to the Parties;*
20. As communicated to Parties in Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/061](#) of 20 November 2015, the Secretariat, in cooperation with UNODC, commissioned a global review of forensic laboratory capacity, which will support the implementation of recommendation f) above. The review will be undertaken in close cooperation with the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science (SWFS),⁴ and will not only be of benefit in the context of elephants, but also for combating other wildlife crimes more effectively. The review should identify facilities involved in the development or application of identification techniques, in a forensic context, to support law enforcement. The Secretariat met with senior representatives of the SWFS on 6 October 2015 to discuss deeper collaboration. This review is part of a broader project that will be implemented by UNODC on the use of forensic sciences in combating wildlife crime.
21. The Secretariat will report in more detail on this work at CoP17. With that, it considers that it will have implemented Decision 16.78, paragraph b), and that the recommendations emanating from SC65 indicated above have been acted upon.

Workshops on controlled deliveries [Decision 16.78, paragraph c)]

22. A number of activities have taken place since SC65 to progress the use of controlled deliveries to combat illegal trade in wildlife and implement Decision 16.78, paragraph c). Through funding from the Secretariat, the World Customs Organization (WCO) organized a workshop on "Controlled Deliveries of Illegally Traded Wildlife Products" in Bangkok in January 2015⁵ as part of its INAMA⁶ Project. The workshop was attended by delegates from customs, police and wildlife authorities from China, Indonesia, Kenya, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda and Zambia (i.e. countries that have the legal capacity to conduct controlled deliveries). Controlled delivery procedures and guidelines were developed at the workshop. It provided a valuable opportunity for participating officers to share knowledge and experiences; exchange best practices; and establish close professional relationships with their counterparts from other countries.
23. As a follow-up to this workshop, WCO arranged the deployment of customs officers from China to Kenya and South Africa in May 2015. Each hosting administration increased its controls of shipments and air passengers to detect illegal wildlife consignments that could provide an opportunity to initiate a controlled delivery. Despite the mobilisation of routine inspections, risk analysis, detector dogs and other methods, no such opportunity presented itself during the training period. Nevertheless, the training

³ https://cites.org/eng/ICCWC_guidelines

⁴ <http://www.wildlifeforensicscience.org/>

⁵ <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2015/february/wco-inama-project.aspx>

⁶ <http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/capacity-building/activities-and-programmes/cooperation-programmes/the-wco-inama-project>

allowed officers involved to share information and intelligence, and improve mutual understanding. The Secretariat thanks the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for funding the workshop and the international training described above. WCO will undertake further activities on controlled deliveries with funding provided by the Secretariat.

24. INTERPOL is implementing Project WAYLAY in close cooperation with its ICCWC partners. In its first phase, this project focuses on elephant ivory and rhinoceros horn. It aims to establish an international network of experts, harmonize procedures and develop guidance so that Parties wishing to apply controlled deliveries for cases involving illegal wildlife will have access to secure contacts and adequate tools.
25. The capacity-building activities relating to controlled deliveries are continuing, and the Secretariat will provide further updates at CoP17. This will complement the information on the implementation of Decision 16.78, paragraph c) provided above. The Secretariat considers that this component of Decision 16.78 has been implemented.

Anti-money-laundering and asset recovery manual [Decision 16.78, paragraph d)]

26. At the request of the Secretariat, the World Bank is leading for ICCWC the development of an anti-money-laundering learning programme for investigators, prosecutors and judges, with a specific focus on illegal trade in wildlife. The programme will consist of two complementary components: a series of anti-money-laundering training modules (covering subjects such as fundamentals of anti-money-laundering, domestic and international cooperation, and planning investigations); and an anti-money-laundering case simulation. This project was made possible through funding provided to the Secretariat by the United Kingdom and the European Union, with additional World Bank funding from a GEF project. The learning materials, which will be made available on the CITES Virtual College, are expected to be available by CoP17. Following the completion of the learning materials and, subject to the availability of funding for this purpose, a further phase of this project is also anticipated, which will entail on-the-ground training of relevant stakeholders, targeted to regional and national contexts.
27. The Secretariat will provide further information on its activities relevant to the implementation of Decision 16.78, paragraph d) at CoP17. The Secretariat considers that this aspect of Decision 16.78 has been fully implemented.

Collaboration with UNODC [Decision 16.81]

28. It is now well recognized that illegal trade in wildlife involves transnational organized crime groups and, in some cases, rebel militia and rogue elements of the military. In light of the serious nature of illegal trade in wildlife, the high levels of poaching, and its adverse economic, social and environmental impacts, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in July 2015 unanimously adopted a Resolution on 'Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife'⁷. The UNGA expresses particular concern over the alarmingly high levels of illegal killings of elephants in Africa. The Resolution, which has 18 preambular and 17 operative paragraphs, call upon Member States, *inter alia*, to make illicit trafficking in protected species of wild fauna and flora involving organized criminal groups a serious crime.
29. On 25 September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted new global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs specifically address tackling illegal trade in wildlife through specific Targets under Goal 15⁸ (see document SC66 Doc. 13).
30. The Secretary-General of CITES participated in a number of events since SC65 that raised awareness of the serious nature of illegal trade in wildlife involving transnational organized crime groups, including the Annual General Meeting of the International Air Transport Association (IATA-AGM 2015; Miami, June 2015), the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) Global Aviation Summit (Geneva, September 2015), the XIV World Forestry Congress (Durban, September 2015) and others. The Secretariat further continued to maintain a close working relationship with UNODC. The Secretary-General of CITES and the Executive Director of UNODC participated together in a number of important events to raise awareness about the scale and nature illegal trade in wildlife,⁹ the need for increased political

⁷ https://cites.org/eng/unga_resolution_wildlife_trafficking_150730

⁸ https://cites.org/eng/CITES_welcomes_UN_SDGs_with_target_to_end_poaching_trafficking_wildlife_25092015

⁹ https://cites.org/eng/iccwc_crime_congress_2015

commitment to combat it,¹⁰ and the importance of addressing corruption (at the 6th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption).¹¹

31. The Secretariat reports in more detail on these activities in document SC65 Doc. 32.1 on *Enforcement matters*. It considers that Decision 16.81 has been implemented.

Large-scale ivory seizures [Decision 16.83]

32. Updated information on large-scale ivory seizures (defined as 500 kg or more of raw or worked ivory in raw ivory equivalent terms) is contained in the report in Annex 1 to this document. The frequency of large-scale ivory seizures that have been reported to ETIS since 2009 has remained high, with 2013 reaching the second highest level (45,178 Raw Ivory Equivalent (RIE) kg) reported by the CITES Parties. While recognizing that the year is still data deficient, the report emphasises that the number of large ivory seizures in 2014 appears to have decreased (the reported volume dropped by nearly 40 tonnes to 17,894 RIE kg).
33. In this regard, the analysis notes an apparent increase in illegal ivory trade activity in the medium raw ivory weight class (10-100 kg), which could, to some degree, be explained as an example of criminals adapting their means of illicit trafficking away from container shipping in response to the increasing number of large-scale seizures that have been interdicted at both exit and entry ports around the world. Since CoP16, the use of couriers or groups of couriers to move smaller and more diffuse quantities of ivory through air travel channels has been increasingly noted. Like large-scale movements of ivory, these illegal ivory trade movements are believed to reflect organised criminal activity. The report suggests that this is a consideration that bears careful attention going forward.
34. The Secretariat believes that the “*Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis*”, described in paragraph 17 above, is a valuable tool to assist Parties confronted with large-scale ivory seizures in using forensics. Once completed, the global review of forensic laboratory capacity, undertaken by the Secretariat and UNODC as mentioned in paragraph 20 above, should allow the further expansion of wildlife forensics to combat illegal trade in wildlife, in particular illegal ivory trade.
35. In January 2015, ICCWC supported the deployment of a Wildlife Incident Support Team (WIST), led by INTERPOL, to the United Arab Emirates, to assist national authorities in collecting DNA samples from a large-scale ivory seizure for forensic analysis. The WIST was successfully completed and training on sample collection was provided to national authorities. Footage was also recorded during the WIST, and ICCWC was at the time of writing finalizing the development of a training video, which will complement the “*Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis*”.
36. The Secretariat would like to take this opportunity to remind Parties that at SC65, the Standing Committee also agreed to the following recommendations (based on its discussions of document SC65 Doc. 42.1; see Annex 2):
- g) *encourage Parties that submit ivory samples for analysis in accordance with Decision 16.83, to use the forensic analysis results as suggested in paragraphs 39 and 40 of document SC65 Doc. 42.1*
 - h) *encourage Parties to share with the Secretariat and affected countries of origin information on the origin of ivory specimens, arising from forensic analysis of ivory samples, for use in further investigation and prosecution in these countries and by the MIKE and ETIS programmes and their reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties*
 - i) *encourage Parties affected by illegal ivory trade, as a source, transit or destination country, to develop national sampling and funding strategies aimed at promoting the collection of samples from seized ivory for forensic analysis both from large ivory seizures and from stockpiles;*
 - j) *encourage Parties and the donor community to provide financial support to the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC) and to Parties and territories that make large ivory seizures (i.e. 500 kg or more) but lack the capacity and financial resources to*

¹⁰ https://cites.org/eng/un_system_and_intl_orgs_applaud_sust_dev_commitments_by_govs_to_battle_illegal_wildlife_trade_27092015

¹¹ https://cites.org/eng/joint_statement_unodc_cites_on_corruption_wildlife_03112015

implement the provisions of Decision 16.83 to support the collection and analysis of ivory samples from such seizures;

- k) encourage Parties and the donor community to provide financial support to Parties and territories that wish to collect samples from their national ivory stockpiles for forensic analysis but lack the capacity and financial resources to do so.*

37. It is the view of the Secretariat that a consolidated version of the provisions directed to the Parties in Decision 16.83 and recommendations g) to k) in paragraph 36 above, could be incorporated in, or merged with the provisions in the section *Regarding the traceability of elephant specimens in trade* in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16). It suggests that the Standing Committee request the Secretariat to prepare a proposal to that effect for consideration at CoP17.

Illegal trade in live Asian elephants

38. In document [SC65 Doc. 42.9](#), concerns were expressed that illegal trade in live Asian elephants might be increasing. The Standing Committee noted this report and agreed that the Secretariat, pending the availability of external resources, conduct a review of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), in particular the trade in live elephants, in Asian Elephant range States and other relevant Parties, and report its findings at the present meeting.
39. Due to a lack of external resources, the Secretariat has not been able to conduct this review. However, IUCN kindly agreed to assist with the implementation of the Standing Committee's recommendation and collaborate with the Secretariat by seeking funding and contracting appropriate consultants for undertaking the review, thereby also avoiding possible administrative problems at the Secretariat due to the roll out of Umoja.¹² The review will focus on current legislative, regulatory, enforcement and other measures and initiatives that are in place in Asian elephant range States to address or prevent illegal trade in live Asian elephants.
40. IUCN committed to provide the results of its review to the Secretariat in a timely manner, well in advance of the deadline for the submission of working documents for CoP17. The Secretariat proposes to report on the findings of this work, with its recommendations, at CoP17. This would also assist the Standing Committee in its reporting at CoP17 on the implementation of the relevant provision under the section *Regarding trade in elephant specimens* in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16).

Ivory stockpiles

41. Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) urges Parties to maintain an inventory of government-held stockpiles of ivory and, where possible, of significant privately held stockpiles of ivory within their territory, and inform the Secretariat of the level of this stock each year before 28 February, indicating: the number of pieces and their weight per type of ivory (raw or worked); for relevant pieces, and if marked, their markings in accordance with the provisions of the Resolution; the source of the ivory; and the reasons for any significant changes in the stockpile compared to the preceding year.
42. On 21 January 2015, the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/005](#) to remind Parties of the above reporting obligation. The Notification also contained a model table in an Annex that Parties could use for this purpose. At the time of writing, the Secretariat had received replies from 24 Parties (12 in Africa, 6 in Asia, 5 in Europe and 1 in Oceania). This is an improvement from 2014 when only 10 Parties responded. However, not all replies contained all the information requested in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), and some did not provide the total amount of such stocks.
43. The Secretariat is aware of a number of thefts of ivory from government-held stocks in recent years, including one since SC65. For this reason, it has not included in the present document details of the information that it has received from the Parties, in order to avoid elevating potential security risks. Some Parties reported that no stockpiles existed in their territory and others provided lists of ivory tusks and pieces, but no total figure. However, the total amount declared from all Parties was well over 100 tonnes. At the same time, several Parties have chosen to publicly destroy stocks of ivory since SC65, including China, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Thailand, the United States of America and the United Arab Emirates. The total quantity declared as destroyed was over 30 tonnes. In response to a number of enquiries, the CITES Secretary-General published a paper on the relevant provisions of CITES as they

¹² *Umoja is a United Nations-wide enterprise resource planning system that has had an impact on the timely implementation of the Secretariat's work programme. See Notification to the Parties [No. 2015/018](#) of 25 March 2015.*

relate to the destruction of ivory stockpiles.¹³ Upon the request of the Party carrying out the destruction, he also attended and spoke at several public events or provided a written statement, all of which were published on the CITES website.¹⁴

45. As requested by SC65, the Secretariat has made country-specific data from the ivory stock declarations of Parties available to MIKE and ETIS for analysis. It is the view of the Secretariat such data should be considered for each MIKE and ETIS analysis, and that a provision to that effect could be incorporated in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16). It suggests that the Standing Committee request the Secretariat to prepare a proposal accordingly for consideration at CoP17.
46. Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) directs the Secretariat, subject to available funding, to provide technical assistance to Parties to support, where requested, the security and registration of government-held ivory stockpiles. The Secretariat received one request for assistance with an inventory of government-held stockpiles of ivory and one request to be an observer at such an inventory. Regrettably, no external funding was available to respond positively to these requests.
47. At SC65, the Committee requested the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to provide guidance, in accordance with the provisions of Resolutions Conf. 9.10 (Rev. CoP15) and Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), on “best practices” for the management of legal and illegal ivory stockpiles, make this available to Parties, and report at the present meeting. No external funds have been received for the production of this guidance. The Secretariat suggests that if the Committee wishes the Secretariat to pursue this activity, it would be appropriate for it to propose a Decision to this effect for consideration at CoP17.

Wholesale price data for pre-convention raw elephant ivory

48. At SC65, the Committee encouraged all Parties in whose territory legal ivory markets exist or that export pre-convention raw elephant ivory for commercial purposes, to provide wholesale price data on such sales of raw ivory to the Secretariat, for integration into MIKE and ETIS analyses.
49. The information on wholesale price data that Parties may be able to share will be incorporated in the MIKE and ETIS analyses for CoP17, acknowledging that the World Bank is collecting and examining such information as well.

Reporting by the Standing Committee to CoP17

50. The reporting responsibilities in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), as revised at CoP16, direct the Standing Committee to *review actions taken by the Parties to implement the provisions of this Resolution, particularly – but not limited to – the provisions concerning trade in elephant specimens, and to report the results at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties*. The Secretariat is directed to assist the Standing Committee in its reporting to the Conference of the Parties.
51. In order to assist the Standing Committee in its reporting at CoP17, the Committee could request the Secretariat to draft a report on its behalf, summarizing the actions decided and determinations made by the Standing Committee regarding Decisions 16.78-16.81 and 16.83 at its 64th, 65th and 66th meetings. This report would underscore the implementation by the Standing Committee of Decision 16.82.
52. The Standing Committee is reminded that with regard to reporting on MIKE and ETIS, Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) instructs the CITES Secretariat to *report on information collected through ETIS and the ETIS analysis at relevant meetings of the Standing Committee and at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and to report on information collected through MIKE and MIKE analyses at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties*.

Conclusions and final remarks

53. The high levels of elephant poaching and illegal trade in ivory continue to receive significant global attention. This document gives examples of the variety and scope of the CITES response, involving elephant range States, Parties, ICCWC partners and a very large number of national and international bodies and organisations. The implementation of targeted National Ivory Action Plans (see document SC66 Doc. 29) adds to the massive collective effort that is underway to reverse negative trends.

¹³ <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2014/10/20/cites-and-confiscated-ivory-and-rhino-horn-to-destroy-or-not-destroy/#.VEUOAoikaVw.twitter>

¹⁴ <https://cites.org/eng/news/sg/index.php>

54. This collective effort will need to be maintained. Annex 1 suggests that levels of elephant poaching in Africa have declined somewhat since the peak reached 2011, but remain at unsustainably high levels. This trend appears to correlate with population declines in parts of the continent. At the same time, the overall trend for illegal ivory trade transactions shows a progressive upward projection from 2007 through to 2013, perhaps signalling time lags between poaching and export of illegal ivory. Trends for 2014 and 2015, being data deficient at the moment, have yet to be established. The large-scale ivory seizures, and the shifts in smuggling routes and trafficking techniques when facing enforcement actions, suggest continued organized criminal activity, and the need for a well-coordinated response.

Recommendations

55. The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this document.

56. The Standing Committee is further invited to:

- a) agree that Decisions 16.78, paragraphs b), c) and d), and Decision 16.81 can be considered concluded;
- b) advise the Secretariat with regard to the matters brought up in paragraphs 11 and 47;
- c) consider supporting the recommendations of the Secretariat in paragraphs 14, 16, 37, 40, 45 and 51 of the present document.

STATUS OF ELEPHANT POPULATIONS, LEVELS OF ILLEGAL KILLING AND THE TRADE IN IVORY:
A REPORT TO THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE
November 2015

Introduction

Decision 14.78 (Rev. CoP16) directs the Secretariat, in preparation for the 65th and 66th meetings of the Standing Committee, to produce an updated analysis of MIKE data, and to invite TRAFFIC to submit an updated analysis of ETIS data; UNEP-WCMC to provide an overview of the latest elephant trade data; the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups to submit new and relevant information on the conservation status of elephants, and on pertinent conservation actions and management strategies; and the African elephant range States to provide information on progress in the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan. This document has been prepared accordingly, and is presented as an integrated piece of work to assess the status of elephants, levels of illegal killing and trade in ivory.

This is the fourth report prepared by the above entities¹⁵ for the CITES Standing Committee, with previous reports having been provided for SC61 (Geneva, August 2011), SC62 (Geneva, July 2012) and SC65 (Geneva, July 2014). As on previous occasions, this report aims to provide an integrated and up-to-date overview of the illegal ivory supply chain. It was unfortunately not possible for the IUCN/SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group to submit a contribution in time for inclusion in this document.

African elephants (*Loxodonta africana*): status, threats and conservation actions

This section has been submitted by the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group.

The IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG) maintains the African Elephant Database (AED), available online at www.elephantdatabase.org, and publishes the African Elephant Status Report. Status reports were published in 1995, 1998, 2002 and 2007, and provisional updates were released online in 2013 and 2015, containing data through 2012 and 2013, respectively. The AfESG also provides technical expertise on elephant conservation and management, collaborating with governments, NGOs, academic institutions and individuals.

All populations of African elephant have been listed on CITES Appendix I since 1989, except for four national populations that were transferred to Appendix II (Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe in 1997, and South Africa in 2000). The African elephant is listed as Vulnerable (A2a; Ver 3.1; Blanc, 2008) in the IUCN Red List.

Continental overview

There are currently 37 African elephant range States with a known and possible elephant range of over 3.3 million km². Somalia and Senegal are still classified as range States despite uncertainty regarding the current status of their populations. There is a need to assess the status of Sudan as a range State, as all remaining elephants appear to be in South Sudan.

The AfESG's Data Review Working Group has established longstanding, rigorous guidelines that categorize elephants as "Definite", "Probable", "Possible" and "Speculative", based on data reliability, though these categories are currently under review. This review will inform the presentation of population estimates in the next African Elephant Status Report. Between the publication of the African Elephant Status Report 2007, containing data through 2006, and the most recent online update of 2015, containing data through 2013, there has been a decline in elephant numbers based on the available data. "Definite" plus "Probable" elephant numbers, primarily representing estimates from surveys, have decreased from approximately 550,000 to 470,000 between 2006 and 2013.

While this decline appears to be primarily a result of increased pressure from ivory poaching, habitat loss and fragmentation due to landscape-level land use changes also pose significant immediate and long-term

¹⁵ *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.*

challenges to elephant conservation. Small, fragmented populations are being lost as land transformation rapidly and extensively changes the face of the continent. Given the concomitant increase in human population numbers, maintaining adequate elephant habitat while considering the interactions of elephants with local communities remains of utmost importance even in the face of ongoing population declines. Another concerning development is a method of targeting elephants for poaching. In Southern Africa, particularly Zimbabwe, the increasing use of poisons for ivory poaching and conflict mitigation affects not only elephants, but all wildlife consuming the poisoned water or food. Both these large-scale and local-level dynamics are important to understand in order to design policies and programmes that address the many, often interacting, pressures on elephant populations as well as their complex drivers.

Sub-regional summaries (up through the end of 2013)

Figure 1 shows a graphical summary of population estimates at the sub-regional level as at the end of 2013.

Approximately 30% of the continental range is in **Central Africa**, but less than 13% of the continent's "Definite" plus "Probable" elephants reside there. This recorded number of elephants in Central Africa has changed little, as new populations were surveyed after 2006, so they were not included in the 2006 update. That the numbers stayed similar with the inclusion of these new areas supports the evidence for a substantial population decrease in the Central African sub-region (see document [SC65 Doc. 42.1](#)). While knowledge about this sub-region has improved, the extent, quality and reliability of data remains a concern, and surveys comparable in methodology are needed to meaningfully quantify trends. Population declines identified through comparable surveys were previously listed in document [SC65 Doc. 42.1](#). Four range States (Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Gabon) have relatively larger populations than the three remaining countries (Central African Republic, Chad, and Equatorial Guinea). Many areas in the sub-region remain unsurveyed due to the significant resources and capacity needed for surveying elephants in forest habitats, which is why informed guesses are critical for understanding the situation in Central Africa and are included in the figure below. Gabon's informed guesses, for example, which place the national population closer to 60,000, are largely based on a modelling exercise.

The majority of the African elephants, nearly 64%, across 39% of the continent's range, are still found in **Southern Africa**. Botswana continues to hold the largest population (the only range State with over 100,000 elephants), followed by Zimbabwe. Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, and Zambia represent the next tier of large populations, with smaller populations in Angola, Malawi, and Swaziland. Two range States contributed to the decline noted from 2006 to 2013 in this sub-region, and while Zimbabwe's losses may largely be attributed to estimates older than ten years being degraded (i.e. being treated as guesses), several comparable surveys in Zambia indicated a reduction in the elephant population.

Less than 22% of Africa's "Definite" plus "Probable" elephants were found in **Eastern Africa's** 26% of the continental range based on data compiled through the end of 2013. Despite significant losses that comprise the majority of the sub-region's decline from 2006 to 2013, Tanzania is still home to East Africa's largest population, followed by Kenya. These two range States hold the vast majority of the sub-region's elephants, with Uganda and South Sudan contributing most of the remaining known elephants.

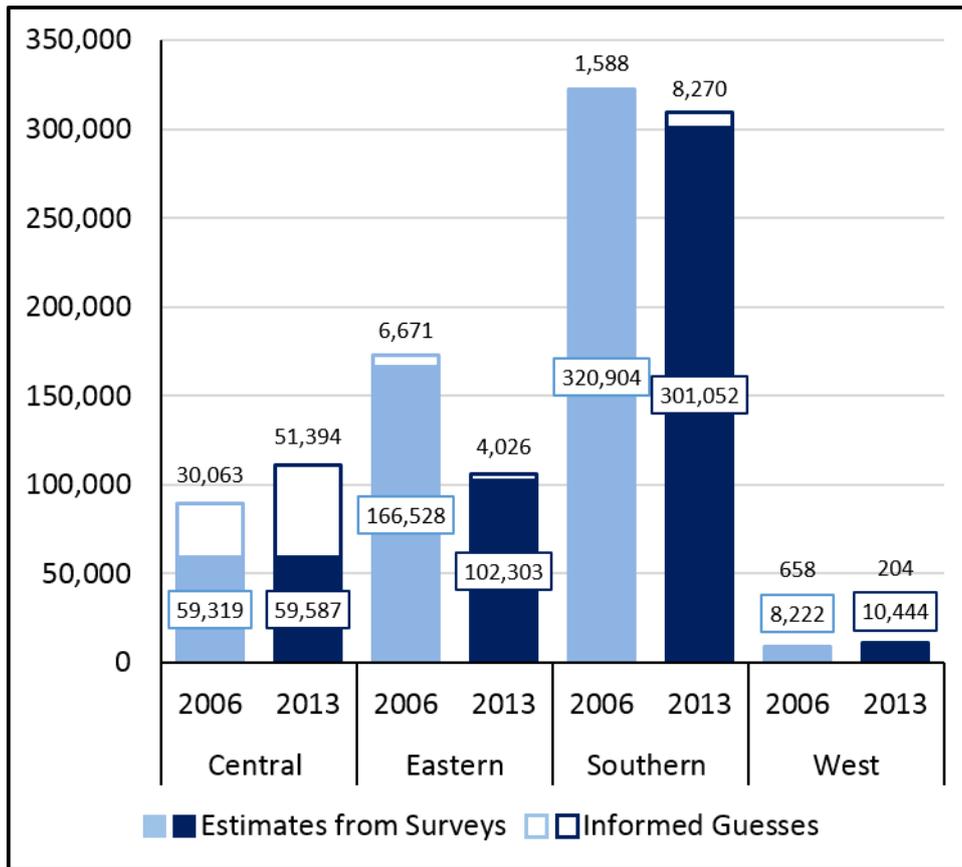


Figure 1. Sub-regional summary of elephant numbers through 2013. “Estimates from surveys” presents the totals of the “Definite” and “Probable” estimates (solid bars and numbers in boxes) from the African Elephant Status Report 2007 and the most recent online update at www.elephantdatabase.org, respectively. “Informed guesses” are the “Possible” totals from informed guesses (clear bars and numbers outside boxes). As estimates from surveys and estimates from guesses are not strictly comparable, they are shown separately and not added up. The AESR 2007 included data from surveys conducted through 31 December 2006 and other sources of data prior to this date and available at the time of publication of the update. The online update includes data from surveys conducted through 31 December 2013 and other sources of data prior to this date or earlier and available at the time of publication of the update.

West Africa, while containing fewer than 2.5% of the continent’s elephants in its 5% of the continental range, has a small, fairly stable population despite the extensive fragmentation of habitat. Unfortunately, new survey efforts in 2013 were not directly comparable to previous survey efforts of the population in the transboundary Park W-Arly-Pendjari, spanning the borders between Benin, Niger and Burkina Faso. Like Central Africa, appropriately monitoring elephant populations in West Africa, where populations are small and very fragmented, demands more resources.

Expected New Survey Results for 2014 and 2015

The forthcoming integration of the most recent 2014 and 2015 survey efforts, supported in large part by Vulcan’s Great Elephant Census and primarily focused on savanna populations, will contribute significantly to the preparation of the next African Elephant Status Report. These surveys are still being reviewed and processed prior to their integration in the AED. While preliminary results indicate that some important populations have experienced worrying losses, other populations appear to be stable and a few show increases.

The areas for which updates are expected, or already received, are many. In East Africa, results from the largest national population, Tanzania, may make a large difference in the sub-region. New survey work in Ethiopia, South Sudan and Uganda will update those range States’ data, but these populations are smaller and their final estimates are not anticipated to make a substantial difference to the sub-regional totals. Kenya intends to conduct new surveys of its forested areas prior to finalising a new national total; those surveys are currently being scheduled. In Southern Africa, the final survey results from Botswana and Zimbabwe have the potential to make the largest impact on the sub-regional and continental totals, though other countries with

notable populations are also being updated both as part of the Great Elephant Census and outside of that initiative. In Central Africa, in addition to incorporating the results of several new surveys, the collection and compilation of informed guesses will remain critical for understanding the most recent population dynamics, while in West Africa, the results of the 2015 Park W-Arly-Pendjari survey will be key as the area covered is more extensive than the 2013 survey.

Elephant conservation action plans and strategies

The African Elephant Action Plan (AEAP) was adopted by a consensus of all the African elephant range States in 2010, and multiple rounds of grants from the African Elephant Fund have been issued to support its implementation, most recently in September 2015 (see next section for details). While regional African elephant conservation action plans were developed for Central, Southern, and West Africa, they are now outdated and no longer widely referenced to guide action. Recently, though, several range States have undertaken to review and/or update their national action plans, as noted below. Some of these efforts are being considered in the context of National Ivory Action Plans that have been developed by nine range States under the direction of CITES. These are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Strategies and management plans

African Elephant Action Plan (2010)			
Central Africa	East Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa
Strategy for the Conservation of Elephants in Central Africa (2005) Cameroon (2010) Chad (2015)* Gabon (2015)*	Kenya (2012)** Tanzania (2012) Ethiopia (2015)*	Southern Africa Regional Elephant Conservation and Management Strategy (2005) Botswana (2003) Mozambique (2010) Namibia (2007) Zambia (2003) Malawi (2015)*	Strategy for the Conservation of West African Elephants (2005) Convention on Migratory Species West African Elephant Memorandum of Understanding (2005) Benin (2005) Burkina Faso (2003) Côte d'Ivoire (2004) Ghana (2000) Guinea (2008) Guinea-Bissau (2000) Niger (2010) Togo (2005)

* in progress, not finalized, or not yet publicly disseminated

** mid-strategy review planned

African Elephant Fund and implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan

This section has been submitted by Kenya as the Chair of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee.

The African Elephant Action Plan was adopted by African elephant range States in March 2010 (see document CoP15 Inf. 68) and subsequently, the African Elephant Fund (AEF) and the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee (AEFSC) were established in accordance with Decision 14.79 (Rev. CoP15) in the course of 2011 to support and facilitate implementation of the Action Plan.

As at the time of the present meeting, the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee has held six meetings to review progress in implementation of the Action Plan and consider and approve project proposals submitted to the Fund:

- The 1st meeting was hosted by South Africa in December 2011 to initiate the AEF funding allocation process [see document SC62 Doc. 46.1 (Rev. 1)].

- The 2nd Meeting was convened in the margins of the 16th meeting of the Conference of Parties to CITES in Bangkok, Thailand in March 2013, to discuss matters related to the implementation of the activities under the African Elephant Fund. UNEP attended the meeting and provided secretarial support and assisted with interpretation during the meeting.
- The 3rd meeting was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, and hosted by the Government of Burkina Faso on 25 – 27 September 2013.
- An informal meeting of the Steering Committee was convened in the margins of the 65th Meeting of the Standing Committee in Geneva on 10 July 2014 to review progress made by range States in the implementation of the Action Plan, and discuss the next formal meeting of the Committee.
- The 4th Meeting was held in Tsavo West National Park, Kenya, and hosted by the Government of Kenya in November 2014.
- The 5th Meeting was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and hosted by the Government of Ethiopia on 11-12 September 2015.

South Africa, as the first Chair of the Steering Committee, reported on the progress made in implementing the African Elephant Action Plan and administrating the African Elephant Fund to the Standing Committee at its 65th meeting for the period 2011 – July 2014. The updates being provided in this report are for the period from July 2014 to September 2015.

At its 4th meeting in Kilaguni, Tsavo West National Park Kenya in November 2014, the Steering Committee had a change of its Chairmanship with Kenya taking over from South Africa. This followed expiry of term of office of the first nominations since the Committee was established. The current membership of the Steering Committee is as shown in column 3 in Table 1. Table 2 shows a list of funded Projects as at November 2014 (by the time of 5th AEFSC meeting, September 2015).

The African Elephant Fund Steering Committee has to date received final reports from 8 countries on their implementation of the projects funded from the Fund, and whose project implementation period has expired. These reports have been uploaded onto the Fund's website and can be found at <http://africanelephantfund.org/page/i/range-state-reports>.

Table 1. Evolution of membership of the African Elephant Fund Steering Committee.

Representation / Category	Members at establishment in 2011	Current Members effective from November 2014	Notes
Eastern Africa sub-region	Kenya Sudan	Kenya Ethiopia	Kenya replaced South Africa as Chair
Central Africa sub-region	Cameroon Congo Republic	Congo Republic Gabon	Gabon replaced Cameroon
Southern Africa sub-region	South Africa Botswana	Botswana South Africa	No changes
West Africa sub-region	Burkina Faso Nigeria	Burkina Faso Ghana	Ghana replaced Nigeria
Donors	Germany Netherlands France	Germany Netherlands Belgium	Belgium replaced France
Ex-Officio	UNEP CITES Secretariat	UNEP CITES Secretariat	No change

It should be noted that the administration of the Fund faced a number of challenges attributed to the range States, Donors and the new financial information system known as Umoja at UNEP. While a number of range States would not submit funding proposals in good time for the Steering Committee to consider for approval for funding, access to some donor funding for implementation of projects beyond a given period of time was not possible due to the cycle of funds release by the Donor. In the first half of 2015, UNEP underwent a change of its financial information systems, and this caused delay in processing Small-Scale Funding Agreements (SSFA) and eventual disbursement of funds for implementation of the approved projects. This in essence affected the entire chain of implementation and reporting on of the approved projects. The Chair of the AEFSC has however been informed by the AEF Secretariat that the situation is expected to normalize in due course.

Table 2. List of projects funded by the AEF as of November 2014

Sub-region	Beneficiary Country	Amount in USD
EAST AFRICA:	Ethiopia Project No. 1	30,000.00
	Ethiopia Project No. 2	39,550.00
	Ethiopia Project No. 3	10,000.00
	Kenya	49,000.00
	Lusaka Agreement Task Force for implementation of activities in East Africa	25,828.00
	United Republic of Tanzania Project No.1	41,450.00
	United Republic of Tanzania Project No.2	26,865.00
	Uganda	31,844.00
CENTRAL AFRICA:	Lusaka Agreement Task Force for implementation of activities in Central Africa	34,898.00
	Republic of Congo	120,000.00
SOUTHERN AFRICA:	Malawi Project No.1	42,433.00
	Malawi Project No. 2	20,000.00
	Mozambique	153,000.00
	Zambia	40,000.00
WEST AFRICA:	Benin	29,262.00
	Burkina Faso	57,000.00
	Burkina Faso, Benin, & Niger	24,650.00
	Mali	25,672.00
	Nigeria Project No.1	20,860.00
	Nigeria Project No.2	13,360.00
	Nigeria Project No. 3	14,850.00
All regions	IUCN (African Elephant Specialist Group)	25,000.00

At its 5th Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September 2015, the AEFSC reviewed a total of 22 project proposals submitted by range States and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force. Due the quality of some proposals and donor conditions on timelines for accessing funding (by February 2016), only 8 out of the 22 proposals qualified for funding (see table below). The process for the beneficiaries to access the funding for implementation of the approved projects was initiated at UNEP immediately after the Addis Ababa Meeting, and SSFA's have been send out for signing by the beneficiary countries.

Table 3. List of projects approved at the 5th AFESC meeting (September 2015)

Sub-region	Beneficiary Country	Amount in USD
EAST AFRICA:	Ethiopia Project No. 4	66,900.00
	Kenya Project No.2	60,000.00
CENTRAL AFRICA:	Gabon Project No.1	16,399.00
	Gabon Project No. 2	39,500.00
SOUTHERN AFRICA:	Angola	50,000.00
	Botswana	34,000.00
	Namibia	75,681.00
WEST AFRICA:	Ghana	133,640.00

UNEP, as the administrator of the Elephant Fund, has shared with the Chair of the AEFSC the status of donations to the AEF as of 11 November 2015. Table 4 below shows the amounts of funds donated by various countries from 2011 to 11 November 2015.

The Chair of the Steering Committee has been informed that the Secretariat is expecting a new pledge from the Netherlands Government of 120,000 Euro (*Not included in 2015 financial status*). The Chair, on behalf of the AEFSC and all African elephant range States, would like to thank the Donor countries for committing resources towards implementation of the African elephant Action Plan to ensure the future and survival of the African elephant. The AEFSC appeals to more Parties, IGOs and NGOs to support the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan by contributing to the Fund.

On the sidelines of the present meeting of the Standing Committee, the AEFSC members and other African elephant range States present will be convening to discuss further updates on the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan in the individual countries, the Steering Committees' experiences and challenges with the administration of the Fund, and how to effectively manage the implementation of the AEAP with the available resources.

Table 4. Funds donated to the African Elephant Fund up to 11 November 2015 as reported by UNEP

Donor Country	Receipts (USD)	Total				
	YEAR 2011	YEAR 2012	YEAR 2013	YEAR 2014	YEAR 2015	
China		200,000				200,000
France		63,690				63,690
Germany	108,800		68,325		174,950	352,075
Belgium					50,000	50,000
South Africa		11,716		9,062		20,778
Netherlands	66,108	49,990	179,310	146,341		441,749
United Kingdom		178,409				178,409
Interest Income	120	3,585	4,330	5,298		13,333
Total Income	175,028	507,390	251,965	160,701	224,950	1,320,034

Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants

This section has been submitted by the CITES Secretariat and is based on the update on poaching trends in Africa released on 3 March 2015 (https://cites.org/sites/default/files/i/news/2015/WWD-PR-Annex_MIKE_trend_update_2014_new.pdf).

The CITES programme for Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants, commonly known as MIKE, was established by the Conference of the Parties (CoP) at its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997) in accordance with the provisions in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on *Trade in elephant specimens*. The MIKE Programme is managed by the CITES Secretariat under the supervision of the CITES Standing Committee. Since implementation began in 2001, the operation of the MIKE Programme in Africa has been possible thanks to the financial support of the European Union.

MIKE aims to inform and improve decision-making on elephants by measuring trends in levels of illegal killing of elephants, identifying factors associated with those trends, and building capacity for elephant management in range States. MIKE operates in a large sample of sites spread across 30 elephant range States in Africa and 13 in Asia. There are some 60 designated MIKE sites in Africa, which together hold an estimated 30 to 40% of the African elephant population, and 27 sites in Asia.

MIKE data is collected by law enforcement and ranger patrols, and through other means, in designated MIKE sites. When an elephant carcass is found, site personnel try to establish the cause of death and other details, such as sex and age of the animal, status of ivory and stage of decomposition of the carcass. This information is recorded in standardized carcass forms, details of which are then submitted to the MIKE Programme. A database of more than 15,000 carcass records has been assembled so far, providing a substantial information base for statistical analysis.

MIKE evaluates relative poaching levels based on the Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants (PIKE), which is calculated as the number of illegally killed elephants found divided by the total number of elephant carcasses encountered by patrols or other means, aggregated by year for each site. Coupled with estimates of population size and natural mortality rates, PIKE can be used to estimate numbers of elephants killed and absolute poaching rates.

While PIKE provides a sensitive measure of poaching trends, it may be affected by a number of potential biases related to data quality, carcass detection probabilities, variation in natural mortality rates and other factors, and hence results need to be interpreted with caution. However, the fact that the quantitative results presented below are in good agreement with quantitative information available from the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) and the African Elephant Database, gives confidence as to the robustness of the results.

Trend analysis

Previous trend analyses of MIKE data using standardized methodology have been presented to the 15th and 16th Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CITES; to the 61st, 62nd and 65th meetings of the CITES Standing Committee; as well as to other meetings such as the African Elephant Summit (Gaborone, December 2013). In addition, analyses of MIKE data have been published in the peer-reviewed scientific literature (Burn et al. 2011; Wittemyer et al. 2014). Since the report submitted to the 65th Meeting of the Standing Committee (SC65), records for 1,440 carcasses found in 2014 were received from 46 sites in Africa.

The data set used for analysis consists of 13,511 records of elephant carcasses found between 2002 and the end of 2014 at 53 MIKE sites in 29 range States in Africa, representing a total of 488 site-years. These data can be accessed through https://cites.org/eng/prog/mike/data_and_reports. Figure 2 shows empirically derived time trends in PIKE at the continental level for reporting African MIKE sites, with 95% confidence intervals. The chart shows a steady increase in levels of illegal killing of elephants starting in 2006, peaking in 2011 and slightly declining and levelling off thereafter. The continental PIKE level in 2014 remained virtually unchanged compared to 2013.

Despite the slight decline since 2011, the overall estimated poaching rates have likely remained higher than the normal growth rate of elephant populations (which is about 5%). Therefore, the elephant population at MIKE sites overall is likely to have continued to decline in 2014. In some areas, a decline in PIKE may be the result of a substantial decline in the elephant population, making it more difficult for poachers to find suitable targets in such areas. However, recent and reliable elephant population estimates from such areas are needed to verify the impact of poaching on such populations. Such estimates are likely to become available in the course of 2016, when an updated African Elephant Status Report is published by the IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group.

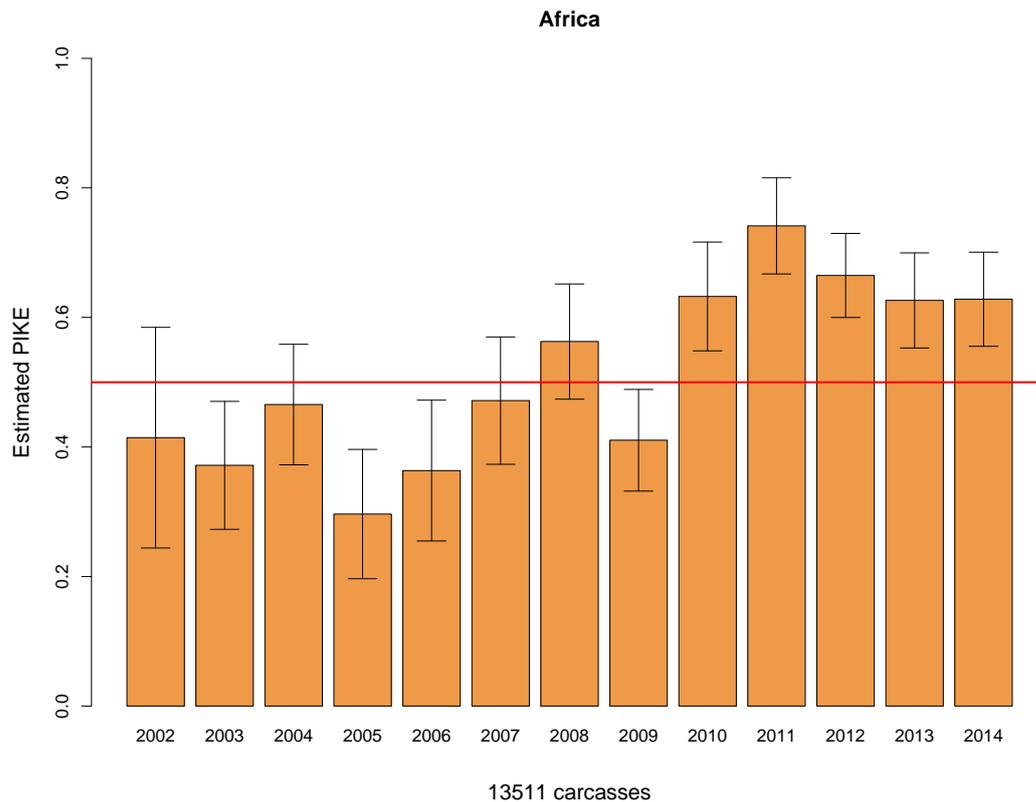


Figure 2. PIKE trends in Africa with 95 % confidence intervals. PIKE levels above the horizontal line at 0.5 (i.e. where half of dead elephants found are deemed to have been illegally killed) are likely to be unsustainable. The number of carcasses on which the chart is based is shown at the bottom of the figure.)

The stability in PIKE levels in the last two years is also reflected at the sub-regional level, although there are differences between the sub-regions (Figure 3). The downward trend since 2011 in Central Africa was broken in 2014 with a slight (but not statistically significant) increase over 2013. The downward trend did continue in Eastern Africa, although the PIKE value in 2014 is not significantly different from the value recorded in 2013. It is nevertheless worth noting that, for the first time since 2010, the PIKE level in Eastern Africa in 2014 was below 0.5. In Southern Africa, PIKE in 2014 remained very similar to the levels recorded in 2012 and 2013. The only sub-region where a substantial increase in PIKE was recorded in 2014 was West Africa, but the paucity of carcass data from that sub-region continue to make inferences on trends unreliable. However, it is worth pointing out that the value of PIKE for West Africa in 2014 is the highest ever recorded in that sub-region.

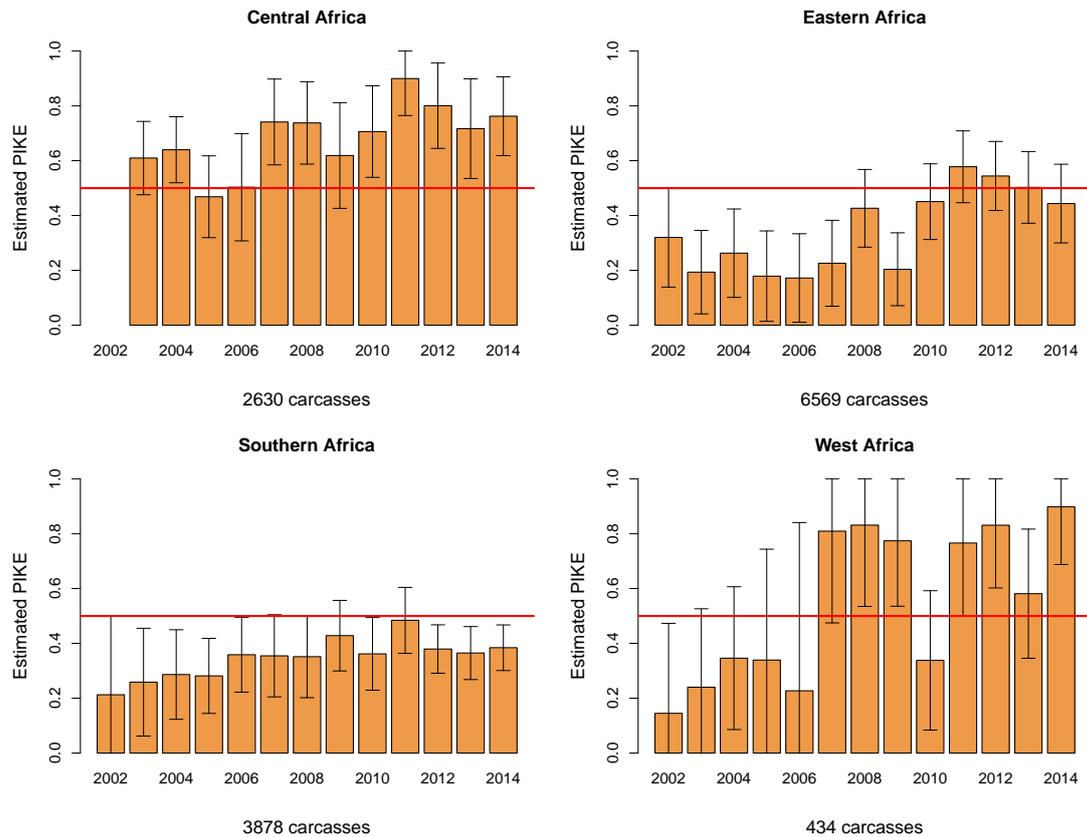


Figure 3. Sub-regional PIKE trends with 95 % confidence intervals. The numbers of carcasses on which the graphs are based are shown at the bottom of each graph.

It is also difficult to estimate poaching impact at the site level, especially in sites that do not have sufficiently large carcass sample sizes, or where there may be indications of bias in reported PIKE levels. Among sites that have reported 20 or more carcasses in 2014, where the site-level PIKE could be taken to be relatively reliable, those that remained of particular concern (with a PIKE level of 0.7 or higher) in 2014 include Bangassou (Central African Republic); Garamba (Democratic Republic of the Congo); Niassa (Mozambique); Pendjari (Benin); and Selous-Mikumi (United Republic of Tanzania). On the other hand, substantial declines in PIKE in 2014 have been reported in Caprivi (Namibia); Chewore (Zimbabwe); Meru and Samburu Laikipia (Kenya); Ruaha-Rungwa (United Republic of Tanzania); and South Luangwa (Zambia). Whether these declines in PIKE are sustained or are just a sign of regression to the mean remains to be seen.

Data for 2015 is being collected and an updated trend analysis will be released on UN World Wildlife Day (3 March 2016). While it is too soon to speculate on what the trend will look like for 2015, worrying reports of escalated poaching levels are emerging from a number of MIKE sites, including Gourma (Mali), Kruger National Park (South Africa), and the two MIKES (Minimising the Illegal Killing of Elephants and other Endangered Species) sites in Zimbabwe, where there have been widespread reports of cyanide poisoning of elephants.

In conclusion, while poaching levels seem to be stabilizing across MIKE sites, overall they remain above the likely sustainability threshold, especially in Central and West Africa, but also in specific sites in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Legal trade in ivory

This section has been submitted by UNEP-WCMC.

An overview of reported trade in *Loxodonta africana* using CITES annual report data over the period 2012-2013 has been produced by UNEP-WCMC. Trade data for 2014 are not yet available, as the deadline for submission of annual reports to CITES for 2014 is 31 October 2015. Annual reports have not yet been received at the time of writing (October 2015) for Cameroon (2012 and 2013) and Zambia (2013). The annual report for South Africa 2013 was initially received as a draft, and confirmation for its inclusion in the CITES Trade Database was received on 11 November 2015. As such, it was not possible to resolve any discrepancies encountered when processing this data in time for the submission date of 12 November 2015.

Reported legal trade in *L. africana* directly from African range States over the period 2012-2013 principally comprised wild-sourced hunting trophies (including tusks). Notable levels of direct trade in wild-sourced ivory carvings (6,761 kg of ivory carvings and 3,343 ivory carvings) were also recorded by countries of export, primarily as personal possessions (purpose code 'P'). In total, for 2012 and 2013, African range States reported the direct export of 2,307 tusks and 19,838 kg of wild-sourced tusks (Table 5 and Table 6 below); countries of import recorded the import of 1,414 tusks and 956 kg of tusks. Trade in tusks by weight was primarily from Zimbabwe, with a small amount also exported by Mozambique in 2013 (reported by countries of import only). Exports from both of these countries were primarily hunting trophies (purpose code 'H'). There was a large discrepancy in trade recorded by weight from Zimbabwe, which can be partially explained by Zimbabwe reporting exports primarily by weight, whereas countries of import largely reported trade in number of tusks. Zimbabwe also reported exports of tusks or trophies to 12 countries in 2012 and four countries in 2013 that reported no imports in tusks or trophies from Zimbabwe in that year; however annual reports have not yet been received from several countries of import (Canada [2012 and 2013] and the Russian Federation [2013]). The basis for the compilation of Zimbabwe's annual report was not specified, but it is possible that some of this trade did not occur if the report was compiled on the basis of permits issued as opposed to actual trade.

Table 5. Direct trade in wild-sourced* tusks of *Loxodonta africana* from African range States, 2012-2013 (all purposes).

Exporter	Reported by	2012	2013	Total
Botswana	Exporter	781	690	1471
	Importer	286	264	550
Cameroon	Exporter			
	Importer	4	6	10
Gabon	Exporter	4		4
	Importer			
Mozambique	Exporter	72	117	189
	Importer	36	50	86
Namibia	Exporter	108	93	201
	Importer	43	31	74
Senegal	Exporter	2		2
	Importer			
South Africa	Exporter	194	174	368
	Importer	54	40	94
United Republic of Tanzania	Exporter	28	10	38
	Importer	28	13	41
Zambia	Exporter	34		34
	Importer	8	11	17
Zimbabwe	Exporter			
	Importer	209	331	540
Total	Exporter	1223	1084	2307
	Importer	668	746	1414

* 'Wild-sourced' includes trade recorded as source 'W', 'U' and without a source specified.

Source: CITES Trade Database, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Table 6. Direct trade in wild-sourced* *Loxodonta africana* tusks reported by weight (kg) from African range States, 2012-2013 (all purposes), rounded to the nearest kilogram

Exporter	Reported by	2012	2013	Total
Mozambique	Exporter			
	Importer		61	61
Zimbabwe	Exporter	11 870	7968	19 838
	Importer	329	566	895
Total	Exporter	11 870	7968	19 838
	Importer	329	627	956

* 'Wild-sourced' only includes trade recorded as source 'W'. No trade in tusks reported by weight (kg) was recorded as 'U' or without a source specified. Source: CITES Trade Database, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

When the declared export quotas for tusks as sport-hunted trophies are compared with the exporter-reported data for tusks and trophies (assuming that one trophy includes two tusks) (Table 7 (quotas) and

Table 8 (trophies)), it may appear that quotas were exceeded by Namibia and South Africa in both 2012 and 2013¹⁶. However, on the basis of the analysis of the tusk serial numbers provided, exports from both Namibia and South Africa appear to be within quota in 2012 and 2013. It may also be of note that tusks from previous quota years appear to be exported in later years. On the basis of importer-reported data, the same initial basic calculation (tusks and 2x trophies) indicates that reported imports from Namibia and South Africa were within quota in both years. South Africa's CITES annual report for 2012 and 2013 appears to have been compiled on the basis of permits issued rather than actual trade, meaning that some of the reported exports may not have occurred; Namibia did not specify the basis for its annual report compilation in 2012, but reported on actual trade in 2013.

In general, quota excesses for elephant tusks can be difficult to establish due to reporting practices – for example, trade reported as a ‘trophy’ may contain one, two or no tusks. When tusk serial numbers and details on the items in trade provided within annual reports are scrutinised, it appears that trophy parts (e.g. skins, feet, skull, etc.) and tusks of the same animal were exported separately (as they shared the tusk serial number), so including trophies in the calculation would overestimate the trade.

Gabon and Senegal reported the export of four tusks and two tusks, respectively, in 2012 (all recorded as source code ‘W’, i.e. “Specimens taken from the wild” and purpose code ‘P’, i.e. “personal possession”). This trade was not reported by countries of import (France and China, respectively).

*Table 7. Export quotas for *Loxodonta africana* tusks as sport-hunted trophies 2011-2015 established in compliance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on trade in elephant specimens. The number of elephants represented by the quotas is half the number of tusks (i.e. two tusks per elephant). Where there was no published quota for tusks as trophies, this is indicated by “-”.*

Exporter	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Botswana*	800	800	800	800	-
Cameroon	160	160	160	160	-
Gabon	-	-	-	-	-
Mozambique	200	200	200	200	200
Namibia	180	180	180	180	180
South Africa	300	300	300	300	300
United Republic of Tanzania	400	400	400	200	200
Zambia*	160	160	-	-	160
Zimbabwe	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000

*Export quotas for Botswana in 2011 and 2012 and Zambia in 2011, 2012 and 2015 were published for “tusks and other trophies” of a specified number of animals.

Source: Species+, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Reporting issues

The analysis of hunting trophy data is complicated by the variety of ways in which hunting trophies can be reported. The *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*¹⁷ states that all the trophy parts of one animal, e.g. an elephant's two tusks, four feet, two ears and one tail, constitute one ‘trophy’ if they are exported together on the same permit. However, in practice, many Parties do not follow these *Guidelines* consistently and this can lead to double-counting of trophies. Standardisation in reporting of hunting trophies through application of the *Guidelines*, in particular for species such as *L. africana* where export quotas have been established, is crucial to assessing compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

¹⁶ Namibia: 108 tusks + 2 x 60 trophies ~ maximum of 228 tusks in 2012; 93 tusks + 2 x 52 trophies ~ maximum of 197 tusks in 2013 (quota of 180 tusks in both years). Based on tusk serial numbers: 132 in 2012 and 92 in 2013. South Africa: 184 tusks + 2 x 80 trophies ~ maximum of 354 tusks in 2012; 174 tusks + 2 x 80 trophies ~ maximum of 334 tusks in 2013 (quota of 300 tusks). Based on tusk serial numbers: 245 in 2012 and 158 in 2013.

¹⁷ See CITES Notification to the Parties No. 2011/019. These Guidelines are under review (see CITES Notification to the Parties No. 2015/058).

Table 8. Direct trade in wild-sourced* sport-hunted trophies** of *Loxodonta africana* from African range States, 2012-2013.

Exporter	Reported by	2012	2013	Total
Botswana	Exporter	2	1	3
	Importer	258	204	462
Cameroon	Exporter			
	Importer	36	10	46
Mozambique	Exporter			
	Importer	43	18	61
Namibia	Exporter	60	52	112
	Importer	35	42	77
South Africa	Exporter	80	80	160
	Importer	65	93	158
United Republic of Tanzania	Exporter	14	12	26
	Importer	88	38	126
Zambia	Exporter	19		19
	Importer	15	14	29
Zimbabwe	Exporter	32		32
	Importer	365	253	618
Total	Exporter	207	145	361
	Importer	905	672	1537

*'Wild-sourced' includes only trade recorded as source code 'W'. No trade in trophies was recorded as 'U' or without a source specified.

** 'Sport-hunted trophies' consist of trade in 'trophies' reported as purposes 'H', 'P' and 'T'. This does not include trade in other "trophy items" such as skins, skulls, ears, tails, etc.

Source: CITES Trade Database, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

As the serial numbers provided within annual reports can provide valuable insight into verification of quota compliance, the Standing Committee may wish to consider whether this information should be collected more systematically through the CITES Trade Database to support CITES implementation. Adoption of electronic permitting and automated data transfer of trade data to the CITES Trade Database in near real-time would facilitate this and should be considered as a means for enhancing transparency and traceability for all species with quotas and tagging/marking systems. The Parties have adopted systems for near-real time checking of caviar permits in the past and so have precedents.

Summaries of trade recorded in the CITES Trade Database, compiled by UNEP-WCMC, are provided in Tables 5, 6 and 8.

Illegal Trade in Elephant Specimens

This section has been prepared by TRAFFIC.

As of 7 October 2015, there were 22,578 records in the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), of which 20,377 represented ivory seizures, whilst the remainder comprised non-ivory elephant products. It is worth noting that five African elephant range States (Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Senegal and Somalia), and two Asian elephant range States (Bangladesh and the Lao People's Democratic Republic) have never submitted an elephant product seizure record to ETIS in over 27 years, yet these countries collectively have been implicated in 289 ivory seizures that have taken place elsewhere in the world. Figure 4 shows the number of ivory seizure cases and the estimated weight of ivory seized as raw, unadjusted data in each year from 1989 to 2014. The data for 2014 and 2015 are very incomplete, with a major data collection initiative currently in progress (see Notification No. 2015/044). Because of inherent bias in the raw data, Figure 4 cannot be interpreted as a trend, nor is it suggestive, of absolute quantities of ivory seized over time, or of the amount of illegal ivory in trade. Instead, it is merely a trend of the amounts of ivory seized and reported to ETIS.

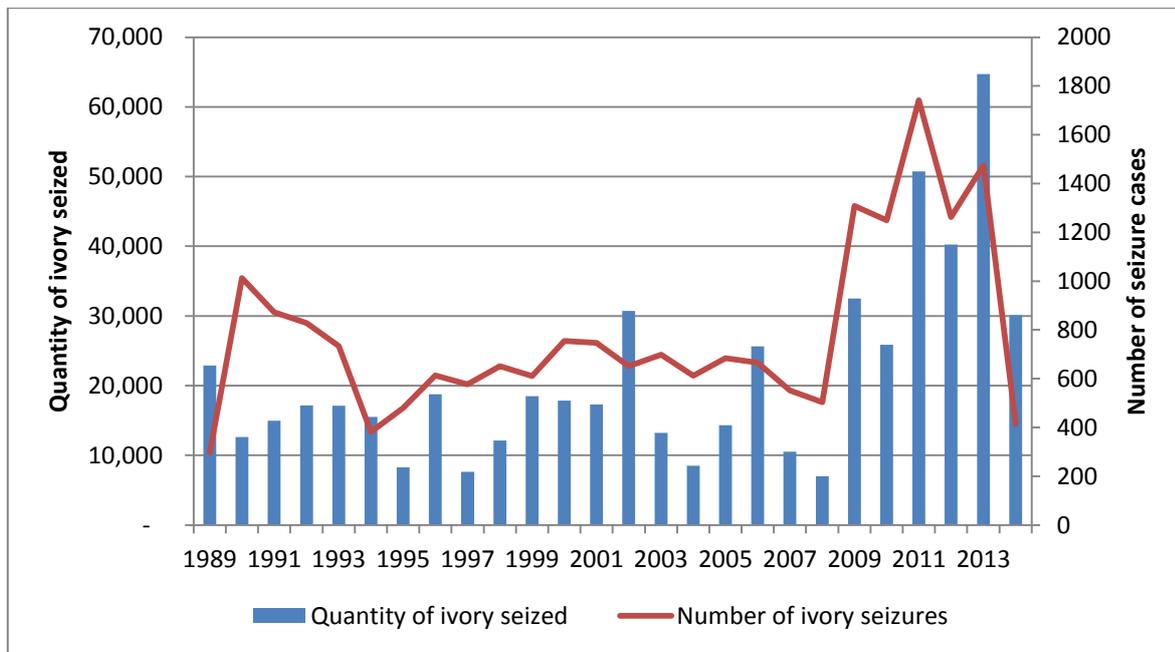


Figure 4. Estimated weight of ivory and number of seizure cases by year, 1989 – 2014 (ETIS, 7 October 2015)

Trends and levels of illegal ivory trade

An analysis of the ETIS data was undertaken to update the trend in illegal trade in ivory through 2013. This effort was based on 1,630 more records than the previous trend analysis reported in document SC65 Doc. 42.1. As before, the methodology described in Underwood *et al.*, 2013 was used, analysing 15,710 separate raw and worked ivory seizure records from 74 countries or territories, covering the period 1996-2013. In this regard, data were classified according to ivory type (raw or worked) in three separate weight classes (less than 10 kg; between 10 kg and less than 100 kg; and greater or equal to 100 kg), and then smoothed to estimate overall trade patterns with confidence intervals. The same four bias-correcting variables to assess seizure rates and rates of reporting were used in the model. As in all trend analyses since CoP16, this time period was selected as 1996 is the last full year in which all African Elephant populations were listed in CITES Appendix I. For this analysis, a number of records were modified based on forensic work to assign countries of origin to 28 large ivory seizures that occurred between 1996-2014 (Wasser *et al.*, 2015). The years 2014 and 2015 were data deficient, and are therefore not included in this analysis.

The Transaction Index presented in Figure 5 is a relative measure of global illegal ivory trade activity over the last 18 years, with 1998 (the year before the first one-off sale under CITES occurred) set to 100 and serving as the baseline. The best estimate of the scale of illegal trade activity in each year is indicated by the bold dot, but the vertical lines depict 90% confidence limits; it is possible that the actual level of illegal trade lies anywhere within the interval. As with previous analyses, the confidence limits remain relatively tight for most of the model, with the degree of uncertainty for the years 2011 and 2012 considerably reduced from the previous trend presented in document SC65 Doc. 42.1. As in all prior ETIS trend analyses, the last year in the sequence, in this case 2013, characteristically shows a higher degree of uncertainty in terms of its precision.

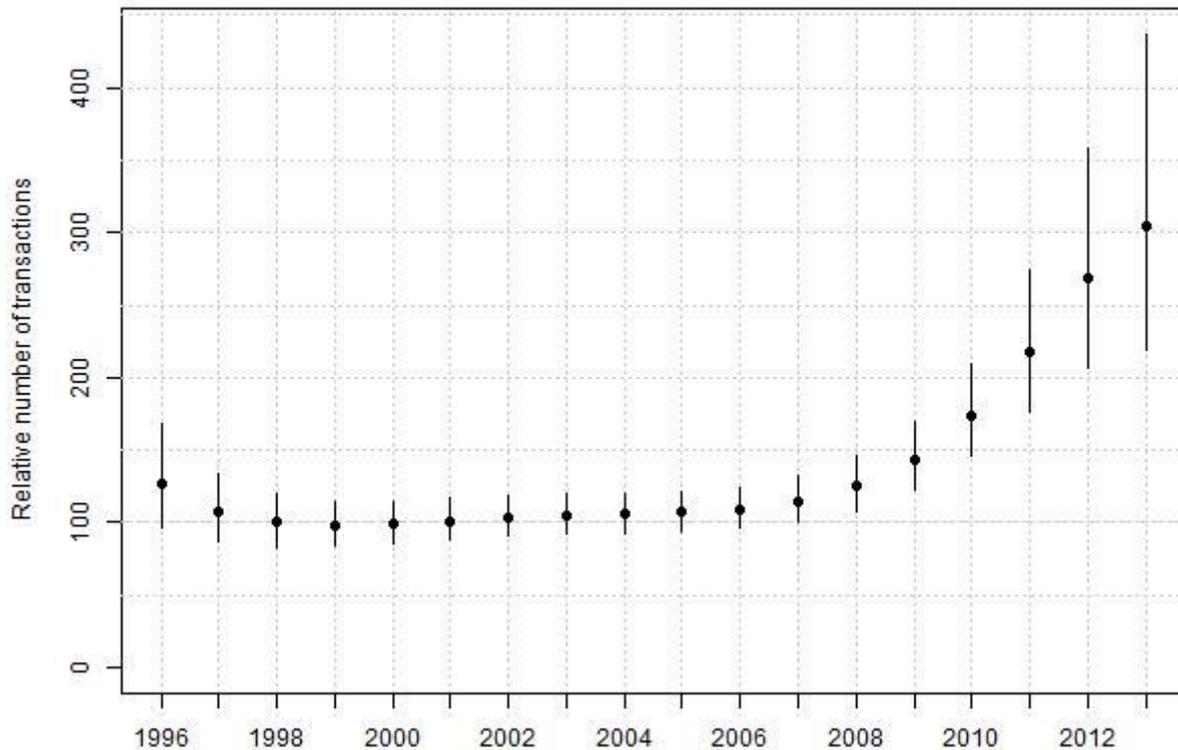


Figure 5. Mean estimate of illegal ivory trade activity, 1996 – 2013, showing 90% confidence intervals (ETIS Transaction Index, 07 October 2015)

Using the mean estimate, the overall trend for illegal ivory trade transactions shows a progressive upward projection since 2007. The estimated mean of illegal ivory trade activity in 2012 now shows an increase over 2011, and increases further in 2013. It is worth noting that neither the confidence interval for 2012 nor that for 2013 overlap with the confidence interval for 2010, indicating that the considerable increase in illegal trade activity recorded over the three most recent years is unlikely to be due to a chance fluctuation. The Transaction Index strongly shows that illegal ivory trade activity intensified through 2013.

Looking at the individual ivory classes (Figure 6), there is evidence of increasing illegal trade in 2013 compared to 2012 in some ivory classes. The largest increases are with respect to medium and large worked ivory transactions, which are nearly 1.5 times greater than the activity in 2012. However, the contribution of both of these two ivory classes to the total number of transactions has remained relatively small and consistent over time (Figure 6 and Figure 7). The medium worked ivory class represented 4% of the total number of transactions in 1998 and is now 6%. In comparison, the small worked ivory class has increased from 55% in 1998 to 70% of all transactions in 2013, using the estimated mean (but for all of these percentages, it is worth remembering that there is a degree of uncertainty in the numbers owing to the confidence intervals). For the large worked ivory class, it must be remembered that the number of seizures in this class remains very low so interpretation of its significance needs particular care. As in previous analyses, it is still the small worked ivory class which contributes the greatest portion of illegal ivory trade activity to the Transaction Index. Overall, the three worked ivory classes has maintained approximately the same proportion of illegal trade activity over the whole time period.

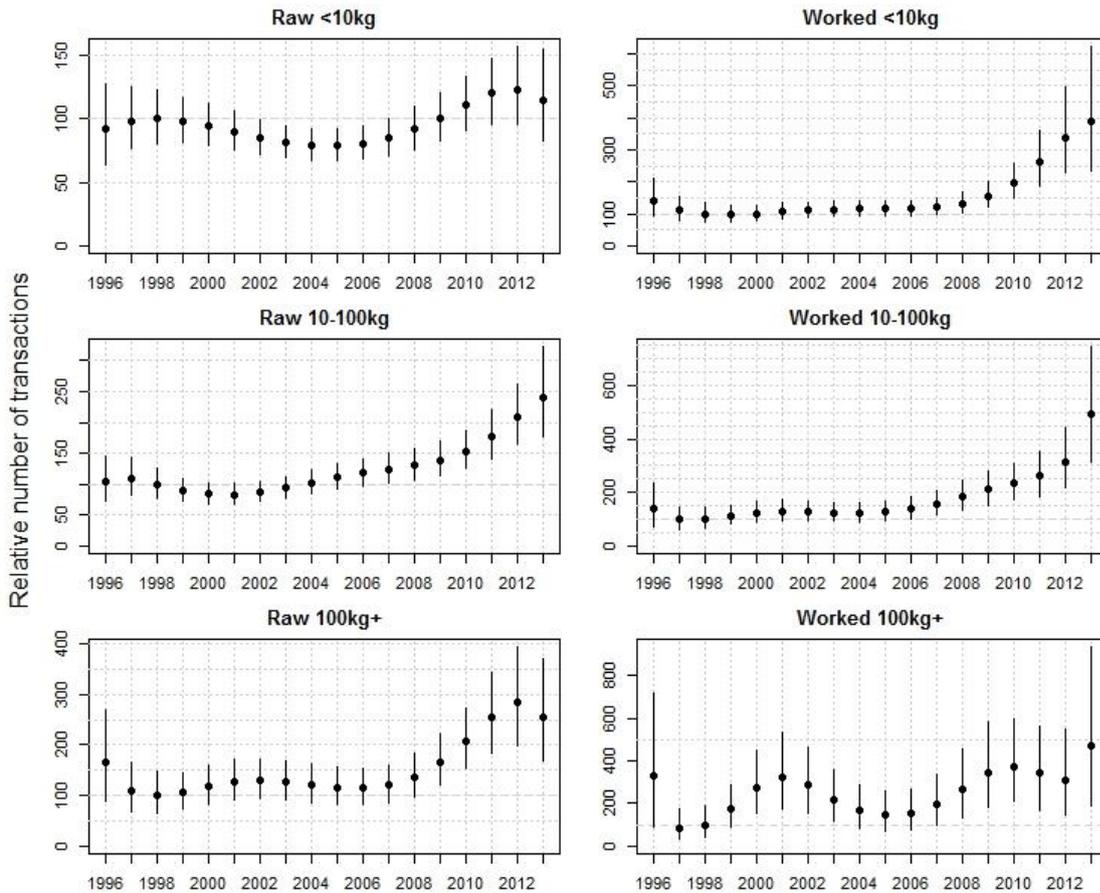


Figure 6. Mean estimate for each ivory class, 1996-2013, showing 90% credible interval for each year. (ETIS Transaction Index, 07 October 2015)

For raw ivory, the number of transactions in the small and large ivory classes remains relatively constant at high levels for the years 2011-2013, as demonstrated by the confidence intervals which mostly overlap. In contrast, there is some evidence suggesting a possible increase in the medium ivory class in 2013. From Figure 6 and Figure 7, it can be seen that an increasing proportion of raw ivory transactions now fall in the medium and large weight classes. Indeed, medium-sized transactions of raw ivory are up from 36% in 1998 to 50% in 2013. Large raw ivory transactions have increased from 10% of all raw ivory transactions in 1998 to around 15% of transactions in the last two years, whereas during the same period small raw ivory transactions have decreased from around 54% to 36% in 2013.

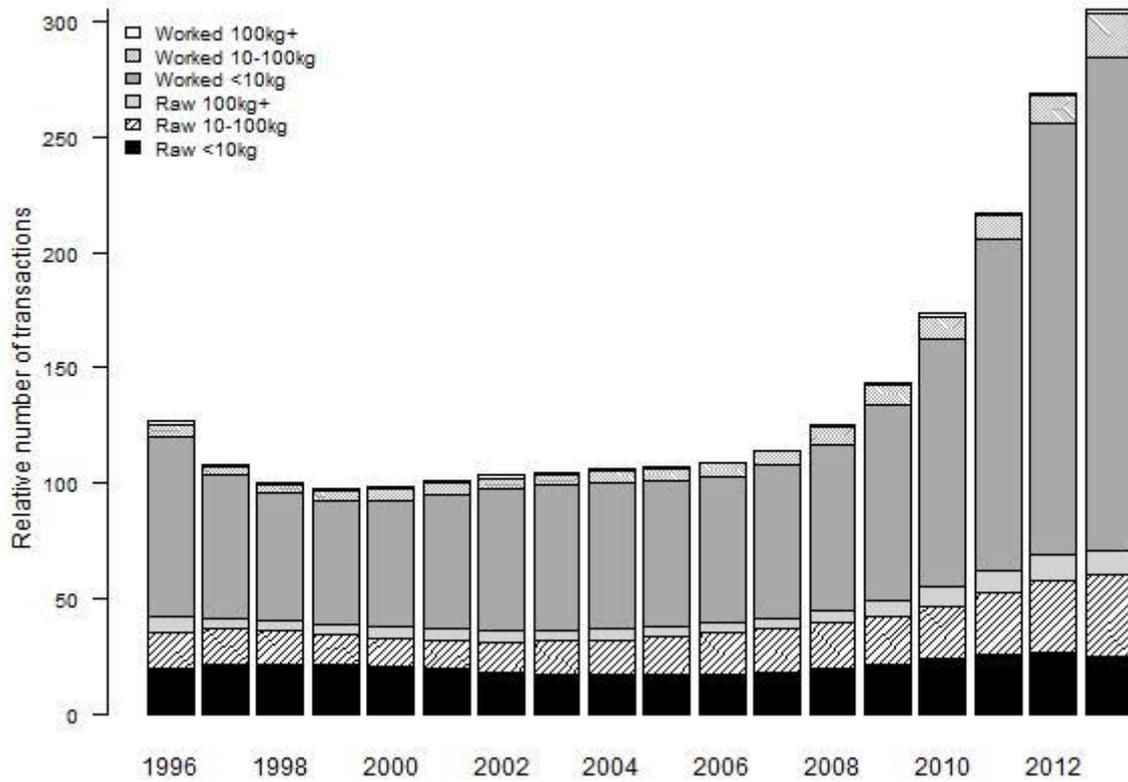


Figure 7. Estimated mean of illegal ivory trade activity by ivory class, 1996-2013 (ETIS Transaction Index, 07 October 2015)

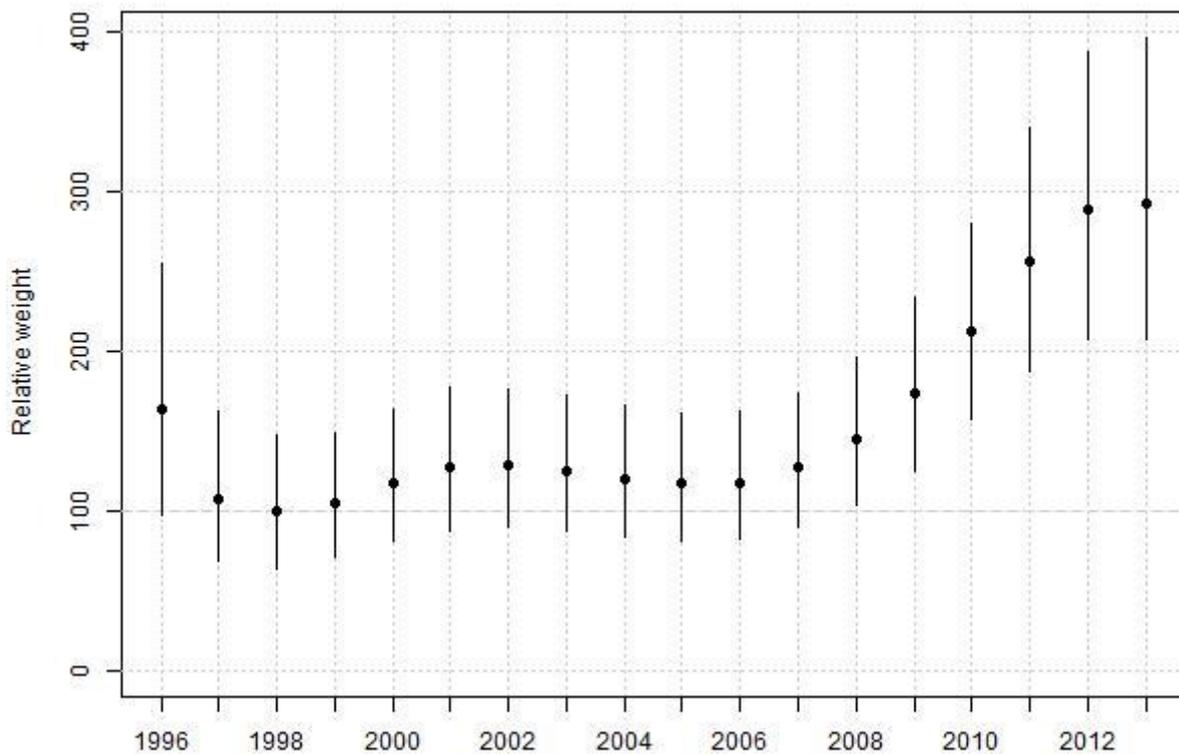


Figure 8. Mean estimate of weight of illegal ivory trade activity, 1996 – 2013, showing 90% confidence intervals (ETIS Weight Index, 07 October 2015)

Figure 8 presents an aggregated estimate of the mean weight for all ivory classes by year, again with 1998 set to 100 as the baseline. This figure shows relative – not absolute – values for the quantity of ivory being traded illegally so the pattern, more than the relative weights, is the important consideration to focus upon. Mirroring the pattern of the Transaction Index (Figure 7), there is relative stability in the quantity of illegal ivory in trade from 1997 through 2007/2008, but thereafter a sharp upward increase commences reaching the highest levels in 2012 and 2013 where the confidence interval essentially overlaps. Overall, this figure presents a very worrying pattern of trade since 2010. In Figure 9, it can be seen that the large raw ivory class contributes the most to the Weight Index, which is consistent with previous ETIS analyses whereby an increasing number of large-scale ivory seizures have been identified as driving the trend upward. Although it is suggestive that the quantity of ivory seized in the large weight class may have decreased somewhat in 2013, interpretation is confounded by the large confidence intervals and a general pattern of stability at high levels is the salient feature.

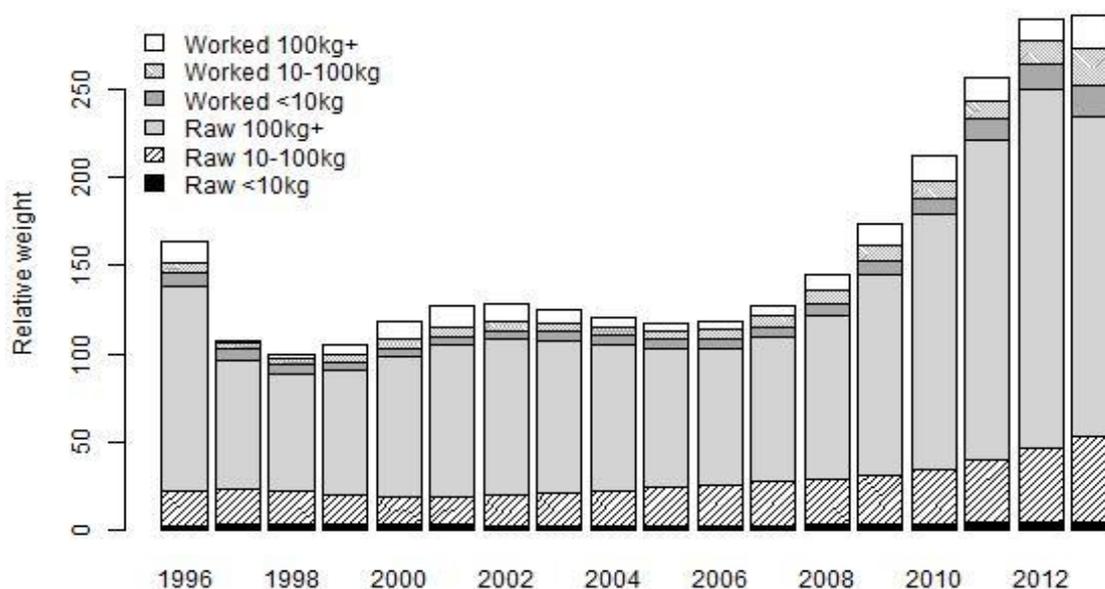


Figure 9. Estimated mean of weight of illegal ivory trade by ivory class, 1996-2013 (ETIS Weight Index, 07 October 2015)

Large-scale ivory seizures

As an ongoing focus, ETIS continues to track large-scale ivory seizures as raw data without bias adjustment, which are defined as 500 kg or more of raw or worked ivory in raw ivory equivalent (RIE) terms seized at a single time; raw ivory equivalent values result from converting worked ivory products into raw ivory values to account for the loss of ivory during processing. Pursuant to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) and Decision 16.83, Parties are recommended to undertake forensic examinations involving large-scale ivory seizures. As described in document CoP16 Doc. 53.2.2 (Rev. 1), such seizures are suggestive of the presence of organized crime in the illicit ivory trade. Finally, most large-scale ivory seizures are known at the time of their occurrence as they almost always generate media coverage; thus, in years that may otherwise be data deficient (such as 2014) large seizure are mostly known in real time and can be an early indicator of the scale of trade that will become apparent in subsequent analyses.

The frequency of large-scale ivory seizures that have been reported to ETIS since 2009 has remained high, with 2013 reaching the second highest number reported by the CITES Parties. Prior to 2009, an average of five large-scale seizures were annually reported to ETIS, but since then an average of three times more such seizures have been reported to ETIS each year (Table 9). 2013 represents the second highest number, but the greatest quantity of ivory derived from large-scale seizure in ETIS. It is worth noting that in 2014, the number of

large ivory seizures appears to have decreased and the volume has dropped by nearly 40 tonnes. Whether this reflects a real decline in illegal ivory trade in that year or it is an artefact due to biases in the data will be apparent in the next ETIS analysis that will be prepared for CITES CoP17, which will include data for 2014.

Table 9. Number and weights of large-scale (>500 kg) ivory seizures by year, 2000 – 2014, as raw, unadjusted data (ETIS, 07 October 2015)*

Year	No. of Seizure Cases	Quantity of Ivory Seized (RIE kg)
2000	7	10,738
2001	7	8,141
2002	7	25,164
2003	6	6,042
2004	3	2,465
2005	4	5,969
2006	6	16,442
2007	4	3,257
2008	1	790
2009	13	22,176
2010	11	15,041
2011	21	34,133
2012	14	25,498
2013	20	45,178
2014	12	17,894
Total	136	238,928

** For many seizures, weights are not given but derived from modelling, thus year to year comparisons may reflect some differences in values. For the values in this report, the models were revised using data through 2015 and the relationship between the weight of a seizure and the number of pieces was non-linear. Further, RIE values include a calculation for worked ivory to take account of wastage during processing so that raw and worked ivory reflect 'raw ivory equivalent' values.*

Discussion

This trend analysis brings understanding to the scale and pattern of illegal ivory trade up to 2013, the year of CITES CoP16 which was held in Bangkok, Thailand. (It needs to be recalled that the ETIS analysis presented at that meeting addressed the trend in illegal ivory trade through 2011). At CoP16 and the 64th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee, a series of interventions were agreed by the CITES Parties to address illegal ivory trade, including a revision to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16), the decision to initiate an intersessional National Ivory Action Plan process directed at various source, transit and destination countries, and a number of other decisions to improve law enforcement action and reduce demand for illegal ivory. It needs to be appreciated that it will only be possible to assess the impact of these interventions in subsequent analyses of the ETIS data, the first of which will be for CoP17 in 2016. Whilst improved law enforcement effort is not yet evident in the ETIS data overall to explain the 2013 results in this analysis, it can be said that an improvement in rates of reporting from the Parties is an apparent factor for the current result.

That said, a related concern in this regard is the fact that the majority of CITES Parties are delivering elephant product seizure data to ETIS late and hence are not adhering to the recommendation in Annex 1 of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on data collection:

All Parties, through their CITES Management Authorities, following liaison with appropriate law enforcement agencies, should provide information on seizures and confiscations of ivory or other elephant specimens in the prescribed formats either to the Secretariat or directly to TRAFFIC within 90 days of their occurrence. In addition, law enforcement agencies in States not-party to the Convention are requested to provide similar information.

In many cases, key Parties are submitting data to ETIS as much as 18 to 24 months after the seizures occurred, a fact that seriously inhibits the ability of the monitoring system to operate and track illegal ivory trade developments in a timely manner.

In terms of the results of this analysis, ETIS continues to show record levels of illegal trade in ivory whilst the MIKE programme has shown some level of decline in illegal killing of elephants. One reason for this apparent discrepancy is the issue of time lags between elephant poaching and ivory seizures. Ivory, of course, is not a perishable commodity, but little is actually understood about time lags. In fact, the time between poaching and seizure may be considerable and span a year or more. For ivory leaking from ivory stockpiles, even greater time lags are possibly the norm. This is an issue that remains to be adequately explored, but may be a key factor in explaining differences between MIKE and ETIS results in specific years or over time periods.

Following on from the above point, information in this report from the African Elephant Specialist Group on the status of elephant populations in various range States notes significant population decline in a number of key countries, such as the United Republic of Tanzania. Indeed, in May 2015, the Tanzanian government, whose country was previously regarded as having the second largest population of African Elephants, announced a 60% decline in elephant numbers over the last five years (Nyalandu, 2015). Such losses are the result of ongoing attrition over a period of time and are certainly reflected in the record levels of illegal ivory trade presented in this analysis.

Finally, the apparent increase in illegal ivory trade activity in the medium raw ivory weight class is worth noting and could be partially explained to some degree as an example of criminal adaptation away from container shipping in response to the increasing number of large-scale seizures that have been interdicted at both exit and entry ports around the world. Since CoP16, the use of couriers or groups of couriers to move smaller and more diffuse quantities of ivory through air travel channels has been increasingly noted. Like large-scale movements of ivory, these illegal ivory trade movements are believed to reflect organised criminal activity. This is a consideration that bears careful attention going forward not only to track patterns of adaptation in terms of criminal activity, but also to more fully understand the role of organised crime in the illegal trade in ivory.

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**Recommendations concerning elephant,
agreed by the Standing Committee at its 65th meeting,
and based on considerations of documents SC65 Doc. 42.1, Doc. 42.2 and Doc. 42.7
(see documents SC65 Com. 7, SC65 Doc. 9 and SC65 Summary record).**

Document SC65 Doc. 42.1

Arising from Decisions 16.79

- a) request Cameroon, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique and Nigeria to:
- i) work with the Secretariat and its consultants to finalize the development of national ivory action plans with time frames and milestones, by 31 October 2014, and to take urgent measures ensuring significant progress by SC66 on the implementation of their national ivory action plans; and
 - ii) submit a comprehensive report to the Secretariat by 15 May 2015, in the format provided in the Secretariat's evaluation of the progress reports as presented in the Annex to document SC65 Doc. 42.2, so that the Secretariat can make the reports available to the Standing Committee and convey any recommendations it may have, as appropriate, at SC66;

With regard to Parties of "Importance to Watch"

Arising from Decisions 16.80

- b) request Japan, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to submit a report to the Secretariat on their implementation of CITES provisions concerning control of trade in elephant ivory and ivory markets, by 15 May 2015, so that the Secretariat can make the reports available to the Standing Committee and convey any recommendations it may have, as appropriate, at SC66;
- c) request Angola, Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to:
- i) work with the Secretariat and its consultants to finalize the development of national ivory action plans with time frames and milestones, similar to those that will be developed by countries of 'secondary concern', by 31 October 2014, and to take urgent measures ensuring significant progress by SC66 on the implementation of their national ivory action plans; and
 - ii) submit a comprehensive report to the Secretariat by 15 May 2015, in the format provided in the Secretariat's evaluation of the progress reports as presented in the Annex to document SC65 Doc. 42.2, so that the Secretariat can make the reports available to the Standing Committee and convey any recommendations it may have, as appropriate, at SC66;

With regard to Parties of "Secondary Concern" and "Importance to Watch"

- d) request the Secretariat to
- i) make the national ivory action plans referred to in paragraphs a) and c) public;
 - ii) inform the Standing Committee in case a country fails to submit an adequate national ivory action plan by the deadlines specified in paragraphs a) and c), for the Standing Committee to consider taking appropriate intersessional decisions, which may include compliance measures as necessary; and
 - iii) recommend to Parties that develop or update national ivory action plans to include, where possible, indicators to measure the impacts of the actions in the NIAPs (e.g. through data on elephant poaching levels; number of ivory seizures; successful prosecutions; progress on paragraph d) under "Regarding trade in elephant specimens" of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16); and changes to legislation);

Arising from Decision 16.78, paragraph b)

- e) encourage all Parties to make full use of the “Guidelines for forensic methods and procedures of ivory sampling and analysis” developed by UNODC, to promote the use of forensic analysis to the fullest extent possible to combat the illegal ivory trade;
- f) request the Secretariat to compile a list of appropriate forensic-analysis facilities capable of reliably determining the age or origin of ivory, or both, for distribution to the Parties;

Arising from Decision 16.83

- g) encourage Parties that submit ivory samples for analysis in accordance with Decision 16.83, to use the forensic analysis results as suggested in paragraphs 39 and 40 of document SC65 Doc. 42.1;
- h) encourage Parties to share with the Secretariat and affected countries of origin information on the origin of ivory specimens, arising from forensic analysis of ivory samples, for use in further investigation and prosecution in these countries and by the MIKE and ETIS programmes and their reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties;
- i) encourage Parties affected by illegal ivory trade, as a source, transit or destination country, to develop national sampling and funding strategies aimed at promoting the collection of samples from seized ivory for forensic analysis both from large ivory seizures and from stockpiles;
- j) encourage Parties and the donor community to provide financial support to the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) and to Parties and territories that make large ivory seizures (i.e. 500 kg or more) but lack the capacity and financial resources to implement the provisions of Decision 16.83 to support the collection and analysis of ivory samples from such seizures;
- k) encourage Parties and the donor community to provide financial support to Parties and territories that wish to collect samples from their national ivory stockpiles for forensic analysis but lack the capacity and financial resources to do so.

Arising from Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) in the section “Regarding trade in elephant specimens”, paragraph e)

- l) the Secretariat to make country-specific data from the ivory stock declarations of Parties available to MIKE and ETIS for analysis, and report an aggregated summary of this data to the Standing Committee at its regular meetings and the meetings of the Conference of the Parties;
- m) encourage all Parties in whose territory legal ivory markets exist or that export pre-convention raw elephant ivory for commercial purposes, to provide wholesale price data on such sales of raw ivory to the Secretariat, for integration into MIKE and ETIS analyses.
- n) the Secretariat, through MIKE and ETIS, to identify Parties of “Primary Concern”, “Secondary Concern” or “Importance to Watch” for consideration by the Standing Committee at SC67, based on an analysis of all data in the last five years available to MIKE and ETIS and using scientific and clear methodologies.
- o) Request the CITES Ivory Enforcement Task Force to examine the trade in preconvention ivory and the possible laundering of illegal ivory into this trade and report its findings and recommendations to SC66 or SC67.

Document SC65 Doc. 42.2

With regard to Parties of “Primary Concern”

Arising from the recommendations adopted by the 64th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC64, Bangkok, March 2013)

- a) note the Secretariat’s evaluation of the progress reports submitted by China, Kenya, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam on the implementation of their NIAPs, as presented in the Annex to document SC65 Doc. 42.2;

- b) encourage the eight Parties to review and, as necessary, revise their NIAPs, including the milestones and timeframes and, where possible, to include indicators to measure the impacts of actions in the NIAPs (e.g. through data on elephant poaching levels; number of ivory seizures; successful prosecutions; progress on paragraph d) under “Regarding trade in elephant specimens” of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16); and changes to legislation), based upon any new identified needs and these Parties’ own evaluations of progress¹⁸. In doing so, the eight Parties are further encouraged to take into consideration the evaluation of the Secretariat, in particular the actions where progress was rated as ‘challenging’ or ‘unclear’;
- c) request the eight Parties to continue to implement their NIAPs between SC65 and SC66, in accordance with the milestones and timeframes in each NIAP, and including any revisions made to their NIAPs as referred to in recommendation b) above;
- d) request the Parties of “Primary Concern” to report on the further measures taken to implement their NIAPs to the Secretariat by 15 May 2015 and in the format used for the Secretariat’s evaluation of the progress reports as presented in the Annex to document SC65 42.2, so that the Secretariat can make the reports available to the Standing Committee and convey any recommendations it may have, as appropriate, at SC66;
- e) request the Secretariat to evaluate the reports submitted in compliance with the recommendation in paragraph d), including its footnote, and convey its findings and recommendations at SC66 in the format as submitted to SC65; and
- f) taking into consideration the reports and the Secretariat’s evaluation, the Standing Committee will, at its 66th meeting, decide whether Parties have substantially achieved their NIAPs and should no longer be considered of primary concern; or have made progress but remain of primary concern; or have made insufficient progress and require compliance measures.

Document SC65 Doc. 42.7

The Standing Committee:

- a) Notes the action taken by Kenya, Gabon, the Philippines, India, United States, China including Hong Kong SAR, France, Chad, Belgium, and Portugal in destroying stockpiles of mainly illegally sourced ivory since 2011;
- b) Requests the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to provide guidance¹⁹, in accordance with the provisions of Resolutions Conf. 9.10 (Rev. CoP15) and Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP16) on “best practices” for management of legal and illegal ivory stockpiles and make it available to Parties;
- c) Encourages governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, if requested, to provide support to range States and other countries to plan for and implement the management of ivory stockpiles for the purposes of these recommendations; and

¹⁸ 1. *The Standing Committee recommends that Thailand submits to the Secretariat a revised NIAP by 30 September 2014, which should include the following actions, to be achieved by 31 March 2015:*

- a) *the enactment of appropriate legislative or regulatory provisions (such as the inclusion of the African elephant as "protected species" under the Wildlife Act) that allow for the effective control of domestic trade and possession of elephant ivory and provide for strict penalties in case of illegal possession or illegal domestic trade of ivory;*
- b) *the enactment of legislative or regulatory controls establishing (i) a comprehensive registration system for domestic ivory and (ii) an effective system for registration and licensing of ivory traders (including enforcement and penalisation in case of offences); if those controls are already in place, Thailand should inform the Secretariat on the acts establishing those controls;*
- c) *increases efforts on the monitoring and control of ivory traders and ivory data, as well for law enforcement efforts against illegal ivory trade, including indicators on how those efforts will be measured.*

The Standing Committee further recommends that Thailand submits a progress report to the Secretariat of the aforementioned actions by 15 January 2015. The Committee, after assessing Thailand’s progress, in consultation with the Secretariat, will make such recommendations as appropriate.

- 2. *The Standing Committee requests Thailand to submit a further progress report by 31 March 2015, on which date it will assess Thailand’s progress in consultation with the Secretariat, convey its assessment to Thailand and, if it is not satisfied that the actions in point 1. above have been achieved, shall proceed appropriately by postal procedure in accordance with provisions in Resolution Conf. 14.3, paragraph 30.*

¹⁹ *Guidance can include inter alia security, inventory procedures, transparency in tracking, reporting costs of storage/security, destruction options, DNA sampling and analysis, pre- and post- destruction monitoring, and the use of residual material;*

- d) Requests the Secretariat to report on progress made with regard to paragraph b) to the 66th Standing Committee meeting.