

BIONNIAL REPORT FOR SIERRA LEONE CITES MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE PERIOD 2005 – 2006

October, 2007.

This report intend to cover areas pertinent to the implementation of the cites convention for the period indicated above. These areas primarily include:

1. Compliance and enforcement

Within the period under review, serious attention continued to be given to complying and enforcing the convention as this is observed as one of the basic elements for the implementation of the convention.

Since the ratification of the convention in 1995, Sierra Leone had complied by putting in place a Management Authority and Scientific Authority for fulfilling Article IX of the convention, and these organs are still in place and functional.

- Though we have not exported anything in the last 2-3 years due to trade suspension emanating from bird flu (H5NI) and EU significant trade level on species on appendix II P.e. timneh, it has always been our guide to permitting trade in cites – listed specimens only to the extent consistent with the procedures laid down in the convention Articles
- We have always taken cognizance of the appropriate domestic measures to enforce the provisions of the convention and prohibit trade in violation, e.g. confiscation of chimpanzees and imposing punishments in local courts especially in rural communities. 5 (five) chimpanzees have been seized within the period under review and handed over by us to the Sierra Leone Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Sanctuary for reintegration re-introduction.
- A total of 10 elephants were discovered illegally hunted between 2006 and April, 2007 by local and outside poachers in the Outamba-Kilimi National Park and the Loma Mountains Non Hunting Forestry Reserve. Two poachers were caught and detained pending trial of the case, when it was later learnt that they broke open the confinement and escaped. The anti-poaching squad of the park discovered in one of the dead elephants I ivory half way removed. This is now kept in the parks warehouse, it weighs roughly 3 kg. The matter is still with the police and warrant of arrest for both poachers is also still pending.
- This MA has always maintained records of trade, and as well as the submission of periodic reports to WCMC through the Secretariat even before the trade suspension in June. It is also our duty concern to respond to communications with the Secretariat as soon as necessary,

and especially those connected with trade information on species, e.g. Appendix I and review of significant trade in specimens of Appendix II species (Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP 13) paragraph 1)

2. Legislative and Regulatory Measures

A legislation plan and a Cabinet Paper requesting for an amendment of the Sierra Leone Wildlife Conservation Act of 1972 and regulations were submitted to Cabinet for its approval, even before this period of reporting. Hiccups to this development includes:

- at the beginning, cabinet recommended a delay of the approval in order to include contributions into the cabinet paper from other line ministries.
- Before this process could be completed, a presidential Executive Order divorced Forestry and Environment Divisions from their respective ministries to form a National Commission on Environment and Forestry (NaCEF) in 2003, hence another set back of the amendment process.
- The proposed amended documents, including the cites model law and plan of action have again been submitted to a newly established National Law Reform Commission in early 2007 for draughting. The Objective of this Commission is to up-date all outdated laws of Sierra Leone to current standard. It is understood that work is in progress, and it is hoped to be completed this year.
Of late (after the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary elections) we have been reverted back to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Food Security.

3. Administrative Measures

The Convention is administered by the Cites Management Authority of Sierra Leone of which the Forestry Division is the focal body responsible for the implementation of the convention, and whilst the Wildlife Conservation Branch of Forestry is the enforcing body, assisted by the police and the customs and Excise Personnel. (at boarder posts, harbour and airport). There is cordiality in information sharing and discharge of individual group duties.

There is also the Scientific Authority of which the Department of Applied Sciences of the University of Sierra Leone is in care. This organ complements the work of the MA by providing advise and pertinent Scientific information, particularly in its functional role as Scientific Authority.

The Scientific Authority is now copting other research institutions such as the Agricultural Research Council, and others from the Njala University of Sierra Leone inorder to enlarge itself for effective undertakings of research.

- Some of the undertakings of the Scientific Authority within the period under review include the Pre-assessment of Chimpanzee Populations and habitat condition at the Bunbuna water fall, prior to the construction of the Bunbuna Hydro Power dam, with the view to determine the effect of flooding after completion.

One of the recommendations of this Project amongst others is to provide a corridor for Chimps and other key animal species into safe areas, and Loma Mountains non Hunting Forest Reserve being one. This project is funded by the World Bank for Hydro Power consumption in Sierra Leone.

- A substantial amount of plants have been collected from the study site and exported to UK laboratories for identification and classification purpose.

The SA is handicapped in many areas, some of these areas include lack of equipment, such as computers and lap-tops, and funds to conduct research for fulfillment of its function as SA.

4. Wildlife Law enforcement Training Workshop (on CITES implementation)

This workshop was held for 2 days, starting from March 28th to March 29th, 2007 in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The workshop was funded by the Jane Goodall Institute for Conservation, Education and Research and the Humane Society International. The workshop had 90% of Cites legal contents in order to help participant correctly and lawfully implement Cites.

The trainer of the Workshop was Madam Birgith Sloth. She has close to 30 years experience of working with Wildlife enforcement and Cites first in Denmark as Cites Management Authority, then with developing and enforcing EU Wildlife trade regulations and later Wildlife Law enforcement and CITES Capacity building in the Baltic states, Slovakia, Hungary, Cyprus, Croatia, Russia, etc., etc. She was also assisted by Alice Stroud from SSN, who is also the regional representative for Anglophone Africa based in the USA. She has legal background with effective and sound conservation understanding. She never limited herself only on the workshop, but even after that she continue assist to promote capacity building for staff and public sensitization on elephant protection and conservation through the provision of posters, she is also building cooperation between government and the conservation NGOs in the country, eg. CSSL (Conservation Society of Sierra Leone).

The immediate objective of the training, amongst others include:

- to give an overall introduction to national and international (CITES) enforcement laws;
- introduce authorities and non-governmental organizations working with wildlife enforcement and their role in Wildlife enforcement;

to familiarize the customs and other authorities with some of the more common wildlife, cites species and items in trade in order to assist him/her in knowing when a case might involve breach of national wildlife laws or CITES; and

- to provide the officers with information on procedures to be followed at the borders and how to control the validity of a CITES Permit.

Teaching aid for the workshop included national and international specimens brought into the country on loan from the MA of the Netherlands government. It was made possible with the use of Import and Export permits from both countries, i.e. Sierra Leone and the Netherlands. These are assorted specimens of appendices I, II, and III, i.e. skins, bones, ivory, leather bags, belts and pause, to mentioned but few.

The training workshop was attended by the MA of Sierra Leone itself, customs officials, police personnel, the military, the SA and a number of NGOs Attorney Generals office.

On the whole, the workshop was appreciative, educative and constructive. It also provides room for interactions between participants, but time frame too short for so much material intake. It was the concern raised by all participants, and would appreciate a more detail and well timed training workshop.