

**1st Meeting of Range States for the Joint CMS – CITES
African Carnivore Initiative (ACI1)**

Bonn, Germany, 5 – 8 November 2018

CMS-CITES/ACI1/Inf. 15

**IMPLEMENTATION OF CITES DECISIONS 17.241 TO 17.245 ON AFRICAN LION
(PANTHERA LEO)**

(As at 2 November 2018/Prepared by the CITES Secretariat)

Summary:

This document provides an overview of the status of implementation of CITES Decisions 17.241 to 17.245 on African lion (*Panthera leo*).

The overview is intended to guide discussions on African lions at the 1st Meeting of Range States for the Joint CMS-CITES African Carnivore Initiative. The outcomes of these discussions should inform future work on African lions to be conducted under the auspices of CITES and will help to clarify the role of the African Carnivore Initiative in lion conservation in Africa.

1. This document has been prepared by the CITES Secretariat.
2. At the 17th meeting of the CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), Decisions 17.241 to 17.245 on *African lion* (*Panthera leo*) were adopted. They are shown in Annex 1.
3. The Animals and Standing Committees reviewed progress on their implementation at their 30th (AC30, Geneva, 2018) and 70th (SC70, Sochi, 2018) meetings, respectively. This was based on documents from the CITES Secretariat (documents [AC30 Doc. 25](#) and [SC70 Doc. 54.1](#)) and from Niger, as chair of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on African lions (document [SC70 Doc. 54.2](#)). The paragraphs below summarise relevant outcomes of these meetings.

Implementation of CITES Decision 17.241

4. In document [SC70 Doc. 54.1](#), the Secretariat reported that paragraph e) of this Decision [undertake a study on trade in lion specimens] had been implemented. The remaining paragraphs of Decision 17.241 have not yet been fully implemented.
5. In document [AC30 Doc. 25](#), the Secretariat explained how an African lion conservation framework, to be developed by the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group with generous support from Switzerland, would contribute to the implementation of paragraphs a), b), c), d), f), and g) of Decision 17.241 and to CMS Decision 12.67 on *Conservation and Management of the African Lion* (*Panthera leo*).
6. The framework, entitled *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*, aims to guide the conservation of lions across sub-Saharan Africa through collating concepts, best practice experiences and recommendations in order to facilitate the implementation of the Conservation Strategy for the Lion in West and Central Africa (IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, 2006¹), the Conservation Strategy for the Lion in Eastern and Southern Africa (IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, 2006²) and National or Regional Action Plans developed based on the two Strategies. The *Guidelines* have been made available to the present meeting for further consideration.
7. As noted in document [AC30 Doc. 25](#), this guiding document is to be developed in consultation with African lion range States. The First Meeting of Range States for the Joint CMS–CITES African Carnivore Initiative provides an opportunity for range States to discuss and approve the content of the document. The *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* inform about priority activity areas for the conservation of lions and should facilitate, under the auspices of CITES and CMS, the cooperation between lion range States sharing transboundary populations.
8. The present meeting could reflect upon the status and pertinence of the measures called for in Decision 17.241, and propose revisions in the light of the progress achieved to date in implementing paragraphs a) to k), as well as the actions called for in the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa*.

Implementation of CITES Decision 17.243

9. At SC70, the Standing Committee noted that Decision 17.243 had not yet been implemented [see [SC Sum. 5 \(03/10/18\)](#)]. It became clear that this particularly applied to the actions called for in paragraphs c) and d) of the Decision [relating to the establishment of a CITES Task Force on African lions], and paragraph e) [establishment of a multi-donor technical trust fund].

¹ IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group. 2006a. *Conservation Strategy for the Lion in West and Central Africa*. IUCN, Yaounde, 44 pp. Available in [English](#) and [French](#) (accessed on 01.10.18).

² IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group. 2006b. *Conservation Strategy for the Lion in East and Southern Africa*. Johannesburg, South Africa, 55 pp. Available [here](#) (accessed on 01.10.18).

10. The Standing Committee recommended that the implementation of Decision 17.243 be further discussed at the present meeting, taking into account the information and draft recommendations in documents [SC70 Doc. 54.1](#) and [54.2](#). These are shown below.

Relevant information and draft recommendations contained in document SC70 Doc. 54.1 [relevant to Decision 17.243, paragraph a)]

11. With reference to the implementation of the study on legal and illegal trade in African lions [Decision 17.241, paragraph e)], the Animals Committee submitted the following recommendations to the Standing Committee at its 70th meeting (see [SC70 Doc. 54.1, Annex](#)):
- i) Information on the populations, illegal killing and illegal trade of all big cats should be shared amongst Parties in order to be able to detect trends, possible common issues and any linkages.*
 - ii) Parties should be encouraged that when collecting and communicating data on illegal killing and illegal trade in lions and other big cats, details on which parts were removed, or which parts were observed in illegal trade, should be captured.*
 - iii) In order to improve traceability Parties that are importing lion specimens from South Africa are encouraged to use the information generated by South Africa's Barcode of Wildlife Project that South Africa developed for priority CITES species including lions and including DNA analyses of lions bred in captivity and exported as skeletons.*
12. Concerning the recommendations from the Animals Committee in the paragraph above, the Secretariat made the following observations: On reporting requirements for African lions, there may be overlap or duplication with existing obligations, such as annual trade reporting and annual illegal trade reporting. Concerning information on populations, illegal killing and illegal trade of big cats, Parties could consider and draw upon the study on trade in and conservation of Asian big cats in document SC70 Doc. 51, which also touches upon lions and other big cats. With regard to monitoring the illegal killing of African lions, one option could be to direct the Secretariat to explore if there is scope for collecting such data through the network of MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants) sites in Africa.
13. The Secretariat further noted that, based on the study on the legal and illegal trade in African lions, several additional recommendations could be developed in the form of draft decisions. These could address the following:

Directed to range States and consumer countries of African lions:

- a) Encourage range States of African lions and consumer countries to increase enforcement efforts to detect illegal, unreported or miss-reported trade in lion specimens;

Directed to the Secretariat, and pending external resources as necessary:

- b) Develop a working definition for "big cats";
- c) Explore possible linkages between trade in specimens of different big cat species, taking into consideration the CITES measures in place for trade in big cats, and analysis of trends in legal and illegal trade in big cats;
- d) In consultation with relevant experts, develop and support the use of appropriate forensic-type techniques to allow for the identification of lions (and other big cat species) in trade, including in highly processed products;

- e) Encourage research to understand the commodities in trade (glue, wine etc.) which contain, or claim to contain, lion;
- f) Develop guidance materials for the identification of lion products and parts in trade (including differentiation with other cats); and
- g) Examine the use of the purpose code “H” to determine if trade in lion specimens reported under this source code is following the guidance in Resolution Conf. 12.3, paragraph 3 h), and assess if additional descriptions of specimens and units of quantity are needed to cover trade in specimens of lions and other big cats (and incorporation as needed into the “Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports” and the “Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report”).

Relevant information and draft recommendations contained in document SC70 Doc. 54.2 [relevant to Decision 17.243, paragraphs b) to e)]

14. The document was submitted by Niger as Chair of the Standing Committee’s intersessional working group on African lion, established at its 69th meeting (SC69, Geneva, 2017). It contains the working group’s composition and mandate, and its recommendations which are shown in an Annex.
15. Because participation in the working group had remained limited, the Standing Committee, at SC70, encouraged African lion range States to provide further inputs and comments to Niger, as Chair of the intersessional working group on lions, on the draft recommendations contained in document SC70 Doc. 54.2 prior to the second African lion range States meeting [see [SC70 Sum. 5](#) (Rev. 1)].
16. Niger could be invited at the present meeting to give updates on the working group’s draft recommendations, reflecting inputs from African lion range States that may have been received. Those that were contained in the Annex to document SC70 Doc. 54.2 included the following:
 - (i) The development of a dedicated resolution on African lions for submission to CoP18, with draft text and considerations for such a resolution presented.
 - (ii) Participants at the present meeting should provide guidance to the CITES and CMS Secretariats on the prioritization of activities to be promoted or funded under the African Carnivore Initiative.
 - (iii) CITES decisions should be adopted at CoP18 on a process for the establishment of a multi-donor technical trust fund for African lions, and on the establishment of CITES Task Force on African lions.
 - (iv) The present meeting should be used to discuss the terms of reference and modus operandi for the CITES Task Force on African lions envisaged in Decision 17.243, including sources of funding.

Implementation of CITES Decisions 17.242, 17.244 and 17.245

17. Concerning Decision 17.242, the Animals Committee reviewed the Secretariat’s updates at AC29 and AC30, supported the implementation of the study called for in Decision 17.242, paragraph e), and submitted recommendations to the Standing Committee as per paragraph 11 above.
18. To facilitate and support Decisions 17.244 and 17.245, the Secretariat disseminated in April 2018 a Notification to the Parties ([Notif. 2018/042](#)) with information on existing funding opportunities that can support the implementation of conservation and management plans and strategies for the African lion, and the actions outlined in Decision 17.241, paragraphs a) to j).

Conclusions and recommendations

19. The Standing Committee requested the Secretariat to work with the Chairs of the Animals and Standing Committees in preparing and submitting a report on the implementation of Decisions 17.241 to 17.245 on African lion to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18).
20. The First Meeting of Range States for the Joint CMS–CITES African Carnivore Initiative provides an opportunity for range States to agree on further work on African lions that could be proposed for consideration at CITES CoP18 through the reporting indicated in the paragraph above. Range States could therefore consider:
 - a) The status of implementation of relevant CITES Decisions on African lions, with a view of revising or reviewing those that remain pertinent, and taking account of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of Lions in Africa* and the advice formulated at the Animals and Standing Committee meetings as indicated above; and
 - b) The activities that should be prioritized under the African Carnivore Initiative on African lions, and the role that the range States, and CITES and CMS Secretariats, should play in supporting them.

Annex 1**CITES Decisions on African lion (*Panthera leo*) adopted at
CITES CoP17 (Johannesburg, 2016)****Directed to the Secretariat**

17.241 *Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall, in collaboration with African lion range States, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):*

- a) *investigate possible mechanisms to develop and support the implementation of joint lion conservation plans and strategies, taking into consideration existing lion conservation plans and strategies;*
- b) *develop an inventory of African lion populations across its range, taking due consideration of existing inventories developed by African lion range States;*
- c) *support the development of relevant databases by African lion range States;*
- d) *develop strategies to reinforce international cooperation on the management of lions;*
- e) *undertake studies on legal and illegal trade in lions, including lion bones and other parts and derivatives, to ascertain the origin and smuggling routes, in collaboration with TRAFFIC and/or other relevant organisations;*
- f) *undertake a comparative study of lion population trends and conservation and management practices, such as lion hunting, within and between countries, including the role, if any, of international trade;*
- g) *support capacity-building in lion conservation and management, including where appropriate the making of non-detriment findings where a range State requests it;*
- h) *support public awareness raising as well as education programmes in African lion range States, in order to support co-existence between humans and lions and to promote measures for the conservation and recovery of African lion populations;*
- i) *promote fundraising, as part of its overall fundraising initiatives, to support the effective implementation of conservation and management plans and strategies for African lion and for a CITES Task Force on African lions;*
- j) *create a portal on the CITES website to permit, amongst other things, the posting and sharing of information and voluntary guidance on the making of non-detriment findings for African lion; and*
- k) *report on the progress relating to paragraph a) – j) to the 29th and 30th Animals Committee meetings.*

Directed to the Animals Committee

17.242 *The Animals Committee shall consider the report of the Secretariat and submit recommendations to the 69th and the 70th Standing Committee meetings and the African lion range States, as appropriate.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

17.243 *The Standing Committee shall, at its 69th and 70th meetings:*

- a) *consider the reports submitted by the Animals Committee in terms of Decision 17.242;*
- b) *recommend further actions to be taken; including the possible need for the development of a Resolution on the conservation of African lion;*
- c) *establish a CITES Task Force on African lions, inviting the participation of all African lion range States, consumer states for lion parts and derivatives, and relevant enforcement bodies, including the members of the Task Force of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC);*
- d) *provide terms of reference and modus operandi for this Task Force; and*
- e) *consider the establishment of a multi-donor technical trust fund to attract funding and direct resources for the work of the CITES Task Force on African lions and to support the effective implementation of conservation and management plans and strategies for African lion.*

Directed to African lion range States

17.244 *Directed to African lion range States African lion range States are encouraged to collaborate in implementing the decisions contained in Decisions 17.241 paragraphs a) - j) and 17.243 paragraph c).*

Decision directed to all Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organisations, donors and other entities

17.245 *Directed to all Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, nongovernmental organizations, donors and other entities All Parties, governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, donors and other entities are encouraged to support the African lion range States and the Secretariat: a) in their efforts to conserve and restore this iconic species across the continent, taking into consideration existing land-use practices; and b) in implementing the decisions contained in Decision 17.241 paragraphs a) - j).*