**5th Meeting of the Sessional Committee of the**

**CMS Scientific Council (ScC-SC5)**

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**CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE LEOPARD (*PANTHERA PARDUS*) IN AFRICA**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

Summary:

On the basis of CMS Decision 13.97 *Conservation and Management of the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa*, the Sessional Committee is requested to review the *Roadmap for the Conservation of Leopards in Africa*, and formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Range States, IUCN and others, as needed.

This document is accompanied by one Annex: *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa.*

**CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE LEOPARD (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa**

Background

1. CMS Decision 13.97 *Conservation and Management of the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa* and directed to the Scientific Council provides:

*The Scientific Council shall* *review the Roadmap for the Conservation of Leopards in Africa contained in UNEP/CMS/COP13 Doc.26.3.1/Annex 4, and formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Range States, IUCN and others, as needed.*

History of the *Roadmap for the Conservation of Leopards in Africa*

1. The conservation of Leopard has received international attention for a long time. The Leopard has been listed on Appendix I of CITES since 1975, regulating the trade of its skins or products. Since then, a series of decisions regarding Leopard skin trade has been adopted under CITES.
2. In October 2017, at the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP12, Manila), the Leopard was listed under CMS Appendix II, as this species has many transboundary populations across its global range and its conservation would benefit from enhanced international cooperation.
3. As a consequence of the listing, the CMS Secretariat commissioned the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group to draft a *Roadmap for the* *Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* as an input document to the first Range State Meeting of the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI1) in November 2018. At this meeting, the first draft of the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* was presented and shared with the Range States for review, in order for a revised version to be submitted to CITES COP18 (2019, Geneva, Switzerland) and CMS COP13 (2020, Gandhinagar, India). It was developed further with inputs from Range States, and Version 1.0 was finalized by IUCN.
4. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.254 and 18.255 on *Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa*, requesting the CITES Animals Committee to review the *Roadmap for the Conservation of* *Leopards in Africa* and make recommendations, as appropriate, concerning the aspects of it that relate to the implementation of CITES. Subsequently, the CITES Secretariat shared the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* with the Animals Committee in December 2019 and in March 2020 (see also Paragraph 10).
5. In February 2020, CMS COP13 took note of the *Roadmap for the Conservation of Leopards in Africa* under agenda item 26.3.1 Joint CMS-CITES African Carnivores Initiative. COP13 also adopted Resolution 13.4 *Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative* and Decisions 13.86 to 13.87 *Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative*, instructing the CMS Secretariat to cooperate closely with the CITES Secretariat, and in collaboration with IUCN, to develop a dedicated Programme of Work (POW) for the ACI. The *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* forms a basis for this draft POW.
6. As instructed by COP13 Decision 13.97, the Scientific Council should review the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa*, and formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Range States, IUCN and others, as needed.

Issue: Ongoing consultation of the CITES Animals Committee

1. As per CITES Decision 18.254 and 18.255 *Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa*, the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa*and any relevant update have also been shared with the CITES Animals Committee for its review, as appropriate. During the 31st meeting of the CITES Animals Committee, which took place from 31 May - 22 June 2021, the Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 29.1 and agreed to submit to CITES COP19 the following draft decisions:

19.XX Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall share with the Animals Committee the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for its review.

19.YY Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall review the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* by IUCN, and make recommendations, as appropriate, concerning the aspects of it that relate to the implementation of CITES.

1. Since the IUCN’s *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa*was developed to guide Leopard conservation activities of both CITES and CMS, it should reflect relevant policies of both Conventions a joint document between CITES and CMS, and each Convention body should remain informed about revisions made by the other.

Discussion and analysis

1. The *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* shall provide the background for the development of transboundary Regional Conservation Strategies and subsequently National Action Plans for the implementation of sensible conservation actions for the Leopard in Africa under CMS and CITES. As per CMS Decision 13.96(a), it also forms the basis for Leopard conservation measures under the draft *Programme of Work* for theACI.
2. The Sessional Committee is informed that the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* is intended to form a living document and therefore will continuously integrate new instruments, tools, concepts and experiences as they are being developed or as new insight becomes available. The proposed revisions of it should be discussed and agreed by ACI Range States, preferably at ACI Range State meetings, where CMS and CITES Parties are joined and no further back-and-forth exchange between Convention bodies is required.

Recommended actions

1. The Sessional Committee is recommended to review the document contained in the Annex of this document and formulate recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Range States, IUCN and others, as needed.