



35th Anniversary of CITES

The Africa Regional Bureau of the Species Survival Network (SSN) is devoting this issue to the 35th anniversary of the entry into force of CITES. SSN warmly congratulates CITES Parties for joining efforts to protect endangered and threatened species against the harmful effects of unregulated international trade by ratifying and implementing the CITES treaty. SSN has been an active participant in CITES meetings for the last 17 years and stands as a prime witness to the multiple successes of the Convention. Despite the many challenges that the 175 CITES Parties still need to overcome to ensure sufficient

protection of internationally traded species, CITES remains an invaluable tool for the conservation of species in trade. SSN and its member organizations are honored to work with the CITES Parties to strengthen the conservation of these species. This month, the newsletter presents the very encouraging results of a recent chimpanzee survey

in Sierra Leone that showed that the population is double previous estimates. We also express our warmest congratulations to the Government of Liberia for its decision to suspend wildlife exports as a precautionary measure to preserve the country's wildlife. Finally, we address the need for increased protection for hippopotamuses in Burkina

Faso, and review reports showing the existence of an illegal trade in cheetahs from East Africa to the Middle East.

Enjoy!

Will Travers, Shelley Waterland and Alice Stroud, SSN Africa Regional Bureau



Display warning tourists not to illegally import protected Felidae skins, Atlanta airport, United States.

Latest CITES Postings and Notifications

◆ The Secretariat informed Parties of changes to the Standing Committee's recommendations to suspend trade made in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP13) or with Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.), which the later resolution replaced (CITES Notification No. 2010/012)

◆ The Secretariat distributed revised *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* (CITES Notification No. 2010/013). The revised guidelines can be downloaded at <<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2010/E013A.pdf>>

◆ The Secretariat distributed a list of stony coral genera for which identification to genus level only is acceptable, and reminded Parties that these taxa

should be identified to the species level where feasible (CITES Notification No. 2010/014).

◆ The Secretariat informed Parties that the Standing Committee had adopted a recommendation to suspend trade with Madagascar in Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) specimens. Parties are requested not to accept imports of Nile crocodile specimens coming from Madagascar until further notice (CITES Notification No. 2010/015).

◆ The Secretariat informed Parties that the thirty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of CITES was on 1 July 2010, and provided details on the celebration of this benchmark and on the launch of the "CITES Trade Data Dashboards", a new section on the CITES web-

site (CITES Notification No. 2010/016). The CITES Trade Data Dashboards can be accessed at <<http://cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2010/dashboards.shtml>>.

◆ The Secretariat informed Parties of the publication (in English only) of a *Case Study Handbook on Wildlife Smuggling Concealment* by the General Secretariat of ICPO-INTERPOL (CITES Notification No. 2010/017). The handbook will soon be made available in pdf format via the Enforcement Authority Forum on the CITES website. Official governmental law enforcement agencies can also request hard copies by contacting the General Secretariat of ICPO-INTERPOL at : environmentalcrime@interpol.int

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Important CITES Dates

- **19-23 July 2010:** CITES-FAO workshop to review the application and effectiveness of international regulatory measures for the conservation and sustainable use of elasmobranchs
- **31 July 2010:** deadline for Parties to submit information relating to incidents of poaching of and illegal trade in tigers
- **31 December 2010:** deadline for African elephant range States that wish to authorize export of raw ivory in accordance with Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP15) to communicate in writing to the Secretariat export quotas for raw ivory for 2011

Illegal Trade in Cheetahs from East Africa to the Middle East

On 10 June 2010, UAE authorities confiscated a cargo of 15 cheetah cubs (*Acinonyx jubatus*) illegally shipped from Somalia and intercepted at Dubai International Airport. Six out of the 15 animals had died before arrival because of poor transport conditions, and the rest of the animals are now being treated for severe stress, dehydration, malnutrition and possible bacterial and parasitic infections. Cheetahs are listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List and are included in CITES Appendix I, which prohibits their commercial trade and requires that all animals transported for non-commercial trade be accompanied by the necessary CITES permits and be “so prepared and shipped as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment” (CITES Article III). The United Arab Emirates (UAE) are a common destination for illegal imports of cheetahs. Available reports show that



Confiscated cheetah cub showing loss of hair from poor transport conditions (left) and confiscated cheetah (right) © Breeding Center for Endangered Arabian Wildlife

cheetahs are imported illegally, as 4-8 week old cubs, for the pet trade and for hunting, primarily from Somalia or Sudan (Haas van Dorsser et al., 2002). The value of a six-week old cheetah ranges between US\$3,000-5,000 in the UAE, and can reach higher prices depending on the buyer. Between 1998 and 2002, 39 juvenile cheetahs were confiscated at the Sharjah airport alone, one of the less busy airports of the UAE, and authorities believe that only a fraction of illegal imports are actually



seized (*ibid*). SSN is concerned by the volume of this illegal trade in juvenile cheetahs, and congratulates the UAE authorities for this successful seizure. SSN also encourages UAE authorities to strengthen their enforcement efforts, and to collaborate with cheetah range States to stop this illegal trade.

SSN has created a Big Cat Working Group to inform discussion and decision-making at CITES meetings with regards to conservation and trade in Appendix I and II African and Asian big cats. Between CITES meetings, members of the SSN Big Cat Working Group undertake independent and collaborative efforts to raise the profile of the species in range and consumer States. Please contact the SSN Africa Regional Bureau if you need additional information on illegal trade in cheetahs or if you need assistance with activities related to their conservation.

Estimates of Sierra Leone's Wild Chimpanzee Population Double

Experts from the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary recently conducted countrywide survey of endangered Western chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes verus*) in Sierra Leone, with support from SSN member organization the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (<http://pasaprimates.org/>) and endorsement from the Sierra Leone authorities. Results of the survey revealed that the Sierra Leone population of Western chimpanzee includes about 4000 animals, a figure twice as large as previous estimates for this population (the previous survey from 1980 led to an estimate of about 2000 wild chimpanzees located primarily within protected areas). The survey also revealed that almost half of these chimpanzees are surviving in highly threatened and marginal habitats outside of the country's protected forest reserves, making them more susceptible to such threats as habitat loss and degradation, poaching and illegal trade.

SSN warmly congratulates the team of researchers from the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary for undertaking this survey. It is likely to become a very important tool in the development of new man-

agement policies for the species, both in Sierra Leone and within the region. A population and habitat viability assessment workshop in Sierra Leone, to be



Western chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes verus*), CITES Appendix I - © Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

held at the end of 2010, will allow the authorities and the various stakeholders involved to draft a Chimpanzee Conservation Action Plan that fully incorporates the new data provided in the survey. Sierra Leone's shared border with Guinea, where the chimpanzee population is estimated at 25,000, is one of the highest-priority regions in the world for primate conservation. SSN encourages the Sierra

Leone authorities to build on the results of the survey by ensuring that all zones occupied by chimpanzees become protected areas. In July 2007, the government of Sierra Leone prohibited the capture, killing, and possession of chimpanzees, demonstrating its commitment to strong conservation of the species within its borders. SSN strongly believes that the enforcement of this law is of paramount importance for the protection and survival of this species in the country and encourages all stakeholders to provide assistance to the Sierra Leone government in this regard.

The survey results for the Sierra Leone population of chimpanzees were announced at the same time as the IUCN Eastern Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*) Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan for 2010-2020. This Action Plan provides information about the status of Eastern chimpanzees in each range State (Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda) and can be downloaded at <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2010-023.pdf>

Need for Increased Protection of Hippopotamuses in Burkina Faso

Though the common hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), a species classified as Vulnerable in the 2010 IUCN Red List, occurs in many parts of Africa, signs of a deteriorating population are increasingly apparent. Total population estimates range between 129,190 and 152,590 individuals in 43 range States. The common hippopotamus is extinct in 4 range States, exists but has unknown population sizes in 7 range States and consists of fewer than 500 individuals in 14 range States. The species is reported as “not common” in West Africa, where the population is split into a number of small groups totaling about 7,000 animals spread over 19 countries (IUCN, 2008). National surveys conducted in Burkina Faso in 1981 estimated the total number of common hippopotamuses in that country at 500 individuals (SP/CONAGESE, 2002).

A new study (*Tropical Conservation Science* 3 (2): 175-189) demonstrates that further conservation actions are needed to save

one of West Africa's last hippo populations, in the 'Mare aux Hippopotames' Biosphere Reserve of southern Burkina Faso. Researchers who conducted this study found 41 common hippopotamuses in the region in 2008, up by six individu-

als since 2006, but down from 68 in 1985. In order to stop this decrease, the authors call for increased levels of monitoring of hippo populations, together with broader involvement of the local human population, an improvement of zoning measures (such as the designation of sites used by hippos during the rainy season as protected areas) to limit conflict with human populations and infringement on local crops, and the development of ecotourism activities in the area.

SSN congratulates the authors of the study and the Burkina Faso government for their renewed efforts in improving the conservation of hippopotamuses. SSN encourages the Burkina Faso authorities to follow the recommendations presented in the study as key measures to stop the decrease of hippopotamuses in the 'Mare aux Hippopotames' Biosphere Reserve of southern Burkina Faso. SSN also calls on all CITES stakeholders to support the Government of Burkina Faso in these efforts.



MAIN THREATS AFFECTING THE COMMON HIPPOPOTAMUS (*Hippopotamus amphibius*)

- ◆ Poaching and international trade in meat and ivory (from the canine teeth)*
- ◆ Habitat loss and degradation
- ◆ Trophy-hunting



* Note: other hippo products found in international trade between 2000 and 2010 included bones, carvings, feet, horns and plates, leather products, skins and skin pieces, skulls, tails, teeth, trophies, tusks and live hippos (UNEP WCMC Trade Database, 2010).

Photos: Common hippos (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) © B. Niagate; Hippo tooth carving advertised for sale on Internet for 139.99 USD



Ban of Wildlife Exports in Liberia

On 29 June 2010, by proclamation, Her Excellency Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia, banned the export of wild animals and bushmeat from the country. The ban, according to a Foreign Ministry release, is to remain effective pending the passage of proposed legislation, and is intended to protect the country's wildlife against the harmful effects of growing illegal international trade in wild animals and bushmeat. The proclamation is in accordance with the Act Adopting the National Forestry Reform Law of 2006 which, in Chapter Nine (9) Section 9.12, prohibits illegal

hunting and trade in wildlife.

Studies in Liberia have shown that duikers formed three-quarters of the bushmeat harvest (Anstey, 1991), but that other species such as red and black colobus monkeys, pangolins and forest elephants were also negatively affected by bushmeat trade (CEEB, 2003-2004).

SSN warmly congratulates the Government of Liberia for its commitment to fighting against illegal international wildlife trade through the adoption of this strong precautionary measure. SSN urges

CITES stakeholders to support the Liberian government in these efforts.



Busmeat seller in Monrovia market © Global News Network, Liberia.

Capacity-building corner

Useful publications:

- ◆ Concerned Environmentalists for the Enhancement of Biodiversity, *Monrovia-Liberia as the transport hub for the bushmeat trade; bushmeat survey report conducted in Monrovia, Liberia, 2003-2004* available at

<http://www.cepf.net/Documents/Final_CEEB.Liberiabushmeat.pdf>

- ◆ Dibloni, Vermeulen, Guenda, and Millogo, *Effectif, structure d'âges et mouvements saisonniers des populations d'hippopotame commun, Hippopotamus amphibius Linné 1758*

dans la Réserve de Biosphère de la Mare aux Hippopotames en zone sud soudanaïenne du Burkina Faso, 2010. Tropical Conservation Science Vol. 3 (2):175-189.

Please contact the SSN Africa Regional Bureau if you need help with translation.



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Call for local representation

The Species Survival Network's Africa Regional Bureau is engaged in a capacity building effort which involves local non-governmental organizations and the Press. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need help with CITES issues, if you wish to submit article ideas for the newsletter or if you wish to apply for SSN membership.

SSN Member of the Month: Save the Elephants

Organization Profile:

Founder: Dr. Iain Douglas - Hamilton

Date of Creation: 1992

Mission Statement: To secure a future for elephants and sustain the beauty and ecological integrity of their habitat and to develop a tolerant relationship between man and elephants

Offices Located in: Nairobi and Samburu, Kenya

Projects in Africa Located in: Kenya, South Africa, Mali, Gabon

Website: <http://www.savetheelephants.org>

Project of Regional Interest: Advocacy

Save the Elephants (STE) continues to be a highly credible advocate of elephant conservation in international forums and the media, guiding international public opinion and the conservation policies of governments around the world. The fate of African and Asian elephants is greatly influenced by the outcome of meetings of the CITES Conference of the Parties (CoPs). STE attends every meetings of the CoP to support elephants and lobby Parties to maintain the 1989 ivory ban. At CoP15, STE Founder Dr. Iain Douglas-Hamilton presented evidence against the Tanzanian and Zambian proposals to downlist their elephants to Appendix II and to sell their stockpiles which contributed to the rejection of these proposals. STE's advocacy work continues to contribute significantly to the survival of the world's elephant population. In addition to STE's research on monitoring the illegal killing of elephants (MIKE), STE is about to start tackling the demand for ivory with an advocacy and awareness raising campaign in China. STE also has a program of education, conservation and research which is detailed on their website.



Save the Elephants' delegation at CoP15 in Doha, Qatar, March 2010.

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CITES Protected Species of the Month



Encephalartos gratus included in CITES Appendix I © taihaku

- ◆ **Name:** Mulanje cycad (*Encephalartos gratus*)
- ◆ **CITES listing:** Appendix I
- ◆ **CITES export quotas:** No export quotas reported for 2010 (see <<http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2010/ExportQuotas2010.pdf>>)
- ◆ **International trade levels :** Between 2000 and 2009, 4394 live plants, 34022 seeds, 1 specimen, 30 timber pieces, and 10 dried plants of *Encephalartos spp* and 53kg of live plants, 15409 live plants, 6 kg of seeds and 5608 seeds of mulanje cycad (*Encephalartos gratus*) were exported. Main exporters were Mozambique and South Africa; main importers were the United-States and Thailand; all legal commercial trade must be in artificially propagated specimens as the species is listed on Appendix I
- ◆ **IUCN category:** Vulnerable
- ◆ **Threats:** International trade; collection of seeds and live plants; habitat destruction and habitat loss
- ◆ **Range States:** Malawi, Mozambique
- ◆ **Useful resources:** John Sydney Donaldson, Cycads: Status survey and Conservation Action Plan, IUCN/SSC Cycad Action Plan (2003) available at <<http://www.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2003-010.pdf>>; Janice S. Golding and P. Johan H. Hurter, *A Red List account of Africa's cycads and implications of considering life-history and threats*, Biodiversity and Conservation Volume 12, Number 3 / March, 2003



Secretarybird (*Sagittarius serpentarius*) listed in CITES Appendix II © Lip Kee Yap

- ◆ **Name:** Secretary-bird; messenger sagittaire (*Sagittarius serpentarius*)
- ◆ **CITES listing:** Appendix II
- ◆ **CITES export quotas:** 20 live specimens for Tanzania in 2010 (see <<http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2010/ExportQuotas2010.pdf>>)
- ◆ **CITES trade levels (WCMC Trade Database 2010):** Between 2000 and 2009, 9 bodies, 1 bone, 294 live animals, 1 skull, 4 specimens and 8 trophies were exported. Main exporters were Tanzania and Sudan; main importers were Austria, the Netherlands and Great Britain
- ◆ **IUCN category:** Least Concern
- ◆ **Threats:** Predation of young by crows and kites; habitat loss; deforestation and international trade
- ◆ **Range States:** Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
- ◆ **Useful resources:** Factsheet on secretary-birds <<http://www.avianweb.com/secretarybirds.html>>