

sent a valid reason for rejecting our proposal. As we have explained, our proposal was based on recommended best practices for metapopulation management of rhino as advocated by the IUCN SSC AFRSG. Instead of our proposal being based on bad science, it is rather Israel's objection to our proposal that demonstrates a lack of appreciation of the principles of managing a rhino metapopulation for growth and long-term conservation of genetic viability, on which our proposal is based.

It must also be remembered that the entire worldwide population of southern white rhinos—now over 12,000 animals—has grown in just over a century from only 20 to 50 animals (Emslie and Brooks 2002), a number that is approximately half of Swaziland's current population. This widely acclaimed conservation success story could not have been achieved had it not been for innovative management, including translocations, removals, metapopulation management, trophy hunting and private ownership. Swaziland's proposal is simply following tried and tested approaches.

The proposal was put to a vote; results were 88 in favour, 15 opposed and 21 abstaining. The required two-thirds majority being more than obtained, the proposal was accepted. The proposal and all documentation can be viewed on www.biggameparks.org.

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CITES Rhino Resolution 9.14(rev)

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At the recent 13th CITES Conference of the Parties (CoP13) in Bangkok, CITES Rhino Resolution 9.14(rev) was retained and revised, transferring reporting responsibility to IUCN SSC's African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups.

The CITES Secretariat introduced a document that drew attention to the requirement for reporting to it.

Reports were required at least six months prior to a CoP detailing the following:

- the status of captive and wild rhinoceros populations
- a summary of incidents of illegal hunting
- a summary of incidents of illegal trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives
- the status, type and frequency of law-enforcement

activities and monitoring programmes for all major rhinoceros populations

- the status of development and implementation of national legislation and national conservation action plans
- the status of marking, registration and control of rhinoceros horn stocks

Once again, the CITES Secretariat noted the low level of reporting by Parties, noting that no reports had been received before the deadline, and only four Parties, although late, had submitted reports at all: China, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. The Secretariat argued that this continued low level of reporting showed that reporting to the Secretariat under Resolution 9.14 (rev) was seen as an administrative burden. The Secretariat in its document recommended either the repeal of the Resolution or an amendment to remove the requirement of reporting to the CITES Secretariat.

The delegations of the Netherlands, on behalf of member states of the European Community, supported by the delegations of India, the United States of America and Vietnam, wished to retain the resolution but agreed with the deletion of the paragraphs relating to reporting to the Secretariat.

The delegation of Namibia, supported by Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland, also supported deleting the reporting requirements. However, they recognized the value of the information called for under Resolution 9.14(rev), noting that similar information was being provided by range states to IUCN's African Rhino Specialist Group. These African range states all supported retaining the Resolution as they felt it was an important instrument that focused attention on the importance of conserving African and Asian rhinos, highlighting the need for active conservation programmes. Delegates felt that it was critically important to have an integrated international approach to rhino trade and conservation and that Resolution 9.14(rev) encouraged this, and was bearing fruit.

The delegation from Italy mentioned the Italian-funded SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation (RPRC) and that Italy hoped to provide additional funds for rhino conservation in the near future. Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland all thanked Italy for funding the SADC

RPRC, which they felt had significantly contributed to rhino conservation in the SADC region.

Malaysia strongly supported the repeal of the resolution, whereas delegates from Mexico and Nepal and the observer from Fund for Animals favoured its retention.

The observer from IUCN—the World Conservation Union—confirmed that the IUCN African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups would be willing to share information but warned that some confidential data may not be available. The Chair requested that the Secretariat and IUCN collaborate in preparing a draft decision about reporting requirements. The resolution was then retained after two paragraphs on reporting to the CITES Secretariat were deleted, as suggested by the Secretariat.

The wording of the decision on reporting which was adopted was as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) invite the IUCN SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups to share information on the national and continental conservation status of African and Asian rhinoceros species, the legal and illegal trade in rhinoceros and rhinoceros products and their derivatives, incidents of illegal killing of rhinoceros, and management strategies and actions; and
- b) submit a written summary of the information for consideration at the 14th Conference of the Parties that will include recommendations for further reporting arrangements on the conservation and trade in African and Asian rhinos.

Directed to Parties

Range states of African and Asian rhinoceros species are encouraged to support the IUCN SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups in collecting and collating the information referred to in Decision 13.XX.

Understanding that the IUCN SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups operate on a voluntary basis and may be constrained by lack of resources, Parties and other donors are urged to provide support to these groups for undertaking the activities.