

ETIS analysis, Cameroon, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda were identified as countries of “secondary concern”, whilst Angola, Cambodia, Japan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates were seen as “important to watch”, thus making up the 15. Additional actions directed at these individual countries can be taken by the Standing Committee if problematic issues are subsequently revealed.

- *Decision 16.81* serves to foster co-operation between CITES and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.
- *Decisions 16.82* and *14.78* deal with reporting to future Standing Committee meetings and the role of the Standing Committee in tracking progress on the other Decisions.
- *Decision 16.83* was formulated to direct all Parties involved in any ivory seizure of 500 kg or more to collect and submit samples to appropriate forensic laboratories for analysis within 90 days of the seizure. With effective implementation, this move should reveal sources of large quantities of ivory that would otherwise be likely to remain unknown.

In other developments instigated by the provision of ETIS results to SC62, further deliberations at SC63 and SC64, held just prior to and after CoP16, resulted in China and Thailand as destination countries, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Philippines and Viet Nam as transit countries/territories, and Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda as source countries, having to prepare detailed national ivory trade action plans and submit them to the Secretariat by 15 May 2013. *SC64 Doc. 2* states “...the eight Parties should keep the Secretariat updated via electronic means about progress made against timeframes and milestones; and the Secretariat shall monitor progress and will keep the Standing Committee informed intersessionally via electronic means”. All action plans were submitted by the deadline. Together with other results of CoP16, they hold great potential for putting “teeth” into the CITES framework for dealing with illegal trade in ivory, and holding governments accountable for their ivory trade policies and practices.

All in all, CoP16 has provided elephant conservation with a robust framework for action to address a range of issues in the global effort to arrest escalating illegal trade in ivory. ETIS played an indispensable role in identifying priority countries for attention and guiding the development of subsequent CITES policy actions and interventions.

RHINOCEROSSES by Tom Milliken

The relentless surge in rhinoceros poaching for the continuing horn trade to Asia, especially Viet Nam, was documented in a report for CoP16 by IUCN and TRAFFIC (*CoP16 Doc. 54.2 (Rev. 1)*). This report, mandated by *Resolution Conf. 9.14*, highlighted: record poaching losses in South Africa; the highest number of rhinoceros horns in trade in two decades; the advent of Europe and North America as sources of rhinoceros horn through thefts from museums and other institutions and the illegal acquisition of sport-hunted trophies; the use of European sport hunters in South Africa as conduits for illegal horn trade to Viet Nam; and the emerging roles of Mozambique and China in the illicit trade. The report concluded “Rhinos are facing a crisis and there is no room for complacency.” The CITES Parties clearly received the message, adopting a series of forceful measures to address critical rhinoceros conservation issues, as highlighted below.

- *Decision 16.84* directed all Parties to report rhinoceros horn seizures to the Secretariat and all countries along the trade chain to enable follow-up investigations, and to submit seized horn samples to accredited forensic laboratories for DNA analysis, as described in document *CoP16 Doc. 54.2 (Rev. 1)*. The Decision also calls for national legislation to underpin the use of specialized investigative techniques (such as controlled deliveries and covert investigations) and other law enforcement tools (for instance, anti-money-laundering and asset forfeiture legislation) to combat rhinoceros crime, and for prosecutions to employ a combination of relevant legislation so that penalties serve as effective deterrents. *Decision 16.84* also further strengthens CITES permitting procedures for rhinoceros horn specimens; calls for measures to regulate internal trade in rhinoceros specimens such as sport-hunted trophies or antique specimens, including all parts or derivatives; and stipulates that Parties should consider stricter domestic measures to regulate the re-export of rhinoceros horn products.
- *Decision 16.85* represents far-reaching, landmark progress in terms of the purview of CITES in addressing demand for endangered species products. It calls for all Parties identified as a range or consumer State “to develop and implement long-term demand reduction strategies or programmes and immediate actions aimed at reducing the illegal movement and consumption of rhino horn products, taking into consideration the draft demand reduction principles included in the Annex to document *CoP16 Doc. 54.1 (Rev. 1)*, to achieve measurable change in consumer behaviour”. In range States, the Decision continues,

“strategies or programmes to enhance community awareness with regard to the economic, social and environmental impacts of illicit trafficking in wildlife crime” should also be developed. Actions taken in this regard need to be reported to the CITES Rhino Working Group by 31 January 2015, so that “best practices” and challenges can be elucidated for a report to SC66.

- *Decision 16.86* is directed at Viet Nam, which was identified at CoP15 as the principal destination for rhinoceros horn. Viet Nam is exhorted to implement those elements of the South Africa–Viet Nam action plan that will serve to strengthen national management of rhinoceros horn trophies (including issues of tracking, possession, alteration and transfer of ownership), and improving investigations and prosecutions of Vietnamese nationals or others implicated in rhinoceros crime. This Decision also calls on Viet Nam “to conduct consumer behaviour research to develop and implement demand reduction strategies or programmes aimed at reducing the consumption of rhino horn products”, and to report on this and other activities, including arrests, seizures, prosecutions and penalties in rhinoceros crime cases, to the Secretariat by 31 January 2014.
- *Decision 16.87* is directed at Mozambique, a country that has emerged as the main staging ground for rhinoceros poaching incursions into South Africa’s Kruger National Park and the leading point of export for illicit rhinoceros horn in Africa at the present time. It calls on Mozambique to implement *Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15)* and *Decision 16.84* effectively, with special attention to enacting legislation to establish penalties for rhinoceros crime that serve as a deterrent. Mozambique needs to produce a comprehensive report on its efforts to the Secretariat by 31 January 2014 for consideration by the CITES Rhino Working Group.
- *Decision 16.88* is directed at both Mozambique and South Africa, calling for enhanced bilateral co-operation to combat rhinoceros poaching and illegal horn trade, and a comprehensive report to the Secretariat by 31 January 2014 on actions taken.
- *Decision 16.89* requires the Secretariat, subject to external funding, to convene a CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force comprising Parties affected by rhinoceros poaching and illegal trade, the ICCWC partner organizations, EUROPOL “and, as appropriate, other Parties and experts. The Task Force should develop strategies to improve international cooperation”. The Decision also calls for the Task Force to develop “guidelines on best practices, protocols and operational procedures, that will promote the use of wildlife forensic technology; examine the implementation of *Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15)* in...South Africa and Zimbabwe;... examine progress with curtailing illegal trade in rhinoceros parts and derivatives by citizens of

implicated States, particularly Viet Nam;...and revise *Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15)*, taking into consideration the contents of *Decisions 16.84* and *16.85* and submit this revised version for consideration at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties”. *Decision 16.89* further solicits external funding “to undertake a technical mission to the Lao People’s Democratic Republic to assess current enforcement activities relevant to illegal trade in wildlife, in particular in rhinoceros parts and derivatives, and the implementation of *Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP15)*”.

- Reports on actions taken pursuant to *Decisions 16.85–16.89* will be considered at SC65 and SC66, following evaluation by the CITES Rhino Working Group, as mandated in *Decision 16.90*.
- *Decision 16.91* calls upon the Standing Committee, at SC64, to extend the mandate of the Rhino Working Group that was first established at SC61 in August 2011. This was subsequently done on the last day of CoP16.
- In *Decision 16.92*, the Standing Committee is charged with reviewing the definition of “hunting trophy” provided in *Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP16)*, as it applies to rhinoceros horn hunting trophies, and determining whether revision is needed to eliminate any possible abuse of the definition to facilitate illegal trade in rhinoceros horn.

Collectively, these measures establish a far-reaching plan of engagement under CITES for international action to tackle the escalating illicit rhinoceros horn trade. The degree of specificity and the breadth of content in these Decisions hold considerable hope for improving the conservation status of the world’s five beleaguered rhinoceros species.

TIMBER SPECIES by David Newton

At CITES CoP16 there were six listing proposals concerning timber, the majority involving species that have been under harvest pressure for many years and that are in some instances now very rare in the wild. Two proposals were submitted by Madagascar (*CoP16 Props 58* and *63*), to include that country’s populations of Malagasy Ebony *Diospyros* spp. and Malagasy Rosewood *Dalbergia* spp. in Appendix II (with annotations); two from Belize (*CoP16 Props 61* and *62*) were for inclusion of three rosewood *Dalbergia* species in Appendix II; Thailand and Viet Nam put forward a proposal (*CoP16 Prop. 60*) to list another rosewood species (*D. cochinchinensis*) in Appendix II; and Brazil proposed amendment (*CoP16 Prop. 59*) of the annotation #12 for Brazilian Rosewood *Aniba*