

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Seventy-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee
Lyon (France), 7 - 11 March 2022

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

RHINOCEROSSES (RHINOCEROTIDAE SPP.):
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.110 to 18.116 on *Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.)*, as follows:

18.110 Directed to Parties

Parties should ensure the timely reporting of seizures and submission of DNA samples to range States, and continuously review trends associated with the illegal killing of rhinoceroses and illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens, and the measures and activities they are implementing to address these crimes, to ensure that these measures and activities remain effective and are quickly adapted to respond to any newly identified trends, and report to the Secretariat in time for consideration by the Standing Committee on any activities conducted in this regard.

18.111 Directed to China, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, South Africa and Viet Nam

China, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, South Africa and Viet Nam are encouraged to make every effort to further strengthen their implementation of paragraphs 1 e) and 2 d) of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17) on Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses, including by pursuing the initiation of joint investigations and operations aimed at addressing members of organized crime networks across the entire illegal trade chain, and to report to the Secretariat on any activities conducted in this regard, in time for consideration by the Standing Committee.

18.112 Directed to Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is encouraged to pursue the expeditious finalization of outstanding cases in court related to rhinoceros poaching and rhinoceros horn smuggling, to consider measures that could be implemented to facilitate the swift processing of such cases in future, and to report to the Secretariat on any activities conducted in this regard, in time for consideration by the Standing Committee.

18.113 Directed to the Standing Committee

At its 74th meeting, the Standing Committee shall review the recommendations of the Secretariat reported under Decision 18.115, and any issues of concern brought to its attention

under Decision 18.114 and make any additional recommendations for further action and request additional reporting, as appropriate, and prepare proposals for consideration of the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Directed to the Secretariat

18.114 *The Secretariat shall review the reports received under Decisions 18.110, 18.111 and 18.112, and bring any issues of concern that may arise to the attention of the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting (SC74).*

18.115 *The Secretariat shall, in consultation with interested Parties and the African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups of the Species Survival Commission of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN/SSC) and TRAFFIC, explore options to reflect on challenges and best practices to assist in addressing rhinoceros poaching and rhinoceros horn trafficking in the report prepared for the Conference of the Parties in accordance with paragraph 7 of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17) and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee, at SC74.*

18.116 Directed to Parties where illegal markets for rhino horn exist

Parties in which illegal markets for rhinoceros horn exist are encouraged to develop demand reduction programmes targeted at key identified audiences, taking into consideration the provisions in Resolution Conf. 17.4 on Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species and taking advantage of the experience and expertise developed in other jurisdictions and by other organizations. Parties are urged to close those markets that contribute to poaching or illegal trade.

Implementation of Decision 18.110

3. Information on the measures and activities implemented by Parties to address crimes involving rhinoceroses, as well as on the reporting of seizures is included in the reports received from Namibia, South Africa, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. This information is included in paragraphs 11 to 45 below. The Secretariat notes that it has not received reporting from any other Parties on their implementation of Decision 18.110.
4. In paragraphs 5 to 10 below, the Secretariat addresses the submission of DNA samples as anticipated by Decision 18.110, taking into consideration the reporting received from the Parties mentioned above and the results of the work conducted to implement Decision 18.115 as presented in Annex 1 to the present document.

Submission of DNA samples

5. In its report, Namibia highlights the important role that forensic analyses play in wildlife crime investigations. However, national capacity limitations in forensic analyses present a significant challenge for investigations and prosecution. The upgrading and streamlining of the Namibian Police Forensic Science Institute should alleviate this hurdle in the foreseeable future. No information on samples submitted to other Parties for forensic analyses is provided.
6. Viet Nam reports upon its collaboration with South Africa, which included the submission of samples from rhinoceros horn seized in Viet Nam to authorities in South Africa for DNA analyses. In the period 2019 to 2021, the CITES Scientific Authority of Viet Nam conducted several DNA forensic examinations on rhinoceros horn samples from domestic seizures. Analyses carried out by the Institute of Ecology and Biology Research (IEBR) continuously increase over time, from eight analyses in 2019, to 11 in 2020 and 19 in 2021. Viet Nam included in its report a table with the results of analyses.
7. Zimbabwe indicated that, since 2019, it had not received any reports from other Parties concerning the seizure of rhinoceros specimens. Zimbabwe is still in the process of establishing a laboratory. At present, collected samples are sent to South Africa for analysis. From 2019 to date, no samples were collected in the country from horn seizures or rhinoceros poaching scenes for DNA analyses.
8. South Africa indicated that it had not received timely reporting from Parties where seizures have taken place. In most cases, authorities in South Africa became aware of seizures through media reports and then reached out to the relevant Party to request DNA samples. In the period since CoP18, the Secretariat was copied on

several occasions on correspondence sent by South Africa to Parties that made seizures of rhinoceros horn, requesting these Parties to collect and send DNA samples to South Africa for analysis. The active engagement of Parties that make seizures in this manner is welcomed and encouraged. It is however also evident that it is often a challenging and time-consuming process to secure such samples, due to legislative and other provisions in different countries that could vary considerably. According to South Africa, on average, it takes three to six months for permits to be issued and DNA samples to be delivered for analysis.

9. South Africa seldom received the [Form for collection and sharing of data on rhinoceros horn seizures and on samples for forensic analysis](#), available in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17) on *Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses*. Parties are encouraged to use this form to facilitate their work.
10. The work conducted to implement Decision 18.115 also provides information regarding DNA sample collection and sharing. Information from some rhinoceros range States provided examples of challenges associated with forensic capabilities that limit investigations, while others flagged challenges associated with sending samples collected from crime scenes across international borders for analysis. The Secretariat reminds Parties of the provisions under the *Regarding the use of simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates* in [Resolution Conf. 12.3 \(Rev. CoP18\) on Permits and certificates](#). These provisions recommend that Parties use simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates to facilitate and expedite trade that will have a negligible impact, or none, on the conservation of the species concerned, including for judicial or law enforcement purposes. At present, not all Parties are making use of these provisions to facilitate the exchange of rhinoceros DNA samples for law enforcement purposes. Parties affected by rhinoceros horn trafficking are therefore encouraged to revisit these provisions, and to draw upon the simplified procedures to facilitate more frequent and effective sharing of samples associated with rhinoceros specimen trafficking.

Implementation of Decision 18.111

11. In November 2021, the Secretariat wrote to China, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, South Africa, and Viet Nam, inviting these Parties to report to the Secretariat as anticipated by Decision 18.111. Reports were subsequently received from Namibia, South Africa and Viet Nam. These reports are available as Annexes 2 to 4 to the present document, in the language and format received.
12. Decision 18.111 encourages the Parties mentioned to make every effort to further strengthen their implementation of paragraphs 1 e) and 2 d) of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17), including by pursuing the initiation of joint investigations and operations aimed at addressing members of organized crime networks across the entire illegal trade chain.
13. Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17), paragraphs 1 e) and 2 d), states as follows:

1. URGES all Parties to:

[...]

e) immediately bring the seizure of illegal rhinoceros specimens made within their territories:

- i) to the attention of authorities in countries of origin, transit and destination, as applicable, providing information associated with the seizure, for example on modus operandi, accompanying documentation, any identification marks on the seized specimens, where appropriate the details of the offenders involved, and any other information that could assist the initiation of investigations as appropriate, in countries of origin, transit and destination; or*
- ii) to the attention of the CITES Secretariat in cases where sufficient information is not available to identify the countries of origin, transit and destination of the seized rhinoceros specimens, including information describing the circumstances of the seizure;*

[...]

2. URGES

- d) that law enforcement cooperation between and among range and implicated States be increased through the existing international, regional and national law enforcement mechanisms and, where necessary, for example, through the establishment of treaties on extradition and Mutual Legal*

Assistance in criminal matters, in order to curtail rhinoceros poaching and illegal trade in rhinoceros horn;

14. The Secretariat highlights some key aspects reported by these Parties below and provide additional comments and observations.

Namibia

15. Namibia submitted two reports to the Secretariat:

- a) the *Three Years of Blue Rhino in Namibia Special Report 2021/01* (Operation Blue Rhino), and
- b) a report on activities conducted under the Operation Blue Rhino programme, as well as on other activities undertaken by Namibia to address organised crimes and illegal killing of rhinoceroses in the country.

These two reports are consolidated in Annex 2 to the present document.

16. Namibia developed a National Strategy on Wildlife Protection and Law Enforcement 2021 to 2025 to establish common approaches to the protection and conservation of wildlife within the country and within the framework of its national laws, and to ensure effective enforcement of laws governing wildlife resources.
17. Work is ongoing to establish a Wildlife Protection Services (WPS) Sub-Division within the Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks (including an Intelligence and Investigations Unit under the WPS) and a training school for anti-poaching unit personnel. Training on law enforcement and addressing wildlife crime for personnel from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism is ongoing. Namibia further reported on its national dehorning programme and other matters.
18. The Operation Blue Rhino Special Report 2021/01 outlines a wide range of commendable interventions and achievements in the period 2018 to 2021. The Operation has notably facilitated a shift from reactive to proactive law enforcement to combat wildlife crime. It also facilitated good formal communication, coordination, and collaboration between different authorities within Namibia, resulting in numerous arrests and prosecutions under the Prevention of Organized Crime Act. Rhinoceros and elephant losses have been reduced by approximately 60 per cent in the past three years. In the case of rhinos, pre-emptive arrests¹ have played a major role in reducing losses from poaching.
19. The Blue Rhino Task Team (BRTT), comprised of representatives from various national agencies, engaged in numerous international exchanges and operations, involving Angola, Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia, China and Viet Nam. Collaboration with international agencies has included the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), INTERPOL and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
20. According to Namibia, relations with neighbouring countries have been further strengthened. Direct transboundary collaboration is now central to counter-trafficking operations. Information exchange with counterparts in Botswana and Zambia has enabled important arrests and disrupted syndicates operating between Botswana, Zambia, and Namibia. Liaison with South African counterparts resulted in closer collaboration, sharing of information and important arrests.
21. The Secretariat welcomes the reporting provided by Namibia and the activities undertaken in the context of Decision 18.111. However, the Secretariat notes that such activities to date primarily focussed on strengthening collaboration with Parties neighbouring Namibia, which often serve as transit countries for illegal trade. Limited information is provided regarding the nature and frequency of engagement with destination countries associated with illegal trade in rhinoceros horn specimens.
22. The Operation Blue Rhino Special Report 2021/01 recognizes local, regional and international collaboration, as one of four pillars to create a sound wildlife-protection framework. According to the report, wildlife crime in the country is significantly influenced by demand in Asia. As such, collaboration at all levels is a vital aspect

¹ *Pre-emptive arrests entail the apprehension of perpetrators while they are planning or attempting to carry out a crime but have not yet been able to kill an animal.*

of countering wildlife crime. Namibia is therefore encouraged to build upon the activities conducted to date, and to actively pursue further strengthening and expanding its engagements.

South Africa

23. In terms of Decision 18.111, South Africa highlights that it is very difficult to exchange information between the investigation teams in the country of origin of the horns and the country of seizure, since information on who is leading the investigation in the country of seizure is often not available. South Africa suggests that Parties update the contact details of their focal points, especially their enforcement focal points, on the CITES website, to facilitate engagement and the sharing of information in a timely manner and as quickly as possible after a seizure. In this regard, the Secretariat reiterates the importance of keeping up to date, the details of relevant authorities, including *Enforcement focal points*, on the [National CITES Authorities](#) webpage. Parties are requested to inform the Secretariat without delay when there is a change in contact details or focal points, The Secretariat also encourages those Parties that have not yet communicated to the Secretariat the details of their enforcement focal points to do so as a matter of priority.
24. South Africa suggests that it might be useful to compile a list on investigative authorities dealing with cases involving rhinoceros specimens in countries known to be affected by this illegal trade. In this regard, the Secretariat recalls that a key action arising from the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, in October 2013, was the identification of national focal points for matters related to the illegal trade in rhinoceros horn. The Secretariat further notes that a [Directory of illegal trade in rhinoceros horn focal points](#) is available on its [Enforcement focal points](#) webpage. The outcomes of the Task Force meeting (see [Notification to the Parties No. 2014/006](#) and its [Annex](#)) remains valid and relevant. Parties are encouraged to revisit these outcomes and take them into consideration in their activities to address crimes affecting rhinoceroses. This focal point for illegal trade in rhinoceros horn is responsible for the facilitation of initial contact between relevant enforcement agencies within his or her country, and the authorities from any requesting country. Since the directory was last updated in August 2015, the Secretariat has not received any new information regarding national focal points for illegal trade in rhinoceros. The directory has as a result likely become outdated. The Committee may therefore wish to request Parties implicated in the illegal trade of rhinoceros horn as a range, transit or destination State, to communicate to the Secretariat whether the focal point details in the directory available remain valid and provide the Secretariat with updated information where needed. The Committee may further request the Secretariat to review the current directory and to reach out to Parties implicated in the illegal trade of rhinoceros horn as a range, transit or destination State, not currently included in the directory, to request that these Parties send the details of their national focal points for inclusion in the directory.
25. South African authorities regularly exchange information with authorities in neighbouring countries, Botswana, Eswatini, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Law enforcement operations undertaken jointly with neighbouring countries take place in Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) on a regular basis. South African National Parks engages with Mozambique on several forums established in accordance with the Greater Limpopo TFCA, which includes the Greater Lebombo Conservancy (GLC) Security Forum in which various representatives and authorities from South Africa and Mozambique participate. South Africa further elaborates on its close working relationship with Mozambique at operational level, guided by a *Joint Safety and Security Plan for the Greater Lebombo Conservancy, Kruger National Park and Limpopo National Park*, noting that this operational level collaboration does not function based on scheduled meetings, but rather on daily direct communication and coordination.
26. South Africa is working more closely with Viet Nam, not only to progress implementation of existing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), but also to undertake joint investigations between the two countries. The *South Africa / Viet Nam Intergovernmental Partnership Forum* was established to address various matters between the two countries, including wildlife trafficking. One of the first major successes for the two countries was a combined investigation between South Africa and Viet Nam that led to the seizure of 138 kilograms of rhinoceros horns and approximately 3 tons of suspected lion bones in July 2021. The joint investigation continues. South Africa further highlights the organization of bilateral meetings aimed at further strengthening cooperation between South Africa and Viet Nam during a Wildlife Inter-Regional Enforcement meeting hosted by the UNODC in December 2021.
27. According to South Africa, it has managed to halt the escalation of rhinoceros poaching. The report includes a table showing rhinoceros poaching numbers for the period 2010 to June 2021, and that poaching numbers declined year on year since it peaked in 2014 when 1,215 rhinoceroses were poached in the country. The table shows that this declined to 394 in 2020, and that 249 rhinoceroses were poached in South Africa up to June 2021. South African national authorities and private rhino owners are focusing on a more proactive and integrated approach to combat rhinoceros poaching. This entails the implementation of the Integrated

Wildlife Zone (IWZ) approach. During 2020, seven IWZ's were introduced across South Africa. IWZs are similar to the Integrated Protection Zones previously utilized within national parks and provincial reserves but facilitate an expansion of the effort to protect the world's largest black and white rhino populations by strengthening cooperation between governmental and private stakeholders. By introducing a zoning approach, the necessary resources are redirected to areas where they are most needed. This approach also aligns with the objectives of South Africa's National Integrated Strategy to Combat Wildlife Trafficking.

28. South Africa reports on various other activities and initiatives, such as the establishment of an Environmental Enforcement Fusion Centre to coordinate and improve reactive and proactive responses to rhinoceros poaching and other wildlife crimes, enhanced crime analysis capacity, and others.
29. The report received from South Africa and its Annex is available in Annex 3 to the present document.

Viet Nam

30. In its report, Viet Nam highlights its collaboration with South Africa, including the July 2021 seizure case reported upon by South Africa (see paragraph 26 above). Viet Nam further reports on various regional and international law enforcement operations in which its authorities participated over the period 2019 to 2021. These included Operation Praesidio that was initiated by the World Customs Organization (WCO); the [Thunder](#) series of operations led by INTERPOL and the WCO; [Operation Mekong Dragon](#) which was co-initiated by the Customs Administrations of China and Viet Nam and facilitated by the UNODC and the WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office for Asia and the Pacific; and [Operation Golden Strike](#) initiated by INTERPOL.
31. Viet Nam's report includes tables with comprehensive information on seizures of rhinoceros horn made in the country and criminal procedures instituted. Legislation in Viet Nam carries a penalty of up to 15 years imprisonment and a fine of up to 15 billion Vietnamese Dong (approximately 660 000 USD), for illegal trade in rhinoceros horn.
32. The report received from Viet Nam is available as Annex 4 to the present document.
33. Viet Nam also submitted a report on the implementation of its National Ivory and Rhino Action Plan (NIRAP) (see document SC74 Doc. 28.4 on the *National ivory action plans process*). The report shows that good progress has been made by Viet Nam in the implementation of its NIRAP and includes reporting relevant to Decision 18.111. Viet Nam stresses that close collaboration between countries across the illegal trade chain is essential to address wildlife crime, especially the criminal groups involved in ivory and rhinoceros horn trafficking. Viet Nam highlights the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters that it signed with Mozambique in 2018, and states that procedures to ratify this Treaty have been completed. At present, its Supreme People's Procuracy (SPP) is processing its endorsement.
34. From 2015 to 2018, the SPP submitted eight formal Requests for Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) to other Parties: two requests to China, one request to the Lao People's Democratic Republic, one request to Malaysia, two requests to Mozambique and two requests to Nigeria. Responses to only two of these requests were received to date. From 2018 to June 2020, the SPP sent four formal MLA requests to Cambodia, China, Mozambique, and Nigeria respectively. No responses to these requests were received to date. From 2018 to June 2020, the SPP received four formal MLA requests from France, Kenya, Mozambique and Poland respectively. Of these, two have been processed and finalized, one has been partially processed and for one further information was requested which is still being awaited.
35. Viet Nam also reports on its collaboration with the NGO community, most notably the Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC), in support of investigations that led to arrests and prosecutions in at least three cases involving illegal ivory and rhinoceros horn.
36. The Secretariat welcomes the strengthened collaboration between South Africa and Viet Nam. The Secretariat also welcomes the work conducted by Viet Nam to request information from and provide information to other Parties through formal MLA requests. The Secretariat notes however that the formal MLA request process can be lengthy. While these MLA requests are extremely important, especially in the context of gathering and sharing information concerning organized crime that could subsequently be used for court purposes, Viet Nam is encouraged to explore if some information could be requested through other recognized but more informal channels. These include for example requests for information through INTERPOL channels, or through the use of bilateral agreements on mutual administrative assistance in

customs matters, as described in the outcomes of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, in October 2013.

37. It is further encouraging to note that the implementation of the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between Viet Nam and Mozambique will facilitate better cooperation concerning formal MLA requests between the two Parties. Viet Nam is encouraged to reach out to UNODC to request support regarding MLA requests that remain unanswered, as may be needed.

China, Mozambique, Myanmar

38. In the absence of reporting from China, Mozambique and Myanmar, as encouraged by Decision 18.111, these Parties are invited to provide an oral update on their implementation of the Decision at the present meeting.

Implementation of Decision 18.112

39. In November 2021, the Secretariat wrote to Zimbabwe inviting the Party to report to the Secretariat as anticipated by Decision 18.112. The report from Zimbabwe was subsequently received and is available as Annex 5 to the present document, in the language and format received.
40. Zimbabwe reports that, due to a diverse range of measures being deployed in the country, it has succeeded in significantly reducing rhinoceros poaching. These measures include the use of drones, scanners, sniffer dogs, the deployment of multi-stakeholder reaction teams, and the deployment of relevant authorities at ports of entry and exit. In 2019, a total of 29 rhinoceroses were poached in Zimbabwe. The figure declined to eight in 2020, and four in 2021.
41. Members of organized crime groups responsible for the illegal supply of firearms and ammunition to poaching syndicates were targeted through a coordinated operation. Authorities succeeded in neutralizing these groups and seized several high calibre weapons. Zimbabwe reports that this work had a direct impact on reducing poaching.
42. Regarding the finalization of cases in court as anticipated by Decision 18.112, Zimbabwe reports that, of the nine cases that occurred since 2019, four were finalized and five are ongoing. The report includes a table that provides further information on this.
43. The National Prosecuting Authority of Zimbabwe established a Wildlife Directorate Desk that is responsible for coordinating the prosecution of all wildlife crime cases in Zimbabwe. A wildlife coordinating committee comprising various governmental and NGO stakeholders was set up. This committee ensures that cases brought before court are well prepared and are satisfactorily completed. A schedule of wildlife crime cases on court rolls is prepared weekly and shared among all stakeholders. This has proven to deliver positive results in ensuring that all cases before the courts receive the required attention. Follow-up is conducted regarding accused released on bail, to ensure that they attend court. A schedule of offenders for whom warrants of arrest were issued is maintained and rigorous follow-up is conducted to trace and locate these offenders and bring them before court. According to Zimbabwe, awareness raising and training for the judiciary made a significant contribution to changing the mindset of these role players regarding the importance of addressing wildlife crime.
44. Offenders convicted for rhinoceros poaching or illegal possession of rhinoceros specimens receive a minimum mandatory sentence of 9 years imprisonment. This escalates to 11 to 20 years for repeat offenders.
45. The Secretariat welcomes the measures and activities implemented by Zimbabwe to enable and support the monitoring of wildlife crime cases in court and facilitate their processing.

Implementation of Decision 18.115

46. To implement Decision 18.115, the Secretariat worked with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and commissioned a report to explore options regarding how information on challenges and best practices associated with addressing rhinoceros poaching and horn trafficking, could be incorporated and reflected upon in the report on rhinoceroses prepared for each meeting of the Conference of the Parties in accordance with paragraph 7 of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17). The report developed in consultation with the Secretariat and resulting from this work, available in English only, is presented in Annex 1 to the present document.

47. To undertake this work, the African Rhino Specialist Group (AfRSG) and Asian Rhino Specialist Group (AsRSG) initiated a consultation process and conducted a survey focusing on rhinoceros range States and experts within the specialist groups working on matters related to addressing rhinoceros poaching and trafficking.
48. The survey proved to be an effective method to gather information on challenges and best practices. This is evidenced by the wealth of information gathered that enabled identifying 12 key poaching and trafficking challenges and 29 key responses, as outlined in Annex 1 to the present document.
49. Following the results of the survey, it was agreed to build upon the current survey results by undertaking further surveys engaging CITES Management Authorities in range and consumer States as well as other interested Parties. The results of these further surveys will be incorporated in the report being prepared for the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19, Panama City, 2022), in accordance with paragraph 7 of Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17). This will enable expanding on challenges and best practices in the report.
50. The key poaching and trafficking challenges and key responses identified through the survey could likely serve as baseline for future reports to the Conference of the Parties. The Secretariat concludes that it would be valuable to conduct similar surveys as part of preparing future reports on rhinoceroses to the Conference of the Parties in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17). The Secretariat therefore recommends that the Standing Committee consider proposing to the Conference of the Parties to amend Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17), by inserting the following text in paragraph 7. e) and 8 of the Resolution (proposed new text is underlined):

7. *DIRECTS the Secretariat, prior to each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and pending external funding, to commission the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC to submit a report to the Secretariat on*

[...]

e) *enforcement issues, including information on challenges and best practices associated with addressing rhinoceros poaching and horn trafficking.*

[...]

8. *REQUESTS the IUCN/SSC African and Asian Rhino Specialist Groups and TRAFFIC to engage with range and implicated States as appropriate, including by conducting a survey focusing on range and implicated States and relevant experts, to gather information on challenges and best practices associated with addressing rhinoceros poaching and horn trafficking, as well as with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, when producing the report, and to reflect the outcomes of these consultations and the survey in their reporting pursuant to this Resolution;*

Implementation of Decision 18.116

51. The report received from Viet Nam on the implementation of its NIRAP, available as an Annex to document SC74 Doc. 28.4, includes elaborate reporting relevant to the provisions of Decision 18.116. This includes *inter alia* information on:
 - a) the establishment of an intersectoral survey team in May 2020, which investigated demand for ivory and rhinoceros horn products in Lao Cai, Hai Phong and Da Nang,
 - b) work undertaken by the CITES Management Authority of Viet Nam in cooperation with the Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism and the Tourism Association of Quang Ninh province to complete a report on demand for wildlife and to raise awareness through billboards and posters, and
 - c) a survey on domestic demand for rhinoceros' horn, ivory and pangolin specimens conducted in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development, that will serve as baseline survey for further demand reduction outreach activities.
52. In the context of demand reduction, the Secretariat also draws the attention of Parties to document [SC74 Doc. 34](#) on *Demand reduction to combat illegal trade*. Although the draft *CITES guidance on demand-reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* described in this document is subject to

approval by the Conference of the Parties, the Secretariat believes that it could become a primary instrument to guide the demand reduction efforts of Parties.

Recommendations

53. The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the reports received from Namibia, South Africa, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe, and thank these Parties for the reports submitted;
- b) consider any oral updates that may be provided by China, Mozambique and Myanmar at SC74, on their implementation of measures and activities as anticipated by Decision 18.111;
- c) consider the proposed amendments to paragraph 7. e) and 8 in Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17) on *Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses*, presented in paragraph 50 of the present document, for submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
- d) encourage Parties to scale up efforts and make full use of the provisions under *Regarding the use of simplified procedures to issue permits and certificates* in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates*, to facilitate more frequent and effective sharing of samples associated with rhinoceros poaching and horn trafficking, for forensic analyses in support of investigations and addressing these crimes;
- e) encourage Parties to scale up efforts and make use of the *Form for collection and sharing of data on rhinoceros horn seizures and on samples for forensic analysis*, available in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17), to facilitate exchange of information and samples for analyses;
- f) request Parties implicated in the illegal trade of rhinoceros horn as a range, transit or destination State, to communicate to the Secretariat whether the details of their national focal points, in the [Directory of illegal trade in rhinoceros horn focal points](#) available on the CITES Secretariat *Enforcement focal points* webpage remains valid, and provide the Secretariat with updated information where needed, and further request the Secretariat to review the current directory and to reach out to Parties implicated in the illegal trade affecting rhinoceroses not currently included in the directory, to request that these Parties communicate to the Secretariat the details of their national focal points for inclusion in the directory; and
- g) remind Parties of the outcomes of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, in October 2013, communicated to Parties through [Notification to the Parties No.2014/006](#) and its [Annex](#), and encourage Parties to revisit these outcomes and take them into consideration in their development and implementation of measures and activities to address crimes affecting rhinoceroses.