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WWF POSITION STATEMENT

13th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO CITES, BANGKOK, 2-14 OCTOBER 2004

BUSHMEAT

Documents 62.1 and 62.2 – Bushmeat

Doc. 62.1: Bushmeat Working Group

The CITES Secretariat on behalf of the CITES Bushmeat Working Group, and in accordance with Decisions 12.20-12.21, has submitted a document and draft resolution on the issue. The document recommends 15 actions to curb the illicit bushmeat trade.

The Bushmeat Working Group proposes 2 draft decisions:

- encouraging the working group to continue its work under the name Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group; and
- encouraging governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and other donors to support the work of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group and its member States to implement national action plans and develop a database regarding trade in bushmeat.

WWF Position: SUPPORT subject to amendments

Doc. 62.2: Bushmeat

Ireland (on behalf of the Member States of the European Community) has submitted a document on this issue, and recommends that the Parties adopt a draft resolution which calls on the CITES Secretariat to:

- a) engage with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to draw its attention to bushmeat issues;
- b) invite the UN Food and Agriculture Organization to convene an international workshop to facilitate the development of an action plan to tackle issues associated with the unsustainable trade in bushmeat;
- c) invite FAO to invite named organisations to attend the planning workshop;
- d) invite CITES Parties to help fund the planning workshop.

WWF Position: SUPPORT



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BACKGROUND: BUSHMEAT

These documents are welcomed by WWF. However, additional factors should be considered and addressed in the any resulting decisions agreed by the Parties.

The use of wild animal species as a source of meat is a widespread practice, with wild species used both directly for food and sold as a source of income. Overexploitation and the targeting of threatened species in some regions, particularly west and central Africa, is now being referred to as “the bushmeat crisis”. While this term clearly draws attention to the urgency of the issue in conservation terms, it is perhaps less successful in conveying the human aspects of the use of wild species for meat. It has also been applied primarily in an African context, whereas the threat posed to wild species from their use as meat is equally critical in other parts of the world, e.g. Asia.

Various strategies have been implemented to try to address the "bushmeat crisis". Some attempts have been made to deal with the issue at the source (e.g. anti-poaching patrols around protected areas and logging concessions) and at the consumer level (e.g. education and awareness campaigns). However, it has been shown that improved law enforcement can drive the hunting and trade further "underground" if local people have no available alternative sources of protein. Similarly, if no alternatives are found, awareness campaigns may have limited impact if targeting the rural poor. Often it has not been easy to find viable alternatives to hunting wild animals. Attempts at captive-rearing some of the smaller-bodied and faster-reproducing species such as cane rats and duikers have met with mixed success and have not had more than a small local impact in meeting subsistence protein needs. Some east and southern African countries have developed community-based natural resource management programmes which give communities user-rights over wildlife quotas. In some cases this has been successful in limiting illegal wildlife off-take whilst providing a source of meat. However, in other cases community capacity or interest to regulate hunting has been limited. Longer-term, sustainable and innovative solutions need to be found to stop the trade in meat from wild species from locally or globally extirpating more species whilst at the same time not impacting negatively on rural livelihoods.

WWF advocates a policy to tackle the “bushmeat crisis” that strives for a cessation of illegal hunting in protected areas and an end to the hunting of endangered species such as apes (on both health grounds and conservation grounds), whilst at the same time allowing for sustainable use by local communities of non-threatened species. This joint conservation approach of protection and sustainable use should be considered within a wider landscape planning context, allowing controlled use of less vulnerable species in zones outside protected areas (e.g., buffer zones, extractive reserves, community hunting reserves). This approach has been shown to encourage the continued survival of wildlife outside of protected areas, whilst at the same time achieving the social objective of providing affordable meat to an often poor and growing human population. However, for such a ‘protected area—extractive reserve complex’ model to be successful, rights to hunt in buffer zones need to be clearly defined and enforced and associated technical advice, monitoring expertise and training provided to local communities to ensure management of hunting within sustainable levels. Given the low productivity of tropical forest areas, such a model is unlikely to meet all the protein requirements of growing human populations, and must be supplemented with efforts to provide affordable and locally acceptable protein alternatives. Overall, emphasis needs to be placed on practical, pragmatic, long-term solutions using an holistic approach that takes into account local conditions and cultures, and lessons from earlier initiatives.



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Therefore, WWF believes that the recommendations agreed by the Parties should place greater emphasis on the need for capacity building within African states to address the unsustainable hunting of wild species for meat, and the multi-faceted approach required. The recommendations might also mention (and suggest how to deal with the problem of) unsustainable harvest of species not listed on the CITES Appendices.

Such capacity-building could also include the development and dissemination of useful and innovative tools that aid in the monitoring and assessment of the trade. For example, in Kenya, WWF has supported TRAFFIC (the joint wildlife trade monitoring programme of WWF and IUCN) in using immuno-diffusion technology to develop a species identification protocol for identifying cooked, dried and fresh bushmeat samples from a range of specific species. This could be replicated in other countries to enable better monitoring and policing of bushmeat markets and the identification of species most affected by the trade in any given country. Priority areas and countries for such work could be identified.

THE DRAFT RESOLUTION (Doc 62.1 Rev.1):

The draft resolution recommends and requests 15 actions to curb the illicit bushmeat trade.

- WWF believes the preamble should acknowledge the fact that wild meat is an important source of protein to many rural African communities. Bushmeat hunting *per se* is not of concern - what the Parties need to address is the hunting of threatened species and the unsustainable hunting of non-threatened species, and related international trade.
- The Preamble should define bushmeat to take account of the Secretariat's concerns. The emphasis should be on threatened species or species likely to become threatened by hunting.
- WWF prefers the original terms (urges, recommends, requests) as replacing these with "advise" weakens the urgency of the issue.

WWF proposes the draft resolution be modified as follows:

- To the Preamble:
 - Add "*RECOGNIZING the importance of the meat from wild animals as source of protein for many rural communities around the world, especially in central and west Africa*".
 - Change paragraph 2 to "*RECOGNIZING that unsustainable harvesting of.. and the poaching and illicit trade in the meat of threatened species constitute the greatest threat to the survival of some wildlife species...*"
 - Change paragraph 5 to "*ALSO CONSIDERING the recognition by the States of the sub-region of the unsustainable harvesting of wildlife as a major threat....*"



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Under "Urges all relevant Parties

Paragraph e) would benefit from the inclusion of actions to be undertaken by those who hold logging concessions as these play an important role in the illegal bushmeat trade. WWF suggests the addition of "Logging companies should be encouraged to:

- adopt practices that reduce the impact of logging on animal and plant communities within their concessions;
- set aside unlogged refuges for rare and threatened species;
- halt the transportation of hunters and bushmeat in logging vehicles;
- deny hunters road access to logged forests; and
- provide employees with alternative sustainable sources of protein".

Paragraph g) WWF suggests the wording be amended to reflect some of the considerations that should be made when identifying such alternative sources of protein. WWF proposes the following wording:

"to identify socially, culturally and economically viable alternative sources of protein and other measures to reduce the demand for bushmeat, particularly the consumption of specimens of threatened species. Such measures could include providing sustainable supplies of bushmeat from ranched or captive-bred animals or community-based wildlife management schemes, and ensuring that a strong incentive remains to protect the species' habitat in the wild. Affordable and locally acceptable alternative sources of animal protein need to be provided in urban areas.

Under "Urges:"

Paragraphs a) and b) recommend awareness campaigns. Additional target groups for such awareness campaigns should include policy-makers, decision-makers, logging companies, and people involved at all levels of the illegal trade (hunters, transporters, traders, food outlets, consumers). Where possible, environmental education on the bushmeat crisis and the need for sustainability could also be incorporated into primary school curricula.

Under "REQUESTS"

Add: *"Countries and organizations with relevant expertise and means should support the development of capacity within range states and consumer states for the control of illegal hunting and for the development of sustainability in the bushmeat trade."*

The key action of building capacity for controlling the bushmeat trade should be re-stated in the decisions (see below).

THE DRAFT DECISIONS (Doc. 62.1 Rev. 1):

- encourage the working group to continue its work under the name Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group
- encourage governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, non-governmental organizations and other donors to support the work of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group and its member states to implement national action plans and develop a database regarding trade in bushmeat.

WWF agrees with the CITES Secretariat's assessment that "the majority of issues.... are not issues related to CITES and that it is the level of domestic harvesting, trade and consumption that pose the greatest threat". However, given how little we understand the detailed dynamics of the bushmeat trade and given that transborder trade is not properly monitored, and CITES-listed species are involved, it



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seems premature for CITES to suggest that "work on this subject should be continued by other agreements or organizations".

WWF's view is that, although CITES may not be the primary mechanism for dealing with the bushmeat trade, it does have a role to play, especially as an additional tool to help stop meat of Appendix I and II species (including elephants and apes) crossing international borders.

WWF supports the draft decisions, and proposes the following amendments:

13.xx WWF suggests amending the wording from "implementing national action plans relating to the trade in bushmeat" to "implementing national action plans relating to the trade in bushmeat, including the international trade in Appendix 1 species for bushmeat.."

13.xx (2) WWF suggests amending the wording from "to support the work of the Central Africa Bushmeat Working Group and its member States to implement national action/management plans and to develop.." to

"... to support the work of the Central African Bushmeat Working Group and its member States to build range states' capacity to implement national action plans for monitoring and curbing the trade in threatened species for meat (as per resolution xx.xx), especially the international trade in Appendix 1 species, and to develop...."

DOCUMENT 62.2: Ireland for the EC

WWF supports the draft decision, and agrees with the need to develop an action plan to address the bushmeat trade in Africa. Indeed, WWF has already secured funding and engaged with partners such as FAO to start such an action planning process for west and central Africa. In particular, WWF strongly supports the need for an approach that integrates the conservation of species subject to bushmeat trade with poverty alleviation, habitat degradation, human population growth, and the sustainable use of natural resources. There needs to be discussion and clarity however if this workshop is geographically-specific, and limited to central and west Africa, or is proposed to be global in scope.

The proposed workshop should build on the decisions and agreements of an earlier IUCN/FAO/TRAFFIC workshop on the sustainable use of wild species for meat held in Yaoundé, Cameroon in 2001. This agreed that "activities should be implemented that aim to improve management of the wild meat resource, specifically including:

- a holistic approach to the problem including improved inter-sectoral co-operation
- improved management of wild meat resources
- effective incentives for sustainable use of natural resources."

The workshop also recommended building capacity within key stakeholder groups (local communities, government and development agencies, the private sector, the conservation community). Action strategies were developed for the future. These need to be built upon and turned in to action plans for west and central Africa. CITES Parties should then be encouraged to support the focal African states in implementing these plans.