**Introduction to CoP17 Prop. 8 - CoP17 Prop. 12 Pangolins**

*There are eight species of pangolins, all in the genus* Manis*, following CITES standard nomenclature. Four are collectively distributed in South, East and Southeast Asia, while four others are native to sub-Saharan Africa. All pangolins are currently listed in Appendix II, with wild-caught Asian pangolins traded for primarily commercial purposes being subject to zero export quotas. The five proposals CoP17 Prop. 8 - CoP17 Prop. 12 seek to transfer all pangolin species to Appendix I.*

*High demand in Asia has clearly led to significant declines in populations of pangolins, in particular* M. pentadactyla *and* M. javanica *and an increase in demand for other* Manis *species, both in Asia and in Africa, to increase. Detailed population data on some species are scarce, resulting in insufficient information to determine if these species meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I. However, there are indications that populations have shown significant declines, with high levels of illegal trade recorded, and continual, and in many cases increasingly heavy demand and harvesting. While comparatively little trade in Asian or African pangolins has been reported to CITES since 2000, large volumes of illicit trade have taken place, involving a minimum estimate of some 17,000 pangolins globally each year. In addition to the large shipments being seized in East Asia, originating from Southeast Asia, there are increasingly frequent large shipments of scales being seized coming from Africa.*

*It is important to note that all pangolins in trade are wild sourced: there are no reliable reports of commercial captive-breeding which is extremely difficult owing to the species' breeding biology and the extreme difficulties in keeping them alive in captivity. Pangolins are vulnerable to overexploitation owing to their low reproductive rates (producing only one or two offspring per year).*

*Concern over sustainability of trade reported to CITES, particularly in skins, led to the inclusion of Asian pangolins in various phases of the Review of Significant Trade (RST) process in 1988, 1992 and 1999, with recommended actions being made to various range States to control trade. The African species* M. tetradactyla, M. tricuspis, M. gigantea *and* M. temminckii *were also included in Phase IV of the RST in 1999 but were subsequently eliminated from the process.* M. gigantea *and* M. tricuspis *were again selected for the RST as species of priority concern in 2013.*

*Despite going through the RST processes multiple times, and having the zero quota with Appendix II, illegal trade seems to have continued unabated for the Asian species. So far these processes have failed to provide any notable protection from unsustainable harvest and trade of these species and an Appendix I would be a precautionary measure proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species.*

*Inclusion of all* Manis *species in CITES Appendix I could greatly enhance efforts to safeguard pangolins and support regulatory control mechanisms by non-range States, by placing an overall higher degree of international protection. However, this can only happen if national legislation provides for higher fines and punitive measures for illegal trade in Appendix I-listed species.*

**CoP17 Prop. 11 [Viet Nam, Bhutan and United States of America] Transfer of Sunda Pangolin *Manis javanica* and Chinese Pangolin *M. pentadactyla* from Appendix II to Appendix I**

*Manis javanica* and *M. pentadactyla* are considered Critically Endangered by IUCN based on the rapid decline (>80%) of both species owing to illegal trade for their scales, meat and skin. Information on population status is scarce but neither species is believed to have a small global population. However, there are reports of very severe declines in the past two or three decades in a number of range States of both species, invariably ascribed to exploitation. For example, the population of *M. pentadactyla* in China (which comprises the greater part of the range of *M. pentadactyla*) is estimated to have reduced by some 90% between the 1960s and the early 2000s. *M. javanica* is known to be harvested extensively and, given its low productivity and likely relatively low population density, it is possible that this harvest has led to a decline in population within the guidelines for inclusion in Appendix I. The levels of population declines and harvest pressure is such that a listing is likely to be in the best interest of the conservation of the species.

**ACCEPT**