

**CoP17 Prop. 14 [Namibia] Deletion of the annotation to the listing of the Namibian population of African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* in Appendix II by deleting any reference to Namibia in that Annotation**

Namibia's elephant population was transferred to Appendix II in 1997, subject to a series of annotated conditions. Currently, various forms of trade (i.e. hunting trophies, live animals for *in situ* conservation programmes, hides, hair, leather goods and ekipas in finished jewellery) is conditionally allowed, with all other specimens, including raw ivory, deemed to be specimens included in Appendix I and ineligible for commercial international trade.

This proposal is motivated by the failure of the CITES Parties to implement Decision 14.77, now Decision 16.55, concerning the adoption of a decision-making mechanism to establish a process for trade in ivory. Namibia holds that failure to approve such a mechanism at CoP17 will completely invalidate the current annotation. The principal effect of deleting the annotation would be the establishment of an option for regular trade from Namibia in all elephant specimens, including ivory, governed only by implementation of Article IV (Regulation of trade in specimens of species included in Appendix II) of the Convention.

The annotation to the current listing of Namibia's elephants in Appendix II outlines various conditions that function as special measures under the terms of the precautionary measures in Annex 4 of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16). The Supporting Statement indicates that no African Elephants will be harvested for commercial trade and this may be interpreted as a special measure under the terms of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16). However, it should be noted that the proposal only seeks the deletion of the current annotation and it would have been preferable that a special measure stipulating no commercial harvest be included as an alternative annotation to the current listing.

More importantly, however, looking at the wider context it is not clear what tangible benefits the deletion of the existing special measures in the annotation would bring to the conservation of the species. With the success of current efforts to reverse illegal trade trends and cool demand forces in end markets in such fine balance, continuance of the existing special measures is a precautionary necessity in light of continuing unsustainable levels of poaching and ivory trafficking globally.

**REJECT**