

## **WCC-2016-Res-011-EN**

### **Closure of domestic markets for elephant ivory**

ALARMED that the illegal killing of elephants and trade in their ivory remains a major problem across much of Africa, threatens the survival of many populations of savannah and forest elephants, and undermines the ecological integrity of savannah and forest ecosystems;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that the illegal killing of elephants and illegal elephant ivory trade threatens national security, undermines sustainable economic development in elephant range states including local communities that benefit from healthy wildlife populations, and is a serious risk to the lives of those charged with the protection of elephants and other species;

NOTING that any elephant ivory supply, including legal domestic markets, creates opportunities for the laundering of illegal elephant ivory under the guise of legality;

WELCOMING the joint commitments announced in September 2015 by US President Obama and Chinese President Xi to combat wildlife trafficking, including the commitment to "enact nearly complete bans on ivory import and export...and to take significant and timely steps to halt the domestic commercial trade of ivory" and welcoming the prohibition of domestic elephant ivory trade by the US in July 2016 and France in August 2016;

NOTING the Cotonou Declaration of 2015 by 25 African elephant range States which (among many issues) agreed to "support all proposals and actions at international and national levels to close domestic ivory markets worldwide" and acknowledging positive actions taken by a range of countries;

TAKING NOTE OF the African Elephant Action Plan and the African Elephant Fund, as an African-led initiative (with all 37 African elephant range states in support), which calls for addressing all key conservation issues for the African elephant, including the illegal killing and illicit trade in elephant ivory; and the Elephant Protection Initiative, as an African-led initiative (with 14 member countries to date), which calls for inter alia the closure of domestic markets for elephant ivory;

ACKNOWLEDGING that many range and consumer states have already announced that they have taken, are taking, or intend to take legislative and regulatory steps to close their legal domestic markets for elephant ivory; and

RECOGNISING IUCN's longstanding role in providing sound technical and scientific analyses, and supporting processes designed to conserve elephants notably for their ecological and societal benefits;

### **The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:**

1. CALLS ON the Director General to promote this Resolution, and encourage governments globally to close their domestic markets for elephant ivory as a matter of urgency;
2. REQUESTS the Commissions, especially the Species Survival Commission, the World Commission on Environmental Law, and other organisations with appropriate expertise, to provide relevant technical, legal and trade advice on the implementation of this Resolution to governments, upon request, on the issue of closing domestic markets for elephant ivory;
3. URGES the governments of countries in which there is a legal domestic market for elephant ivory, or any domestic commerce in elephant ivory, to make all necessary legislative and regulatory efforts to close their domestic markets for commercial trade in raw or worked elephant ivory;
4. CALLS ON IUCN Members to take advantage of CITES COP17, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2016, to send an unambiguous message that elephants are protected globally and that in the face of extensive poaching, buying elephant ivory is harmful and unacceptable;

5. CALLS ON all governments, intergovernmental organisations, and non-governmental organisations to provide technical expertise and funding to states' governments and other entities engaged in combating wildlife trafficking to implement this Resolution, including clarifying definitions of closure appropriate to the national context, improving and implementing methods of tracing elephant ivory provenance and date of harvest, and building capacity for enforcement; and
6. ENCOURAGES cross-border (transboundary) conservation projects focused on elephants, through policy and strategic development programmes, to contribute to strict compliance with bans on domestic markets for elephant ivory nationally and across boundaries.

**International Council for Game & Wildlife Conservation** provided the following statement for the record:

*"The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, represented by its Director General, Mr. Tamás Marghescu, would like to formally declare that the Contact Group of this Motion on September 7<sup>th</sup> and then again on the 9<sup>th</sup> deliberately deleted the previously agreed text in the preamble related to the clarification that this Motion does not deal with legal elephant trophies, as they cannot be traded commercially anyway. We kindly request that the Point of Order made by Mr. Marghescu at the Members' Assembly is minuted and a footnote accompanies the final Motion as an important clarification, namely that legal elephant trophies are not subject of this Motion."*