This Issue Dedicated to Professor ‘Hezy’ Shoshani

The Africa Regional Bureau of the Species Survival Network (SSN) would like to dedicate the April/May issue of CITES Afrique to elephant expert Professor Jeheskel "Hezy" Shoshani who tragically lost his life in a minibus bombing in Ethiopia on May 20, 2008. SSN mourns the loss of this passionate advocate for elephant conservation whose work will remain an inspiration for SSN and its Members in the years to come. We would like to extend our condolences to Hezy’s family and friends at this terrible time of loss.

Latest CITES Postings and Notifications

♦ The CITES Secretariat withdrew the recommendation to suspend trade with Ethiopia, Nepal and the Sudan, but confirmed the recommendation to suspend trade with Gabon, Rwanda, and Somalia for failure to submit the questionnaire seeking information regarding the control of ivory trade by 31 December 2007 (CITES Notification Nos.2008/035/025/028).
♦ In CITES Notification No. 2006/077, the Secretariat distributed a form and explanatory notes to report seizures of ivory and other elephant products for inclusion in the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) database. Such forms can be submitted to the Secretariat or directly to TRAFFIC. The Secretariat has informed Parties that the email address used by TRAFFIC to receive ETIS reports has changed and is now: etis@traffic.org (CITES Notification No.2008/030)
♦ The CITES Secretariat informed Parties that it had distributed, for the last time, paper copies of Parties’ original CITES permits and certificates because all CITES permits/certificates used by the Parties will now be posted online in the forum section of the CITES website (CITES Notification No.2008/032). A link to the CITES sample permits/certificates will be provided in the forums for CITES Management Authorities and Enforcement Authorities. Instruction for Parties to subscribe to the forum are available at <http://www.cites.org/forum/forum.php>
♦ The CITES Secretariat has informed Parties that it has been requested to include in the CITES Register of operations that breed Appendix I animals species for commercial purposes: a United States captive breeding facility for two falcon species and a Singapore captive breeding facility for Asian arowana (Scleropages formosus). The facilities will be included in the Register on 2 July 2008 and 15 July 2008 respectively if no objections are received from Parties (CITES Notification Nos 2008/031/033)
♦ The CITES Secretariat informed Parties that China has listed four coral species in Appendix III. This listing is scheduled to take effect on 1 July 2008 (CITES Notification 2008/027).
♦ The CITES Secretariat distributed a list of countries using new CITES Security stamps (CITES Notification 2008/034).
♦ The CITES Secretariat posted information about registration for the Standing Committee meeting (CITES Notification 2008/024). The deadline for Parties to register is 30 June 2008.

Important CITES Dates

• 30 June 2008: deadline for Parties to register for the meeting of the Standing Committee
• 1 July 2008: China Appendix III listing of coral species takes effect.
• 14-18 July 2008: 57th meeting of the Standing Committee in Geneva, Switzerland
African Cranes Threatened by Illegal Trade

Six species of crane, all listed in CITES Appendix II, are present in Africa: the grey crowned crane (Balearica regulorum), the black crowned crane (Balearica pavonina), the wattled crane (Grus carunculatus), the blue crane (Anthropoides paradisea), the Demoiselle crane (Anthropoides virgo) and the common crane (Grus grus). All but the common crane and the Demoiselle crane are endemic to Africa; these two species are winter visitors only.

Preliminary investigations carried out in 2006-2007 on the black crowned crane, the grey crowned crane, the wattled crane and the blue crane by the African Crane Trade Project, under the auspices of the International Crane Foundation/Endangered Wildlife Trust Partnership, showed that these four species of cranes were negatively affected by “the illegal removal of individuals and eggs from the wild for food, traditional use, domestication and illegal trade markets” and that “the captive populations within zoo associations were unsustainable and the CITES database indicated that large numbers of wild-caught cranes were still being traded.”

A workshop organized by the IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) in October 2007 decided that “a proposal to upgrade the black and grey crowned cranes from Appendix II to Appendix I at the next CITES Conference of Parties meeting would be developed and promoted. Concurrently, a review of the current status of the cranes would be made and a proposal for a Vulnerable status for the black and grey crowned cranes proposed. Two motions would also be developed for the IUCN’s World Conservation Congress to be held in 2008, including one on the crane trade and the other on the inconsistent-cites in CITES data.” (CBSG News 2008)

SSN fully supports this initiative and encourages African range States to reinforce national efforts for the protection of African cranes from the harmful effects of international trade.

United States Recognized as One of the Largest Ivory Markets

This evidence of the existence of illegal trade between China and the U.S. was revealed only a few months before the possible approval of China as an ivory trading partner at the next Standing Committee meeting in July 2008. Results from the study were published just days before the indictment in May 2008 of two American women for attempting to import nearly 1400 wildlife products, including elephant teeth and monkey parts, into the country. Agents from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service working in the St Paul, U.S., area where the seizure took place reported that “The market, which is fueled by traditional Asian medicinal and cultural needs, is having a devastating effect on some of the world’s most critically endangered wildlife.” (www.startribune.com).

SSN congratulates U.S. authorities for this successful seizure and encourages the US government to respond to the findings of this newly-published report by increasing its enforcement efforts throughout the country to curtail the harmful effects of illegal ivory trade. Please don’t hesitate to contact SSN if you need more information relating to ivory trade or on the possible approval by the Standing Committee of China as an ivory trading partner.

SSN Mourns the Loss of Elephant Expert Jeheskel Shoshani

Professor Jeheskel "Hezy" Shoshani was among several people killed in an explosion in a public minibus in downtown Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on May 20, 2008. SSN President Will Travers said of this loss. "For many years Hezy served as our guiding light, informing and inspiring us in the struggle to save elephants. I consider him a friend, a colleague, and a hero. He cannot be replaced. He will not be forgotten."

Hezy was an Evolutionary Biologist and a world-renowned elephant specialist who studied elephants and their fossil relatives for over 35 years. Hezy established the Elephant Research Foundation in 1977. He published about 200 scientific articles and books on elephants and edited the publication Elephant. He taught at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan USA, for approximately 25 years and at the University of Asmara in Eritrea since 1998. Last year he moved to Ethiopia to teach at the University of Addis Ababa.

Hezy was a passionate advocate of elephant conservation. His widow, Sandra Shoshani, stated. “Be strong and do not let Hezy’s life be in vain - cherish wildlife.” Hezy’s death is a tragic blow to the protection of the elephants he so loved, the community of conservationists who work to save them, and to us, his SSN family.
Overview of the Animals Committee Results

The 17th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC) and the 23rd meeting of the Animals Committee (AC) took place in April 2008. SSN has prepared a document to summarize the results of these meetings that will be published and distributed to delegates in French and English very soon.

The AC made several decisions which affect African species. These decisions are summarized below.

Review of Significant Trade
CITES Resolution 12.8, on Review of Significant Trade, directs the AC and the PC, in cooperation with the CITES Secretariat and experts, and in consultation with range States, to review the biological, trade and other relevant information on Appendix II species subject to significant levels of trade and to identify problems and solutions concerning the implementation of CITES with regard to these species. African species selected by the AC for the Review of Significant Trade are listed in the text box.

Periodic Review: Resolutions Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP14), on Establishment of Committees, recognizes that an effective method of evaluating whether a species is appropriately listed in the CITES Appendices requires a periodic review of its biological and trade status, and resolved that the AC and the PC are to undertake such reviews. Resolution Conf.14.8 establishes the process for conducting these reviews.

Periodic Review of Felidae
The following African cat species were included in the periodic review of Felidae:

- **Sand cat (Felis margarita)** – Low Priority
  - African Range States affected: Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Sudan, Western Sahara.

- **Black-footed cat (Felis nigripes)** – Low Priority

- **Northern African wild cat (Felis silvestris)** – Low Priority

- **African golden cat (Proelus auratus)** – Low Priority

Periodic review of species selected prior to CoP13:

- **Hippopotamus (Hippopotamus amphibius)**
  - All range States including Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – IUCN Category: Vulnerable (IUCN 2005)

- **Flat-tailed gecko (Ganopsis urophthalmus)**
  - All species endemic to Madagascar selected – IUCN Category: not assessed by IUCN

- **Spiny leaf chameleon (Brookesia decaryi)**
  - Madagascar selected

- **African chameleon (Chamaeleo africanus)**
  - Niger only

- **Fea’s chameleon (Chamaeleo feae)**
  - Equatorial Guinea only – IUCN Category: not assessed by IUCN

- **Mozambique girdled lizard (Cordylus mossambicus)**
  - Mozambique and Zimbabwe selected – IUCN Category: not assessed by IUCN

- **Müller’s sand boa (Gongylus muelleri)**
  - Ghana only

- **Rainbow burrowing frog (Scaphiophryne guttulata)**
  - Madagascar selected – IUCN Category: critically endangered (IUCN 2004)

Species selected for periodic review between CoP13 and CoP15:

- **Yellow-backed duiker (Cephalophus silvicultor)**

A summary report of the AC results is available at <http://www.ssn.org/Meetings/ac/ac23/SSN_AC23_Results_EN.pdf>. Please contact SSN if you have any questions or if you need more information.
Actions by the Committees on Issues Relating to Capacity-Building in the African Region

This section presents a brief overview of the outcome of the AC and PC discussions on issues important to capacity-building in the African region.

♦ Regional Report to the AC for Africa: In AC 23 Doc.5.1., Mr. Khaled Zahzah, the AC representative of French-speaking African countries, reported on CITES activities in Tunisia, Mali and Togo, the only three countries that submitted reports to him for inclusion in the regional report for the meeting. A revised document was submitted to the Committee by Dr. Richard Bagine and Mr. Khaled Zahzah during the meeting to present regional reports from Mali, Togo, Tunisia, Kenya, Ethiopia, United Republic of Tanzania, Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

OUTCOME: The document was noted.

SSN’s VIEW: SSN encourages African Parties to initiate a process to identify CITES-related difficulties encountered in the African region, and to suggest possible short-term or long-term responses to these problems. SSN encourages CITES authorities from the African region to report their difficulties to their AC representatives.

♦ Secretariat Progress Report on the CITES Identification Manual: In AC23 Doc. 17, the Secretariat proposed to turn the CITES Identification Manual into a web-based database.

OUTCOME: The document was noted.

SSN’s VIEW: SSN encourages CITES authorities from the African region in need of assistance with the identification of CITES-listed species to contact the CITES Secretariat and to request paper copies of the Identification Manuals and other relevant resources. According to the CITES website, for issues of CITES capacity-building, you can contact Stephen Nash, Head of the Capacity-building Unit of the CITES Secretariat at stephen.nash@cites.org. Please feel free to contact SSN if you have any questions.

♦ CITES Rules on Transport of Live Animals: As noted in AC23 Doc.16., CITES Articles III, IV and V require that living specimens be prepared and shipped so as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment. CITES Resolution 10.21 (Rev. CoP14) directs the AC to: (a) participate in meetings of the Live Animals and Perishables Board of IATA; b) examine additional references for transport of live specimens for incorporation into RC10.21 (Rev. CoP14); c) examine developments related to the transport of live plant specimens for incorporation into RC10.21 (Rev. CoP14); and d) examine regularly high mortality shipments of live specimens and make recommendations to relevant Parties, exporters, importers and transport companies on how to avoid this in the future. Decision 14.59 directs the AC to examine new or additional references for transport of live animals in RC 10.21 (Rev. CoP14) and to report to CITES CoP15.

OUTCOME: A joint working group of the AC and PC elected Andreas Kaufmann from Austria as the new Chairman of the Transport Working Group (TWG) and noted that Michael Kiehn from Austria would represent the PC on this issue.

The AC agreed that:
- the Chair of TWG, who will participate in meetings of the Live Animal and Perishables Board of IATA, shall report on developments at AC24.
- the CITES Secretariat shall be asked to provide funding to allow the Chair of the TWG to monitor regular meetings of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.
- the Chair and other members of the TWG shall participate in ongoing reviews of the OIE Guidelines for the Transport of Animals by Sea and the OIE Guidelines for the Transport of Animals by Land.
- the TWG will work intersexionally to determine the need for and feasibility of using non-detriment findings in the African region.

SSN’s VIEW: SSN encourages African Parties to initiate a process to identify CITES-related difficulties encountered in the African region, and to suggest possible short-term or long-term responses to these problems. SSN encourages CITES authorities from the African region to report their difficulties to their AC representatives.

♦ International Expert Workshop on Non-detriment Findings (NDFs): at CoP14, Parties agreed to an international workshop on non-detriment findings “the main goal of which is to enhance CITES Scientific Authorities’ capacities, particularly those related to the methodologies, tools, information, expertise and other resources needed to formulate NDFs” (CITES Decision 14.49). The workshop will be held in Mexico on 17-22 November 2008. The Steering Committee in charge of the organization of this workshop includes four Party representatives from the African region: Tony Mwakikunga for Rwanda, Sonja Meintjes for South Africa, Beatrice Khayota and Solomon Kyalo for Kenya. In AC23 Doc.10, Parties were invited to contribute to this workshop by sending information detailed in AC23 Doc.10 to their AC and PC representatives for transmission to the Steering Committee and co-chairmen of the Working Groups. Parties attending the AC and PC were also invited to contact the Steering Committee and/or the Co-chair to provide information for the workshop.

OUTCOME: The document was noted.

SSN’s VIEW: SSN, as a member of the Steering Committee, strongly supports the organization of this workshop and its potentially positive impact on capacity-building related to the making of detriment findings in the African region. SSN encourages CITES authorities from the African region to contribute by contacting the workshop organizers to describe the difficulties they encounter in the preparation of NDFs. For more information, please contact Mr. Hesiquio Benitez of the Steering Committee at hbenitez@conabio.gob.mx or contact the SSN Africa Regional Bureau.
Chinese Citizens Charged With Ivory Trafficking in Kenya

Kenyan police intercepted a Chinese man and woman in possession of an estimated 110 kilograms of ivory as they were about to board a plane to Beijing via Doha, Qatar. The ivory seized was in the form of elephant ivory tusks of unknown origin and cut into pieces. If found guilty, the suspects can be charged with a maximum one-year jail sentence and a fine of up to 10,000 shillings ($163) (The Associated Press, 15 May 2008).

This seizure of elephant ivory destined for China occurs as the CITES Standing Committee is about to discuss, in July 2008, the possible approval of China as a trading partner for a one-off sale of stockpiled ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, approved at CoP14. It illustrates the reality of the concerns already expressed by TRAFFIC over the increase of illegal ivory trade involving China at CoP14: “The occurrence of large-scale seizures has become far more frequent and larger in scale in the recent period 1998-2006, and such seizures are primarily destined for China, Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taiwan (Province of China), which now functions largely as an integrated market.” (TRAFFIC report to CoP14, June 2007)

SSN warmly congratulates Kenya for its successful enforcement efforts and encourages African elephant range States to contact the African Regional Representatives of the Standing Committee to express any concerns they may have over the continued rise of seizures of ivory destined for China. Please don’t hesitate to contact SSN if you need more information.

Arrest of Cyber-Criminals in the Republic of Congo and in Cameroon

Since 1996, the Republic of the Congo has been the only French-speaking African country to become a member of the Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora (the other members are Zambia, the Kingdom of Lesotho, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, Ethiopia and South Africa). After a 12-month undercover operation, the Congo National Bureau to the Lusaka Agreement and the National Central Bureau of Interpol arrested a Cameroonian national residing in the city of Pointe-Noire in February 2008 for illegally trading in elephant ivory over the Internet. The suspect, who was found to have been involved in several illegal shipments of ivory to the US and to Europe, had in his possession at least 14 artifacts made of elephant ivory. These were confiscated as evidence at his home. African elephants are fully protected in the Republic of the Congo.

Use of the Internet, which allows rapid, remote and anonymous transactions, is possibly one of the fastest growing trends in illegal international wildlife trade. The use of the Internet by traffickers is not limited to trading wildlife products or derivatives, but also applies to live animals. The arrest of an alleged cyber-criminal in the Republic of Congo was followed in April 2008 by the arrest of a suspect involved in illegally trading protected wildlife species online in Southern Cameroon. The South West Provincial Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife arrested a man suspected of trying to sell wildlife online and of carrying out international fraud schemes involving falsification of government documents, including the use of a falsified CITES permit for export of a chimpanzee to Belgium.

The arrest of internet wildlife traffickers comes after an appeal made at CoP14 to governments to increase efforts in combating illegal internet wildlife trade and fraud. SSN warmly congratulates the government of the Republic of Congo and the government of Cameroon for this success in stopping the perpetration of Internet crimes.

Well-Known Ivory Smuggler Arrested in the Republic of Congo

On 28th April 2008, officers from SSN member the Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA), the Congo National Bureau to the Lusaka Agreement, the Gendarmerie, and the Lusaka Agreement Task Force arrested a notorious suspected ivory smuggler in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. A search of the trafficker’s house resulted in the seizure of three leopard skins, 671 ivory carvings representing a gross weight of about 41kg, and the confiscation of equipment used to carve ivory. Many of the ivory items were reported to be carved as chopsticks (sold for US$ 20 per pair) and hankos (name seals) destined for the Asian market. The suspect is now awaiting trial.

SSN wishes to warmly congratulate the Congolese authorities for this unprecedented success, which illustrates their commitment to the strong enforcement of CITES. SSN encourages the government of the Republic of Congo to continue its fight against illegal international trade to secure the preservation of protected species in the region.

Useful publications:
♦ Boere, Galbraith, Stroud, “Waterbirds around the world: a global overview of the conservation, management and research of the world’s waterbird flyways” (2006) available at <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/PDF/pub07_waterbirds_part5.1.2.pdf>


Useful websites:
♦ <http://www.lusakaagreement.org/> > website of the Lusaka Agreement.
♦ <http://www.birdlife.org/> > website of Birdlife international - includes bird fact sheets.

Please contact the SSN Africa Regional Bureau if you need help with translation.
SSN Member of the Month: The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)

Organization Profile:
Date of creation: 1984
Mission Statement: To investigate, expose and campaign against the illegal trade in wildlife and the destruction of our natural environment.
Offices located in: London, UK and Washington DC, USA.
Projects in Africa located in: Sub-Saharan region and East Africa
Website: http://www.eia-international.org

Local Project: Undercover investigations led in collaboration with governments, enforcement agencies and international conventions.
Using undercover investigations, and in-depth background research and advocacy at the highest levels of government, EIA is able to present incontrovertible evidence of environmental crime and abuse, together with effective solutions and a powerful rationale for action. EIA investigators gather unique film, photos and information from around the world and work with governments, enforcement agencies and international conventions to mobilize political will for the protection of wildlife and the environment. EIA then uses the skills it gains during its work around the world to empower others. This empowerment creates networks to support local people and to contribute to skills sharing and information gathering in all the countries where EIA operates.

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SSN Member of the Month: The Environmental
Investigation Agency (EIA)

CITES Protected Species of the Month

♦ Name: fern, fougère (Alsophila manniana) (no common name)
♦ CITES listing: Appendix II.
♦ CITES export quotas: no export quotas reported for 2008 (see <http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2008/ExportQuotas2008.pdf>)
♦ CITES Trade levels (WCMC trade database 2007): 16 dried plants were exported between 2000 and 2007 for Alsophila species. Exporters were Equatorial Guinea and Cuba.
 ♦ IUCN category: not yet assessed by IUCN
 ♦ Threats: Habitat loss/degradation; collection for trade
 ♦ Range States: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Principe, Sierra Leone, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe
 ♦ Useful resources: <http://www.timberpress.com/pdfs/excerpts/9780881926309e.pdf> (Publication on tree ferns); Large and Braggins “Tree Ferns” (Timber Press 2004)

♦ Name: Black crowned crane; grue couronnée (Balearica pavonina)
♦ CITES listing: Appendix II
♦ CITES Export Quotas: no export quota reported for 2008 (see <http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2008/ExportQuotas2008.pdf>)
♦ CITES Trade levels (WCMC trade database 2008): between 2000 and 2007, exports of black-crowned cranes amounted to 23 feathers, 1056 live animals, 4 skins, 2 specimens and 2 trophies. Main exporters were Sudan and Guinea; main importers were the United Arab Emirates and France.
 ♦ IUCN category: Near Threatened (IUCN 2006)
 ♦ Threats: Habitat loss/degradation; hunting for consumption and international trade; illegal captures for the pet industry; pollution
 ♦ Range States: Benin (breeding: br), Burkina Faso (br), Burundi, Cameroon (br?), Central African Republic (br), Chad (br), Côte d’Ivoire (br), DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia (br), Gabon, Gambia (br), Ghana, Guinea (br) Guinea-Bissau (br), Kenya (br), Mali (br), Mauritania (br), Niger (br), Nigeria (br), Senegal (br), Sierra Leone, Sudan (br), Swaziland, Togo (br?), Uganda (vagrant)
 ♦ Useful websites: <http://www.savingcranes.org/species/black_crowned.cfm> (fact sheet on the black-crowned crane on other crane species); <http://www.birdlife.org/> (bird life international); <http://www.savingcranes.org/> (the international crane foundation); <http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/publications/actionplans.htm> (IUCN crane action plan)