



*"Working within CITES for the protection and conservation of species in international trade"*

## **MUSICAL CHAIRS IN GENEVA**

***Geneva, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011***

After the shock of an early morning vote at the CITES Standing Committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, which led to the exclusion of some of the world's leading wildlife conservation non-governmental organisations including the Species Survival Network, Born Free Foundation, World-wide Fund for Nature, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Humane Society International, Environmental Investigation Agency, Elephant Family, and numerous others, from the debate on elephant poaching and the impact of the international illegal trade in ivory, a second vote at the start of the afternoon session reversed the previous decision and the Born Free Foundation, SSN and others are back in the room.

*"Common sense has prevailed!"* stated Will Travers, President of the Species Survival Network. *"The previous expulsion of NGOs - the representatives of civil society and tens of millions of members of the public - was a major error of judgement. It cast a shadow over the work of the Convention and, had it persisted, would have diminished its ability to bring real conservation benefits to a range of threatened species."*

*"The exact details of how this more enlightened second vote came about are unclear"* continued Travers, *"but the Standing Committee has gone some considerable way to restoring its reputation for progressive inclusivity to the lasting benefit of species that are or may be threatened by international trade."*

**For more information please go to [www.ssn.org](http://www.ssn.org) or contact:**

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### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **CITES**

The international trade in wild animals and plants is worth billions of dollars every year. Levels of exploitation and rates of wild capture can have a serious detrimental impact on the future survival of thousands of animal and plant species across the globe. The Convention on

International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) is an international agreement between Governments, which provides varying levels of protection for species that are or may be in danger of extinction as a result of the impact of international trade. [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)

## **SSN**

The Species Survival Network (SSN), founded in 1992, is an international coalition of over eighty non-governmental organizations (NGOs) committed to the promotion, enhancement, and strict enforcement of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Through scientific and legal research, education and advocacy, the SSN is working to prevent over-exploitation of animals and plants due to international trade. [www.ssn.org](http://www.ssn.org)

## **The plight facing elephants**

In 2009, over 20 tonnes of ivory was seized and countries have started to report localised extinctions of very vulnerable elephant populations. Since Standing Committee last met in March 2010, over 23 tonnes of ivory have been seized by customs and police agencies worldwide and so far this year at least 11.5 tonnes have been seized.

For further information please visit [www.bloodyivory.org](http://www.bloodyivory.org)