



PROPOSAL: CITES CoP18 – **Prop. 12 App. II to App. 1**
African elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*)

PROPOSERS: Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan,
Syrian Arab Republic and Togo

SUBJECT: Transfer the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe
from Appendix II to Appendix I

IWMC RECOMMENDS – REJECTION of PROP. 12

After having previously tried to obtain the retransfer, the populations of African elephants of Botswana, Namibia, South African and Zimbabwe to Appendix I, the Proponents have no consideration for an inter-African solidarity and for the international cooperation that is at the basis of CITES.

While we accept that countries be opposed to any trade of wildlife, we cannot accept the argument that the only way to fight illegal trade is to prohibit any legal trade. Except for the experimental trade that took place in 2000 and in 2009, trade in ivory has been effectively prohibited since 1990. Because the main purpose of the Proposal is to demonstrate that illegal activities are on the increase, we may wonder why an extended ban would be more successful than the current one.

To offer legal goods to those who need them is the best manner to discourage them in trying to acquire the same goods through illegal channels. *“Prohibitions are not the solution, Prohibitions are the problem.”*(Sinclair,2006)

When there was a supply of legal ivory, either from accumulated stocks or from the two authorized sales of 2000 and 2009, poaching and other illegal activities were under control. The decision taken at CoP14 to establish a “permanent” moratorium on ivory trade was the equivalent of providing the poachers with a blank check.

IWMC sees this proposal as another ill-fated attempt to eliminate legal activities related to the use of wild resources and a direct interference in the affairs of Sovereign States that have managed their resources for the benefit of both the livelihoods of their peoples and the conservation of wild species.

For these reasons and all those presented in Proposals 10 and 11, IWMC strongly recommends to the CITES Parties to reject the proposal by the above-mentioned Proponents. This Proposal will undermine the fundamental principles of CITES and impose its anti-use policy to the detriment of range States that have successfully managed and conserved their elephant populations.