



“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

“Hunting provides the principal incentive and revenue for conservation. Hence it is a force for conservation.”

Special To The Hunting Report World Conservation Force Bulletin

by John J. Jackson, III

□ Santiago, Chile

What Really Happened At CITES COP 12

The 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) was held the first two weeks of November in Santiago, Chile. The Convention regulates all trade of wild species the Parties list. There were 60 listing proposals and 68 other items on the agenda. On balance, the meeting was a win for the forces of protectionism. Whale shark, basking shark, big leaf mahogany, bottlenose dolphin, over a dozen turtle species, reptiles and other animal and plant species were listed. The elephant proposals of Zimbabwe and Zambia were completely defeated. The conditions on future sale of stockpiles of ivory are the most restrictive in history.

Fifteen hundred (1,500) delegates from 160 party nations and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) attended the meeting. Conservation Force had a team of three people. Our top gun was Conservation Force Director James Teer, Ph.D. Dr. Teer has 50 years of expertise, and he has been on

Conservation Force's Board of Directors since it's inception. He is the retired Chair of the Department of Wildlife Management of Texas A & M University; Past President of The Wildlife



Hunting interests met stiff challenges at CITES meeting last month in Santiago, Chile. In all, 1,500 delegates attended.

Society; and recipient of the prestigious Aldo Leopold Award. Chrissie Jackson, Secretary of Conservation Force, registered as a member of the press for access to materials and press

conferences not open to attendees.

The Game animals directly at issue at this conference were African leopard, Pakistan's markhor, all species of bear, all Asian big cats, Saiga antelope and the elephant populations of five African countries.

African Leopard: The Parties eliminated the long-standing requirement that African countries with leopard quotas annually file a "special report" on their leopard trade, in addition to their regular "annual report" specifying all other CITES trade. The "special report" has been a duplication of the regular "annual" report information. In the past, some countries have failed to file their "special" reports in a timely manner, which has resulted in their exports of leopards being temporarily suspended.

Tanzania Leopard: The Republic of Tanzania doubled its leopard quota from 250 to 500 per year after an exemplary presentation made by Tanzania's Director of Wildlife, Emmanuel Severre. Per annum, the Tanzanian government derives about

10 million US dollars in direct revenue through game fees, trophy fees, conservation fees and observer fees from safari hunting.

The Director also stressed that the historical leopard listing records of CITES reflect “that the leopard is in no way endangered” in Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia or Zimbabwe. Hunter questionnaires are given to tourist hunters for the Tanzania Director’s Review. The opinion in 90 percent of the hunting blocks was that the quota should be increased.

Tanzania played an obvious leadership role at this conference. They competently spoke up with conviction, and they participated in all the important working groups formed to hammer out Resolutions, Decisions and Proposals.

Pakistan Markhor: Several modifications were made to the Pakistan markhor quota resolution that was adopted at COP 10. Most significantly, the quota was increased from six to 12 per annum. Pakistan authorities urged the Conference to either eliminate their quota, or to double it. They reasoned that the existing quota resolution limited their trade to six, which is too few animals to support their markhor conservation program over the long term. They would rather chance separate non-detriment findings of the importing countries than be limited to a quota of six established by the Conference as a body. Their 2002 markhor population survey demonstrated that the populations are stable, or are continuing to increase. More promising, additional tribal communities want to create hunting-dependent conservation programs, which in turn can grow other markhor populations and benefit even more tribal people. The quota increase passed by consensus, but during the debate the US delegation expressed concern that it was improper to make a “snappy decision” to increase the quota. Yours truly intervened in the debate to remark that the “real conservation issue and success of the world-renown program is at risk because some major importing Parties are not permitting hunters to bring their markhor trophies home.” I did not name the US,

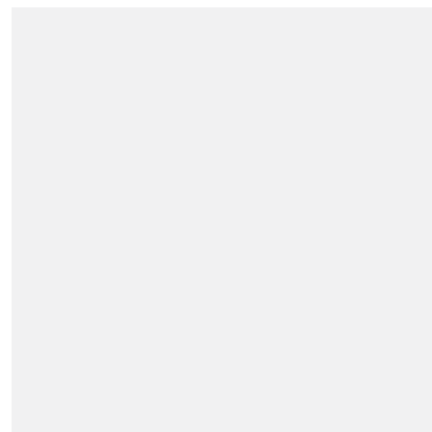
but the same US Fish & Wildlife (USF&WS) officials who argued that the quota increase was too “snappy” have not approved markhor trophy import permits pending since 1999. Obviously four years is too “snappy” too!

Even the reason for the delay within the USF&WS is being withheld. Recently, the USF&WS responded to a Conservation Force Freedom of Information Request (FOIA) we filed to monitor the many permits that have been pending too long. To our surprise, key decisional parts of the markhor documents were not produced. We have had to file an appeal.

In a press conference hosted by CIC, the Pakistan Director responded to our questions. “It is too low a quota, not too high a quota, that most threatens the markhor.... Markhor survival is dependent upon a hunting program that generates revenue, bears the costs and creates the community’s conservation incentive.... Markhor conservation can be expanded to other areas if there is a higher quota.... There are now 12 to 13 communities that desire a hunting-based program, but there has only been a quota of six animals, so it has not been possible.”

In the past two years, the quota of six animals has not been taken because of the holdup in import permit approvals by the USF&WS. That, no doubt, is because some markhor are listed as “endangered” under provisions of the US Endangered Species Act (ESA). They were listed as “endangered” in 1975 when the Anti’s petitioned to list all CITES Appendix I species as “endangered.” A downlisting petition that the USF&WS found “warranted” is still pending.

The Pakistan authorities explain that there are two kinds of markhor, the straight-horned (Suleiman) and the flare-horned. The straight-horned are “endangered” under the ESA, but not the flare-horned. The markhor in the famous Torghor Hills Region in the Torghor Conservation Project (TCP) are of straight-horned variety. In documents provided in response to Conservation Force’s FOIA, the Division of Scientific Authority states that the “tro-



JOHN J. JACKSON, III
Conservation Force



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Editor/Writer

John J. Jackson, III

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Don Causey

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Conservation Force
One Lakeway Center, Suite 1045
Metairie, LA 70002
Tel. 504-837-1233. Fax 504-837-1145.
www.ConservationForce.org

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The Hunting Report
9300 S. Dadeland Blvd., Suite 605
Miami, FL 33156-2721.
Tel. 305-670-1361. Fax 305-716-9119.

phy hunt for straight-horned markhor (and Afghan urial) has been an integral part of TCP since its inception” because the funds it generates run the project and benefit the local people that support it. Without the TCP, markhor and urial almost certainly would be extirpated from the Torghor Hills in the foreseeable future.” Conservation Force maintains that the USF&WS should permit trophy imports of the straight-horned, as well as the flare-horned markhor.

The ESA provides that the USF&WS “may” grant import permits if the imports will “enhance” the survival or restoration of the species in the wild. ESA implementing regulations provide that the USF&WS “shall” process such permits. The Pakistan authorities promised to furnish Conservation Force a list and map distinguishing the different tribal areas and the type of markhor in each. We will publish that when it is provided to us. If you want a copy of the latest USF&WS internal position on the different subspecies of markhor contact us for a copy of their FOIA response.

Saiga Antelope: Conservation Force and Houston Safari Club were cited for their sponsorship of the Saiga Antelope Workshop in Kalmykia in May 2002. That workshop resulted in a Conservation Action Plan for the species, as well as kept it off of the proposal list for Appendix I this time. If the plan from the international workshop is not implemented in a timely fashion, the antelope will no doubt be listed on Appendix I. All commercial trade has already been halted at the recommendation of the Animals Committee. Special thanks is due to Dr. James Teer of Conservation Force for helping organize and for attending the workshop.

Asian Big Cats: The Conference adopted a special program for greater protection of the “big cats” of Asia. This is an effort to carry over the extraordinary measures that have been adopted to protect the tiger at recent Conferences. World Wildlife Fund International (WWF) was behind this effort and was lead by Susan Lieberman, who headed its CITES effort at COP 12. Susan is a former Chief of the

USF&WS’s Division of Scientific Authority. Before that, she led Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) CITES Program. WWF played a leading role at this conference in all protection efforts, from listing sharks to opposition against ivory trade. We are watching this closely, for we expect protectionists to attempt to extend it to Africa and all the “big cats” of the world in the future. All cats are already on Appendix II of CITES.

Bears: The longstanding bear Resolutions were basically carried over to the next Conference. Emphasis was placed on the need for nations with bear trade to ensure that they have legislation and adequate law enforcement to protect bears and eliminate bear bile



The antis were active at CITES. Note sign to left of John Jackson: “Some people would kill for these tusks.”

trade. The renewed Resolution expressly included the US and Canada as major bear trading parties. The Resolution at the last meeting, COP 11, clarified that state and provincial legislation would suffice since the US and Canada have the largest bear populations and most successful bear conservation in the world.

African Elephant: The Conference began early for the African elephant range nations. They held “The African Elephant Dialogue Meeting” in Santiago the week before the COP. Denis Koulogna Koutou, the Cameroon Director of Wildlife chaired the meeting of the 24 African elephant range nations. The Dialogue is important. It is resulting in far greater elephant conservation. This was the fifth

Dialogue meeting.

Five African nations proposed the sale of their ivory stockpiles, Botswana, Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Three of their proposals were conditionally approved, Botswana’s, Namibia’s and South Africa’s. The proposals of Zambia and Zimbabwe were rejected. Any representation that this move constitutes a reopening of the ivory trade is agenda-driven or reckless. Large-scale commercial ivory trade is not even being discussed, only government sale of stockpiled ivory of known origin. Most of the ivory is from natural mortality, and some small part is from problem animal control. Moreover, no country is considering culling for the purpose of ivory trade. Four of the proposals, all but Zambia’s, included requests to continue to export sport-hunted ivory. That part of the proposals was not challenged and is carried over from earlier annotations to the conditional Appendix II listing of elephant in Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe and RSA. Zambia does not want trophy hunting of elephants at this time, even though elephant trophy hunting is a major generator of funds in other countries. It is the largest revenue producer in Botswana’s safari industry, for example, and in Zimbabwe’s CAMPFIRE Program. Ivory policy in Zambia has been greatly influence by the David Shepard Foundation over the past decade. That group has been buying and burning their ivory.

The CITES Secretariat summarized the amended proposals that passed thusly: “Today’s agreement requires any future one-off sale to be supervised through a rigorous control system. The sales cannot occur before May 2004 to provide time for the baseline data to be gathered on population and poaching levels and for the CITES Secretariat to verify and register the existing stocks. The Secretariat must also confirm whether any potential buyers can effectively regulate their domestic ivory markets and thus are eligible for importing the ivory. The aim of these controls is to prevent any illegal ivory from entering into legal markets and to discourage an upsurge in poach-

ing. Another protection built into the system is that trade can be suspended if either an exporting or an importing country is found to be in non-compliance. In addition, trade can be stopped if there is any evidence that trade is leading to increased poaching in other regions of Africa. Two monitoring systems that have been established to track the illegal killing of elephants and illegal sales of ivory will be critical to ensuring that countries relying on tourism are not harmed by sales from countries that also rely on trade.”

The conditions imposed on ivory trade were made more stringent at this conference. For the first time, even the US voted in favor of two of the proposals because it “raised the bar” for good conservation. It is important to understand that the drive for trade of the naturally occurring stockpiles of ivory is driving far more conservation than would otherwise be entertained. Kenya claims it is causing the “rape” of its women by poachers and that the monitoring programs being created will cost more than the limited trade of stockpiles will generate. In reality, even Kenya and India’s elephant populations are growing. Moreover all revenue from stockpile sales is dedicated exclusively to elephant conservation and community benefits. Community benefits are widely thought to be an integral part of elephant conservation. An underlying concern is the “signal” trade sends to poachers (“signal effect”), and the monitoring and control of any secondary impact from the signal. There is no question that elephant populations are generally still increasing. Those in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe are not endangered by trade. The primary concern has become what effect the one-time stockpile sales will have on other populations in jurisdictions less able to control poaching.

The proposals of Zimbabwe and Zambia were rejected. Though Zimbabwe’s elephant remain on Appendix II, it can’t sell any of its ivory stockpile in May 2004. Zimbabwe did not get the necessary two-thirds vote because of concern over its economy and potential collapse of its govern-

ment. Its elephant have increased from 67,000 in 1997 to 89,000 in 2002. In absolute numbers, this is the third largest number of elephants in the world, behind Botswana and Tanzania.

Zambia’s proposal had the least support, but still garnered a majority



Conservation Force delegates: Dr. James Teer (left), Dr. Herb Kalchreuter, John J. Jackson, III, Dr. Kai Wilscheid.

though not the required two-thirds vote. Its elephant population may actually be one of the few that is decreasing. Zambian representatives argued they badly need the revenue to turn the decline around. Perhaps it does.

Quotas: The most important matter at the meeting were three separate items

Conservation Force Sponsor

The Hunting Report and Conservation Force would like to thank International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife (IGF) for generously agreeing to pay all of the costs associated with the publishing of this bulletin. IGF was created by Weatherby Award Winner H.I.H Prince Abdorreza of Iran 25 years ago. Initially called The International Foundation for the Conservation of Game, IGF was already promoting sustainable use of wildlife and conservation of biodiversity 15 years before the UN Rio Conference, which brought these matters to widespread public attention. The foundation has agreed to sponsor *Conservation Force Bulletin* in order to help international hunters keep abreast of hunting-related wildlife news. Conservation Force’s John J. Jackson, III, is a member of the board of IGF and Bertrand des Clers, its director, is a member of the Board of Directors of Conservation Force.



International Foundation for the Conservation of Wildlife

introduced by the US and Germany concerning quotas for Appendix II species. Those items applied to what are called non-detriment findings, which must be made before any animals on Appendices I & II can be exported. Germany wants authorities in importing countries to establish and regulate those findings, rather than authorities in the exporting countries. A similar proposal was also suggested to the USF&WS by animal rights organizations here in the US who are opposed to trade. This kind of secondary review nearly stopped the import into Europe of grizzly bear trophies from British Columbia this past year, and has stopped the export of bobcats from the US in the past. If the three items had been accepted as proposed, it could have caused the greatest impediment of trade ever, including trophy trade. Conservation Force led the opposition to these items. We succeeded in getting on the “Quota Working Group” created to resolve the contentious issues. It was like walking in front of a train, but we stubbornly prevailed. We know well the impossibility of some criteria for making non-detriment findings from the elephant, leopard and polar bear initiatives. The elephant suit I filed and won more than a decade ago arose when the USF&WS substituted its criteria and made its own biological findings, rather than accepting the exporting country’s findings.

Tanzania was the only other tourist hunting interest on the working group. Tanzania was “absolutely against” the German and US proposal. Some organizations skirted the controversy on the basis that they supported “good science.” That position can be taken in just about any issue, of course. In fact, the issue was the respective role of the Parties. Now that the Quota Working Group has reformed the item, it really is about good science. This conflict between the roles of the exporting and importing Parties is as old as CITES and will arise again. The elephant trophy import lawsuit arose out of that conflict, as did the white rhino suit. You can trust Conservation Force to be there and represent your interest.
- John J. Jackson, III.