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JOINT MEETING OF THE CBD LIAISON
GROUP ON BUSHMEAT AND THE CITES
CENTRAL AFRICA BUSHMEAT WORKING
GROUP
Nairobi, 7-10 June 2011

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY LIAISON GROUP ON BUSHMEAT

The Liaison Group on Bushmeat¹ of the Convention on Biological Diversity met in Buenos Aires, from 15 to 17 October 2009, and adopted the following recommendations to improve the sustainability of harvesting of bushmeat:

National level

1. *Increase capacity to fully evaluate the bushmeat issue and establish appropriate policies and management regimes.* National Governments should evaluate the role of bushmeat and other wild animal products in national and local economies as well as the ecological services provided by harvested species and other biodiversity as an essential step towards conserving and sustainably using this resource. This can be done by:

- (a) Increasing the visibility of the existing bushmeat market as a precursor to putting its management on a sounder footing;
- (b) Increasing capacity to monitor levels of bushmeat harvest and consumption in national statistics to inform improved policy and planning;
- (c) Incorporating a realistic and open assessment of wildlife consumption and its role in livelihoods into major policy and planning documents.

2. *Engaging the private sector and extractive industries.* Wildlife management, including bushmeat species management, should be an essential part of management or business plans for natural resource industries (oil, gas, minerals, timber, etc.) operating in tropical, sub-tropical forest, wetland and savannah ecosystems.

3. *Rights and tenure, and traditional knowledge.* Access, rights and associated accountability, as well as the responsibility to sustainably manage wildlife resources should be transferred whenever possible to local stakeholders who have a vested interest in maintaining the resources and who can deliver

¹ The meeting was convened in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC).

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sustainable, desirable solutions. Capacity of these empowered local communities should be built and strengthened to ensure that they have the capacity to exercise these rights. Conservation and sustainable use of wildlife resources would be enhanced through the incorporation of traditional knowledge into management and monitoring systems, as well as by favouring the use of the most ecologically friendly (e.g., species-specific), cost-efficient, and humane hunting methods.

4. *Review of national policies and legal frameworks.* States where bushmeat species occur are strongly encouraged to review existing policies and legal frameworks related to the conservation and sustainable use of wildlife. In addition to restricting harvesting in protected areas and of threatened species, it is recommended that States establish policies, capacity, and management systems that support the legal and sustainable hunting of targeted species. The review should ensure:

(a) The coherence of policy and legal frameworks through mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of wildlife in the various sectoral and national planning exercises;²

(b) That management schemes are practical and feasible for harvestable species as well as those in need of strict protection (e.g., endangered species);

(c) Realistic approaches to enforcement in which control measures are consistent with capacity;

(d) That legal and regulatory texts reflect actual practices without compromising key conservation objectives;

(e) Promotion of the harvest of low-risk species (e.g., highly productive species) and of measures to enhance protection of high-risk species.

5. *Landscape-level management.* An effectively managed and coherent network of protected areas is essential to conserve wildlife, including threatened species. In order to conserve wildlife populations outside protected areas, management should be at the landscape level.

6. *Science.* Management decisions should be made based on the best available and applicable science and the precautionary approach. Further research is crucial and better information management is needed. Appropriate monitoring systems of bushmeat harvest and trade should be developed and implemented at national level, and allow for comparability of bushmeat harvest and trade at the regional level. Standardized methods to assess and monitor the status of wildlife populations should be developed and implemented. New and additional reliable knowledge on populations of harvested species and on levels of use and trade should be made available for consideration within the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red listing process.

7. *Substitution and other mitigative measures.* The development of alternative food and income sources is essential where wildlife alone cannot be sustainably used to support current or future livelihood needs. Mitigative measures (farming, ranching, captive breeding, etc.) may play a role in conserving wildlife resources, but in the long term, there is no substitute for effective management of the resource.

8. *Capacity-building and awareness-raising.* To achieve conservation and sustainable use of wildlife resources, capacity-building and public awareness need to be raised at national and local levels across a range of themes, including: governance and law enforcement, wildlife monitoring and management, livelihood alternatives, and collaboration across government, private and public sectors.

² Including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), forest management plans, national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAP), national forest programmes (NFP), Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), national adaptation programmes of action (NAPA), REDD-PIN, national bushmeat action plans, national wildlife management plans and regulations, species-specific national management and conservation plans.

9. *Health.* Where wildlife hunting and bushmeat trade occur, appropriate public health information and capacity-building should emphasize prevention of disease and protection of both human and animal health. In regions with bushmeat trade, sanitary control and biosecurity measures are necessary to prevent the sale of tainted meat or contaminated animal products that can contribute to the spread of pathogens (including emerging infectious diseases and parasites) between wildlife, domestic stock and people. Furthermore, wildlife, domestic livestock and human health need to be monitored and legislation, regulations, and enforcement need to be developed and implemented to reduce the threat of epizootics from newly emerging infections.

10. *Climate change.* Mechanisms such as REDD+ should take into account the importance of wildlife for maintaining healthy ecosystems and ecological services, and for the permanence of forest carbon stocks and forest adaptation capacity.

11. *Special management areas.* Specific areas for wildlife management should be designated at national and local levels, similar to permanent forest estates designated to manage timber resources. These may span existing protected area systems and multi-use landscapes (e.g., game-management areas or districts).

International level

12. *National and international strategies to address bushmeat.* Such strategies could include:

(a) Supporting and strengthening national political will to take action on key bushmeat and existing conservation commitments;

(b) Supporting and strengthening existing international commitments and agreements and encouraging new ones concerning the conservation and sustainable use of transboundary and shared wildlife resources.

13. *Participatory processes.* The international community invites national Governments to develop or strengthen participatory and cross-sectoral processes in formulating and implementing the sustainable management and harvesting of bushmeat species.

14. *Policy processes.* International partners should seek to effectively integrate wildlife conservation strategies into relevant international development policy processes, such as poverty reduction strategies.

15. *Impacts of international trade on natural resources.* International policy processes and institutions concerning trade and development should take steps to better assess and mitigate impacts of extraction and trade of natural resources (e.g., timber, minerals, oil) on wildlife and resulting bushmeat demands.

16. *International trade in wild bushmeat.* Concerned with the potential threat that a growing international trade in bushmeat may have on wild populations, the international community should take action to discourage trade in illegally harvested bushmeat. Close cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora on this topic is required.

17. *International policy environment.* In order to optimize the sustainability of hunting, the international community should support integrated national, transboundary, and local action to build partnerships among organizations and institutions to:

- (a) Build enforcement capacity;
- (b) Develop and implement protein and income alternatives;
- (c) Increase awareness and education regarding bushmeat hunting and trade.

These actions taken together have the potential to encourage communities to sustainably manage their wildlife resource and reduce the demand for bushmeat.

18. *International science.* The international community should encourage ecosystem research to inform future policy, with a focus on natural forest regeneration, including the role of seed-dispersers such as primates and game-birds, DNA bar-coding, keystone species, disease transmission and impacts on climate change.

19. *Incentives.* Financial mechanisms and payments for ecosystem services such as REDD should take into account the importance of ecosystem functioning and the role of forest fauna in forest health and resilience.

20. *Forest certification.* Forest certification schemes should take into account the role of conservation and sustainable use of wildlife in maintaining healthy forest ecosystems.
