

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Kyoto (Japan), 2 to 13 March 1992

Interpretation and Implementation of the Convention

Exports of Cheetah Hunting Trophies and Skins

QUOTAS FOR TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF CHEETAH

Cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* were once widely distributed in Asia and Africa, but are now nearly extinct in Asia and declining in Africa. The world's cheetah population is estimated to number between 9,000 to 12,000 individuals. The world's largest concentration of cheetah is now found in southern Africa.

In Namibia, historical records show cheetah to have been widespread throughout the country, but rare until the early 1970's. From about 1970 to 1982 there appears to have been a large increase in numbers, proportionately related to the large increases in wild game populations on farmland for the same period. In 1982 a widespread outbreak of rabies caused a sharp decline in game populations, which resulted in large numbers of cheetah being killed on farmland due to their depredation of livestock. Cheetah were estimated to number from 2,000 to 3,000 in 1985, based on radiotelemetry studies. However, numbers appear to have declined since then.

Botswana is thought to hold the world's second largest cheetah population, with between 1,000 to 2,500 animals. Zimbabwe is third with 500 to 1,000.

In southern Africa, it is estimated that only 18 to 24% of the cheetah population occurs in protected areas. Cheetah generally do not fare well in protected areas due to interspecific competition with other large predators. In a study of cheetah biology in the Serengeti, researchers found cub mortalities of up to 92%, with the major cause being losses to other predators. The vast majority of wild cheetah today occur on private farmland; it is estimated that 95% of Namibia's population and 80% of Zimbabwe's population are found on farmland. Cheetah are viewed by farmers as a major threat to livestock and large numbers are killed annually. They are not killed primarily for their skins as the pelt is not commercially valuable. The table below presents data on the number of cheetah reported shot annually as livestock predators in Namibia since 1980. In Namibia, the cheetah is a protected animal; if killed in defense of livestock, the farmer must take the skin and report to the government within ten days.

Year	Shot in protection of livestock	Trophy hunting	Live exports	Total
1980	623	0	139	762
1981	669	0	58	727
1982	850	0	40	890
1983	721	12	124	857
1984	646	7	61	714
1985	537	21	113	671

	Shot in protection of livestock	Trophy hunting	Live exports	Total
1980	623	0	139	762
1986	318	17	67	402
1987	317	12	87	416
1988	272	20	82	374
1989	271	32	67	370
1990	301	29	69	399
1991	145	40	51	236

The number of cheetah utilised annually in Namibia is decreasing, and this may be attributed to two factors: declining populations, on the one hand, but also the growing success of efforts to dissuade farmers from killing cheetah. Trophy hunting and export of live cheetah have been encouraged in Namibia as an attempt to curb farmers' attempts to eradicate cheetah from their land, and to change their attitude from one of "kill at all cost" to one where cheetah would be tolerated and accepted. Giving the cheetah economic value can provide some form of financial return for stock losses, as there is presently no system of livestock compensation in Namibia.

In Zimbabwe, despite longstanding national protection, it appears that increasing numbers of cheetah are being killed on farms in defense of livestock. In order to encourage farmers not to eradicate cheetah from their land, after prolonged consideration, the cheetah's protection status was downgraded to "controlled" in 1990, and a trophy hunting programme was initiated.

5. The proponent governments believe that the only solution to the problem of securing the conservation of viable free-roaming cheetah populations on farmland is to give the landowner the opportunity of receiving direct financial gain and compensation for losses incurred, thus encouraging him to tolerate, or even welcome, the presence of cheetah on his land. Trophy hunting is a viable option which is proving successful in Namibia. Export of live animals to legitimate international captive-breeding programmes is also an important element of this strategy.
6. The Keeper of the International Cheetah Studbook reports that the majority of the world's captive populations originated in Namibia, and Namibia continues to be the major exporter of live wild animals. Efforts to breed cheetah in captivity have largely failed and, according to the International Cheetah Studbook, the sustainability of the world's captive population currently depends on continued importation.
7. The proponents submit for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties the attached draft Resolution to establish an Appendix I export quota system for cheetah, which would permit the export of cheetah hunting trophies and skins, subject to similar restrictions first agreed to for the leopard, *Panthera pardus*, in 1983, as currently set forth in Resolution Conf. 7.7. In addition, the quota would include the export of live wild-captive specimens to zoological institutions participating in internationally recognized efforts to propagate the species in captivity, in accordance with Article III of the Convention.

DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Quotas for Trade in Specimens of Cheetah

RECALLING that Article VII of the Convention identifies instances in which trade in Appendix-I species may be permitted;

RECALLING that the cheetah Acinonyx jubatus is listed in CITES Appendix I, and is classified as Vulnerable by IUCN;

RECALLING also that the majority of the world's cheetah population is now found in southern Africa;

RECOGNIZING that the conservation of the species presents special problems, in that cheetahs do not fare well in protected areas due to interspecific competition and thus their survival can not be ensured by habitat protection alone;

RECOGNIZING that in a small number of southern African countries killing or export of specimens of cheetah may be sanctioned in defense of property and to enhance the survival of the species;

RECOGNIZING also that Namibia has permitted the capture and export of live specimens of cheetah as a component of a strategy to promote the conservation of the species on private lands;

RECOGNIZING further that captive-breeding programmes have had very little success, and that, according to the International Cheetah Studbook, the captive population currently depends on limited imports of live wild specimens;

RECALLING that the Conference of the Parties have approved since 1983 an Appendix-I export quota system for leopard Panthera pardus hunting trophies and skins (Resolutions Conf. 4.13, 5.13, 6.9 and 7.7);

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

RECOMMENDS

that in reviewing applications for permits to import cheetah specimens, whether whole or nearly whole skins or live animals, in accordance with paragraph 3(a) of Article III of the Convention, the Scientific Authority of the State of import approve permits if it is satisfied that the specimens being considered are from one of the following States which may not export more of the said specimens in any one calendar year than the number shown under "quota" opposite the name of the State:

<u>State</u>	<u>Quota</u>
Namibia	150
Zimbabwe	50

that in reviewing applications for permits to import whole skins or nearly whole skins of Acinonyx jubatus, in terms of paragraph 3(c) of Article III of the Convention, the Management Authority of the State of import be satisfied that the said skins are not to be used for primarily commercial purposes if:

- i) the skins are acquired by the owner in the country of export and are being imported as personal items that will not be sold in the country of import; and
- ii) the owner imports no more than two skins in any calendar year if this is authorized by the legislation of the country of export;

that in reviewing applications for permits to import live specimens of Acinonyx jubatus, in terms of paragraph 3(c) of Article III of the Convention, the Management Authority of the State of import be satisfied that the said live specimens are not to be used for primarily commercial purposes if:

- i) the importer or destination is a breeding facility recognized by the Management Authority as participating in an international captive-breeding programme aimed at the recovery of the species;
- d) that the Management Authority of a State of import permit the import of cheetah skins in accordance with this Resolution only if the skins have a self-locking tag attached which indicates the State of export, the number of the specimen in relation to the annual quota and the calendar year to which the quota applies - for example NB 1/100 1992 indicating that Namibia is the State of export and that the specimen is the first specimen exported by Namibia out of its quota of 100 for 1992 - and if the same information as is on the tag is recorded on the export document;
- e) that the Management Authority of a State of import permit the import of live cheetah specimens in accordance with this Resolution only if the animals are marked in a manner recognized by the Conference of the Parties and the international captive-breeding programme for the species (i.e. tattoo or microchip) which indicates the State of export, the number of the specimen in relation to the annual quota and the calendar year to which the quota applies - for example NB 2/100 1992 indicating that Namibia is the State of export and that the specimen is the second specimen exported by Namibia out of its quota of 100 for 1992 - and if the same information as is on the identifying mark is recorded on the export document;
- f) that in the case of live specimens or skins of cheetah traded according to the terms of this Resolution, the word "has been granted" in paragraph 2(d) of Article III of the Convention be deemed to have been satisfied upon the written assurance of the Management Authority of the State of import that an import permit will be granted;
- g) that each State that exports live specimens or skins of cheetah in terms of this Resolution reports the number of skins and live animals so exported annually to the Secretariat and that the Secretariat submit a report to each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
- h) that the system adopted in this Resolution be reviewed at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.