Resolution on the EU strategic objectives for the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held in Bangkok (Thailand) from 3 to 14 March 2013

2012/2838(RSP) - 06/02/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the EU strategic objectives for the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), to be held in Bangkok (Thailand) from 3 to 14 March 2013.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, ECR, and GUE/NGL groups.

Recalling that CITES is the largest global wildlife conservation agreement in existence, with 176 parties, including the 27 Member States of the European Union, Parliament calls upon the European Union and Member States:

- to **speak with one voice** and to improve the speed and efficiency of their internal decision-making procedures so as to be able to agree quickly on an internal EU position for CITES and ensure that CoP16 decisions use the **precautionary principle**;
- to **play a leading role** in the protection of endangered species, by taking an active part in negotiations on the CITES Convention and promoting the removal of loopholes that aggravate the situation;
- **to reach out to third countries**, both prior to and during the Conference, and to establish alliances.

Members stress the need for **transparency in decision-making** and strongly oppose the use of secret ballots as a general practice within CITES. They urge the Commission to ensure **continuity of funding** through its development aid with a view to achieving the CITES objectives. In this context, they refer to the ongoing programme Monitoring the **Illegal Killing of Elephants** (MIKE) which, subject to an independent review and assessment of its effectiveness, could be up for renewed commitment from the European Union.

Amongst other recommendations, Parliament:

- supports CoP16 Doc.32, aimed at improving enforcement for CITES-listed **marine species** caught in seas outside the jurisdiction of any State;
- welcomes the proposals on including the **porbeagle shark** (Lamna nasus), three **hammerhead shark** species (Sphyrna spp) and the **oceanic whitetip shark** (Carcharhinus longimanus) in Appendix II of CITES;
- encourages the CITES Parties, bearing in mind the current **elephant poaching crisis**, to take a precautionary approach and base their decisions on the possible impact on elephant conservation and the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan when considering the decision-making mechanism for a future trade in elephant ivory after the complete nine-year resting period starting from the one-off sale in November 2008 by Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe;

- supports the adoption of the **resolution on the African Elephant Action Plan**, as tabled by Nigeria and Rwanda, as the most efficient way forward for the conservation of elephants across Africa;
- calls for trade suspensions against Parties that have failed to comply with CITES Decision 14.69 on **tigers**, and Parties that encourage the breeding of tigers for trade in their parts and derivatives;
- calls for an end to **trophy hunting**, which has caused large-scale declines in African lion populations;
- calls for (i) support for a series of proposals adding several **species of turtles and tortoises** from North America and Asia to CITES Appendix II and to transfer seven species to Appendix I; (ii) support for a draft decision on snake trade and conservation management.

Parliament deplores the fact that there have been allegations about Member States and European Union citizens being used as intermediaries in the **transfer of rhino horn** into Vietnam or other countries where it has high commercial value and thereby stimulating demand and further poaching.