



October 3, 2016

Contact:
Johannesburg, South Africa: Danielle Kessler
Danielle_Kessler@fws.gov
+1 571-228-1803

"We applaud the leadership and dedication of Kenya, Gabon, Chad, Botswana, and the many other proposing and supporting range states. Notwithstanding the fact that their proposal was defeated, elephants and elephant conservation have overwhelmingly won the day at this CoP. Their courage and passion have helped fuel a great series of successes.

All routes to opening legal ivory trade have been blocked. We've urged member nations to close domestic ivory markets that contribute to poaching or wildlife trafficking. We've strengthened provisions to identify and potentially sanction nations that are not taking adequate steps to stem this crisis.

However, the United States voted no, on this proposal, because it opened up the potential that member nations would take a reservation and use a victory on Appendix I uplisting as a back door to resume trade.

In fact, during discussion on the proposal, Namibia explicitly stated its intention to take a reservation.

We are unalterably opposed to resumption of commercial ivory trade, under any terms. Therefore, because of the risk it represented, we felt compelled to oppose a proposal that we would otherwise support."

—

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe, head of the U.S. delegation to the 17th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, regarding proposal CoP17 Prop. 16 to include all populations of African elephant in Appendix I of CITES through the transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I of the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, proposed by Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Uganda.

Available from: <https://usfws.tumblr.com/post/151287979799/we-applaud-the-leadership-and-dedication-of-kenya>