



July 2015

## **Information on the EU ban on the import of elephant hunting trophies from Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia**

*The European Union Scientific Review Group (SRG) decided on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 to issue a negative opinion with regards to the import into the EU of hunting trophies of African elephants from the United Republic of Tanzania and Mozambique. The elephant populations in these countries have experienced significant declines, very likely as a result of high poaching levels. The SRG also decided to uphold its negative opinion for the import into the EU of such trophies from Zambia. The SRG found that the information at its disposal was not sufficient to conclude that the import into the EU of such trophies from the three countries would be sustainable.*

*The negative opinions set up by the SRG are followed by all EU Member States when they receive import applications for the items in question. In practice, this means that no import into the EU will be possible for these trophies. The opinions are valid as of their date of adoption and apply therefore to all import applications received by an EU Member State after 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015.*

The SRG is composed of the scientific authorities of all EU Member States and chaired by the European Commission. It is set up by Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97.

The European Commission informed the competent authorities of the exporting countries concerned, inviting them to provide information which would be reviewed at the next SRG meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

In the case of Tanzania, the latest available figures show that elephant populations have undergone a substantial decline possibly as a result of poaching in the country. Despite requests to this end, the Tanzanian authorities did not provide information to the EU on the sustainability of their quota of 200 tusks as trophies from 100 animals set up for 2015.

In the case of Mozambique, the latest figures available on the elephant population show a significant decline possibly due to considerable poaching in the last years. The EU invited the competent authorities of Mozambique to provide information on the sustainability of their proposed export quota of 100 animals for the year 2015. Despite repeated requests over the last months, no information was provided.

As to Zambia, the SRG had decided at its meeting on 9th April 2015 for a negative opinion on the basis of a lack of scientific information justifying the new quota of 160 tusks and other trophies from 80 animals. Further to this opinion, the authorities of Zambia communicated information to the EU on the elements underpinning this quota. The SRG considered these elements and found that they referred to data dating back mostly from 2008 and 2009. Declines in the population have been observed since then and updated scientific information was made available, as documented notably by the IUCN in its African elephant database. In this context, the SRG found that more information was needed on how these latest figures had been taken into consideration for the setting of the export quota adopted by Zambia before revising the current negative opinion.

African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) populations from Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia are included in the Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and Annex A of Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97. Commercial trade in elephants and their derived products such as ivory is banned.

Hunting trophies benefit from an exemption to this ban, given that they are considered as personal effects and in recognition of the fact that hunting trophies can play a positive role in conservation efforts. Import of hunting trophies is therefore authorised in the EU, under certain conditions designed to ensure that hunting trophy programmes are not detrimental to the conservation of the species<sup>1</sup>. These conditions are assessed by the Scientific Review Group, in line with Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 338/97 and the EU Scientific Authorities guidelines for the import of Annex A hunting trophies.

More information on the EU wildlife trade regulations can be found here:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/home\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/home_en.htm).

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<sup>1</sup> The conditions assessed by the SRG to issue opinions with regard to the sustainability of import of Annex A hunting trophies are the following:

Trophy hunting should be part of a careful species management plan that should, as appropriate:

- be based on sound biological data collected from the target population(s)
- clearly demonstrate that harvest levels are sustainable
- be monitored by professional biologists
- be promptly modified if necessary to maintain the conservation aims
- demonstrate that illegal activities are under control
- produce significant and tangible conservation benefits for the species
- provide benefits to, and be in co-operation with, the local people who share the area with or suffer by the species concerned