

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



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SOUTH AFRICA AFRICAN GREY PARROTS PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

This document has been submitted by South Africa in relation to agenda item 81.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

African Grey decisions CoP18 doc 81

Extension of Decision 17.258 until CoP19

Current decision

17.258

Decision directed to: Parties, Secretariat

Until the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in the evaluation of applications to register facilities breeding *Psittacus erithacus* for commercial purposes, pursuant to Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, consideration should be given to: a) the recommendations of the Management Authority and Scientific Authority of the Party; b) national measures to regulate domestic trade in this species which may not previously have been required due to its former Appendix-II status; c) any compliance measures directed to the Party submitting the application to register the facility; and d) whether the Party has been included in the Review of Significant Trade concerning the species in the prior 10 years from the effective listing date.

Historically, of all the African Grey Parrot offsprings bred in South Africa, 87,3% were sold to exporters for commercial export, 5.3% were sold to the local pet trade and 7.5% were retained by the breeders for future breeding stock. It is therefore imperative that all breeders of this species in South Africa, register their breeding operations in terms of Res. Conf 12.10(rev CoP15). This includes hobbyist or part time breeders that often supply very small numbers of offspring to commercial exporters.

South Africa's role in the global African Grey trade

South Africa's supply of captive bred African Greys to the global trade, is of crucial importance to counter the pressure of demand on the wild populations. It is important for the survival of African Greys in the wild, that all the captive bred supply is available for the global demand. The progress and growth of South Africa's supply to the global demand is summarized as follows from the



CITES Trade Data:

- From 2007 to 2017, South Africa exported every year, more captive bred African Greys than all other countries combined exports of African Greys from wild and unknown origin for each year.
- From 2009 to 2016, South Africa exported each of those years more captive bred African Greys than any other country ever harvested from the wild in any year. The highest number exported by any country before, was 25,881 wild caught specimens by Guinea in 1988.
- From 2013 to 2016, South Africa exported each year, more captive bred African Greys than the combined export of African Greys of wild and unknown origin from range states and non-range states together in any given year previously, except for 1988 when 57,000 wild caught African Greys were exported by all range states together.
- The percentage of the global trade of Appendix II captive bred African Greys exported by South Africa grew from 1% in 1982 to over 96% in 2014, 91% 2015 and 94% 2016.
- No other country, including specimens harvested from the wild in range states, can supply the quantities of African Grey Parrots that South Africa breed and export.

African Grey trade 2010 – 2017

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Global Net imports, Wild & Unknown origin "W,U"	11,521	12,316	19,242	16,185	18,087	18,636	8,348	2,358
Global Net imports Captive Bred "C,F"	36,337	40,026	52,303	52,599	79,619	65,363	120,079	14,528
Global Net imports of Wild Caught and Captive Bred "W,U,F,C"	47,858	52,342	71,545	68,784	97,706	83,999	128,427	16,886
% Captive bred trade "C" of Net Global trade "W,U,F,C"	75.9%	76.5%	73.1%	76.5%	81.5%	77.8%	93.5%	86%
South Africa Net exports Captive Bred	33,082	34,852	41,373	49,035	76,238	59,348	112,574	7893
% South Africa captive bred exports to total trade "W,U,F,C"	69.1%	66.6%	57.8%	71.3%	78.0%	70.7%	87.7%	46.7%
% South Africa captive bred exports of total captive bred trade	91.0%	87.1%	79.1%	93.2%	95.8%	90.8%	93.7%	54.3%

African Grey trade 2000 – 2009

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Global Net imports, Wild & Unknown origin "W,U"	41,747	36,188	46,817	54,687	49,611	17,158	10,257	11,802	17,394
Global Net imports Captive Bred "C,F"	8,610	11,523	16,691	14,619	16,364	10,311	12,520	26,707	30,732
Global Net imports of Wild Caught and Captive Bred "W,U,F,C"	50,357	47,711	63,508	69,306	65,975	27,469	22,777	38,509	48,126
% Captive bred trade "C" of Net Global trade "W,U,F,C"	17.1%	24.2%	26.3%	21.1%	24.8%	37.5%	55.0%	69.4%	63.9%
South Africa Net exports Captive Bred	6,831	9,986	14,422	10,063	8,664	4,724	9,046	20,366	26,306
% South Africa captive bred exports to Global imports "W,U,F,C" origin	13.6%	20.9%	22.7%	14.5%	13.1%	17.2%	39.7%	52.9%	54.7%
% South Africa captive bred exports of Global captive bred imports	79.3%	86.7%	86.4%	68.8%	52.9%	45.8%	72.3%	76.3%	85.6%

The inclusion of African Grey Parrots to Appendix I in 2017 reduced the availability of captive bred specimens to global demand 14-fold, by removing almost 90% of the legal supply in an instant and created an opportunity for illegal trade.

The illegal trade in this species did indeed increase since its inclusion in Appendix I as reported by the UNODC in CoP18 doc 34 A4: approx. 500 African Greys were seized per year prior to 2017 and more than 1500 per year since its Appendix I listing from the end of 2016, when South African bred exports became impossible.

Net-exports of African Grey Parrots 2014 - 2017

Year	South Africa				Rest of World	Total trade
	Total Exports	Captive bred	Registered exports	Timneh	Wild Caught net-exports	
2014	76307	76307	0	70	31452	110810
2015	59548	59548	0	278	18636	83999
2016	112574	112274	0	250	8348	128427
2017	7893	1444	6349	0	2358	16886

Res. Conf. 10.12(rev CoP15)

So far, 166 South African captive breeding operations with more than 30,000 specimens of breeding stock have been registered since May 2017. Applicants generally spend 3 months to prepare their applications before submission. South Africa's management authorities take another 2 – 4 months to inspect and evaluate applications, depending on the province, before submitting to the CITES Secretariat.

During 2017, the Secretariat spent 1 – 2 months on average to evaluate applications. During 2018, the evaluation of applications were stretched to 2 – 4 months and we have noted that Secretariat is currently taking even longer to evaluate applications. The 2019 applications may have been delayed by CoP 18 preparations. South African breeders are understandably frustrated by this lengthy registration process which has a direct impact on their operation and livelihoods

Re-population of *Psittacus erithacus* in Range states.

The Parrot Breeder Association of South Africa (PASA) established a fund for the conservation of this species. This fund, the African Grey Conservation Fund, has a dedicated bank account where breeders of this species that are registered in terms of Res. Conf 12.10(rev CoP15) can meet their conservation obligation as per par. 15.

Administration of the Fund is done by PASA, and it involves issuing certificate to members that make contributions to this conservation fund. The funds supports identified projects as adjudicated by a subcommittee. So far, the majority of contributors expressed a desire to apply the funds towards re-population of Grey Parrots in range states.

In addition to funds already paid into the African Grey Conservation Fund, a some of the registered breeders have already retained and dedicated offsprings for re-population as part of their contribution towards conservation of the species. The appendix I listing had a negative impact on the trade and a large number of offspring that were retained by breeders between 2016 and 2018.

PASA is thus seeking on behalf of registered breeders, as proposed by South Africa, approval from CITES to apply their contributions towards the identification of suitable and appropriate habitat in range States, feasibility studies and preparations for the eventual release of viable captive bred offspring to their natural habitat.

Conclusion

South Africa supports the comments by the Secretariat and will support the amendments as proposed