



SADC, CITES & The Animal Rightists. The way forward

The next meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES 2019), is just around the corner. This is the 19th Meeting of the Parties (CoP19) since 1975 and Africa is no further forward (than we were in 1975) in getting the convention to “work *with* African countries” to create legal markets for our wildlife and wildlife products. Indeed, we have regressed. And, lest we forget, the purpose of CITES is to REGULATE the wildlife trade on behalf of its 183 sovereign state members - NOT to PROHIBIT trade; and to make sure that whatever trade is permitted is sustainable.

Only the 183 sovereign state members - the “Parties to the Convention” - have a vote at CITES; a single vote for every item on the agenda. And only by casting their votes - theoretically - are ‘party’ decisions made at CITES. Even though the NGOs outnumber the Parties by several thousand-to-one - theoretically - ONLY the Parties have the power to make decisions; and that is achieved - theoretically - “solely by consensus”.

In reviewing the convention’s performances since 1975 , however, I cannot recall a single instance in which any country in Africa has, trade-wise, benefitted from complying with the dictates of CITES. The reason for this is because two thirds of the accredited NGOs at CITES are animal rightist in orientation and they completely dominate the proceedings at convention meetings - by reason of their sheer numbers. And, one way or another, they have contrived to illegally purchase enough of the available 183 sovereign state votes to control most consensus outcomes. Twenty-five years ago they were buying votes for cash. Today they do so by way of “sponsoring” the visits of poor country delegates to the conventions. Either way, they have gained control of the voting system and that has corrupted the convention.

The principle (wildlife) objective of the animal rights doctrine is to ABOLISH all wild animal uses by man. They say that wild animals have the same right to life as have humans beings; that man has no right to use wild animals for his own benefit; and that it is immoral to ‘make money’ out of wild animals. They believe that all of Africa’s wild animals should be considered, and treated by man, as though they are ‘sacred cows’; and that they should be protected from all harm by man. And they refute the need for Africa’s wild animal populations to be ‘managed’ by man.

One has to wonder WHY an animal rightist NGO - whose purpose in life is to ABOLISH all animal uses by man (including PROHIBITING the wildlife trade) - would want to become a member of an organisation (CITES) the purpose of which is to REGULATE the wildlife trade. There can only be one answer to that question: they join CITES in order to sabotage the attainment of the convention's purposes.

The animal rightist NGOs obtain their funding by way of propaganda.

Propaganda is: *"The spreading of ideas, information or rumour for the purpose of promoting an ideal - or injuring an institution, cause or person - by any means, true or false.*

ONE example: In the three year lead-up to Cop17 (CITES 2016) the animal rightist NGOs told the world that the African elephant was facing extinction: and they persuaded the gullible general public to pay them large sums of money to stop the elephant from becoming extinct. How they intended to do this nobody knows. At least two of these NGOs earned in excess of 100 million US dollars a year from such donations. None of that money found its way into Africa (to 'save' the elephant). It all went into the NGO's own bank accounts.

First things first: The stated 'fact' that the elephant is facing extinction is a deliberate lie. The elephant is NOT facing extinction. In southern Africa there are more than 10 times too many elephants in all the major game reserves. And the elephants are destroying all the woodland habitats; rendering both plants and animals locally extinct; and causing the desertification of the national parks.

In terms of the American RICO Act (Racketeering Influenced and Criminal Organisations Act) NGOs practicing this kind of propaganda activity are, in the first instance, guilty of "common fraud" (they make money from a fabricated lie!). If they commit that same fraud a second time (or more than once) the common fraud is reclassified as being 'a racket'; and racketeering constitutes organised crime in America. And these are the kinds of people who are opposing Africa's attempts to harvest Africa's wildlife (for the purpose of relieving rural poverty - because 'poverty' is the principle driving force behind village-hunter poaching).

The First World animal rightists own no national parks or wild animals in Africa. They have no accountability for the wildlife management demands they make on Africa. And they can simply walk away if their management demands are followed through by timid African practitioners - and the results are a disaster. Africa, therefore, can well do without this calibre of "wildlife expert" in our midst.

These are the same people who are 'advising' CITES; who are demanding that CITES becomes an organisation that PROHIBITS the wildlife trade (and they are succeeding) - and they couldn't care a damn if their recommendations result in chaos and mayhem. The countries of the SADC region should think very carefully, therefore, if they wish to be guided by these pernicious people; or if they REALLY want to be associated with a convention that listens to their advice. There is a growing number of people in southern Africa who are advocating that CITES has done enough damage to Africa; and that the convention needs to be dissolved. And they are hoping that, if CITES does not change its tune during its next meeting (Cop18), that the SADC countries will resign en masse. It will take some action of that

magnitude to rock the boat enough to make the United Nations understand that CITES is NOT WANTED; and that it is not doing the job it was designed to perform.

Africa is changing. There are many forward-thinking countries in the SADC region that WANT to create symbiotic and sustainable partnerships between their rural communities and the wildlife that surrounds them; for the survival benefit of their own people. This is most definitely "the way forward for Africa". But they are being foiled in their attempts to do this by CITES; and CITES is being guided by its accredited and corrupt animal rightist NGOs.

How long is Africa going to put up with the neo-colonial aspirations of the criminal elite of these First World (all white) NGOs? Africa is moving ever more rapidly towards embracing the wisdom of using our wild animals sustainably for the benefit of Africa's rural people. How much longer, therefore, are we going to have to hold our breaths whilst Africa's political elite take their time to make the obvious decisions that are now required. Many people in southern Africa are hoping that if CITES does not come out in support of the sustainable-use of our wildlife resources during CoP18 - and if CITES disallows (again) the sale of our legally acquired rhino horn; and legally acquired elephant ivory - that SADC will walk out of the convention, *en masse*, and thus show their solidarity with each other. I am one who would dearly love to see this happen!

Miracles do happen!

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