

Proposal 5

Lynx rufus – Deletion from Appendix II.

(United States of America)

Provisional assessment by the Secretariat

All species of Felidae are currently included in Appendix I or II. The supporting statement for this proposal to remove the bobcat *Lynx rufus* from the Appendices provides comprehensive information on the status and management of and trade in this species. It is widespread and common in North America, with stable or increasing populations in all three range States. The only known threat is loss of habitat to urbanization. The species is well managed in the United States of America and Canada, where significant numbers are harvested on a sustainable basis. The three ranges States exported some 120,000 specimens of *L. rufus* from 1998 to 2002. These were practically all wild harvested, and presumably mostly furs and skins.

The proponent argues that skins and skulls of *L. rufus* are clearly distinguishable from those of the three other *Lynx* species that are included in Appendix I or II. It seems however questionable whether a non-expert with reasonable effort could achieve this for all specimens entering trade. (The supporting statement notes that differentiation of spotted belly hair may be problematic.) Therefore, the criteria of Annex 2 b of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP12) may continue to be met.

The proponent does not mention whether the other range States, Canada and Mexico, have been consulted.

Proposal 6

***Panthera leo* – Transfer from Appendix II to Appendix I.**

[in accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP12), Annex 1, paragraphs A. i) and ii) (for the populations of West and Central Africa), and C. i)]

(Kenya)

Provisional assessment by the Secretariat

The proposal aims to transfer the African populations of the lion *Panthera leo* from Appendix II to Appendix I (the Asian lion *P. l. persica*, has been included in Appendix I since 1977).

The supporting statement quotes population estimates of 16,500 to 30,000 lions on the continent, of which the large majority occur in East and Southern Africa. In its comments as a range State, Namibia notes however that the supporting statement does not present information from a recent continent-wide survey of lions in Africa, which would suggest that higher numbers remain. Trade in specimens is mostly limited to trophies and skins exported mainly from the United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Illegal international trade seems very limited. The information does not indicate that the wild population of the species is small, or that each of the subpopulations is very small. The species's range is reportedly over 7 million km². It is unclear what levels of declines in numbers of individuals in the wild can be projected, but the proposal indicates that the species is increasingly rare outside protected areas as a consequence of direct persecution of problem animals, reduction of prey basis, livestock grazing, disease and political instability in some range States. Overall, it seems that the species does not meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I.

The supporting statement suggests that certain hunting quotas, particularly in the United Republic of Tanzania, are set at unsustainable levels and are considered unenforceable. It argues that an Appendix-I listing would mean that Parties should have to submit export quotas in compliance with Resolution Conf. 9.21 to allow the Conference of the Parties to review and eventually adopt these quotas. In fact, exporting States would be able to continue to export hunting trophies of this species without recourse to the Conference of the Parties even if the species were included in Appendix I. If current levels of international trade were a concern, it might have been expected that this fact would have been picked up in the Review of Significant Trade, conducted by the Animals Committee in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat. To date this has not been the case.

Three of the four range States that responded to Kenya's invitation to comment on its proposal oppose the inclusion of African lion populations in Appendix I. As indicated in the proposal, it appears that the long-term conservation of this species mostly depends on better protection of its habitat and prey base, particularly outside protected areas, and reduction of human-wildlife conflicts, including giving value to lions through tourism and well regulated trophy hunting.