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Mr Stephen Alan Wiggins
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Our ref: DWO385854

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Dear Mr Wiggins,

Thank you for your letter of 16 September to the Secretary of State about the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP17). I have been asked to reply.

Discussions at CoP17 will aim to protect endangered species at risk of over-exploitation as a result of international trade; the UK is fully supportive of this objective.

Any proposals to amend the Appendices and CITES itself are generally a matter of EU competence; this means consensus for support or opposition of a proposal should come from all 28 Member States. We will be working closely with the European Commission and other Member States over the coming months to ensure that our positions on proposals (once announced) are taken into account before any decisions are made on the final EU position.

Elephants and rhinos are a particular priority for the UK; we continue to work with other EU Member States and on a global basis towards adoption of strict controls to ensure their continued protection. The UK Government shares your concern about the sustainability of lion trophy hunting. We have worked within the EU to introduce stricter hunting trophy import controls for the African lion and some other species. These ensure that not only must the exporting country be satisfied that the animal was hunted sustainably, but the importing country must undertake this check. In this way the import of hunting trophies of certain species from certain countries is currently prohibited by the EU.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Woodhouse
Defra - Customer Contact Unit

