

## Comments on “Population Status and Management Plan of the African Grey Parrot in Cameroon”

### SC62 Doc. 27.3

#### Background

Document SC62 Doc. 27.3, “Population status and management plan of the African grey parrot *Psittacus erithacus erithacus* in Cameroon” was submitted by Cameroon in response to recommendations made to them in the context of the Review of Significant Trade.

In 2007, the CITES Standing Committee established a zero export quota for the species from Cameroon, which remains in effect, due in part to:

- Indications of local declines and range contraction (IUCN 2006);
- Greatly exceeded export quotas<sup>1</sup>;
- Illegal exports believed to involve thousands of birds each year (IUCN 2006); and
- Capture of birds in national parks where the species is meant to be protected; birds trapped include birds that move over the borders with Central African Republic and Congo (IUCN 2006).



Under the Review, Cameroon is directed to, *inter alia*, undertake a scientifically-based field survey to establish the status of the species in the country and, develop a National Management Plan for the species. An export quota cannot be established until both are in place. Despite the zero export quota, Cameroon exported 4,715 grey parrots in 2007; 708 in 2008; 10 in 2009; and one shipment of 300 in 2010. Cameroon has failed to implement the zero quota.

#### Comments on SC62 Doc. 27.3

The proposed management plan:

- ▶ does not meet the minimum requirements established under the Significant Trade Review for a management plan for this species. These are:
  - standardized and verifiable population monitoring techniques;
  - a mechanism to establish biologically sustainable capture and/or export quotas that considers the status and demography of the species, levels of illegal trade, trade-related mortality, and national use;
  - effective mechanisms to prevent illegal capture and trade in the species;

<sup>1</sup> Gross export trade report

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Quotas	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Exports	17,532	14,969	16,405	11,113	17,465	17,053

Source: UNEP-WCMC CITES Trade Database

- a detailed description of the methodology used to determine that levels of exports are non-detrimental; and
- once developed and regionally agreed upon, incorporation of the Regional Management Plan for conservation of and trade in this species.

► calculates capture and export quotas based on population estimates established by counting birds at roosts, a methodology criticized by parrot experts because the proportion of the local population that uses the roost being counted is not known (McGowan 2001).

► does not acknowledge that the 2011 population estimate presented in the document, which is 50% lower than a 1998 estimate which used a similar methodology, may indicate a marked population decline.

► calculates rates of wild population growth based on “some information obtained from their counterparts in captivity”. Information on growth rates of captive populations should not be assumed, without evidence, to be applicable to growth experienced by this species in the wild because the adults, eggs and young of properly managed captive specimens do not experience levels of predation, risks from severe weather, food shortages and other impediments to survival experienced by wild birds.

► provides no information on management regimes, including capture methods, capture seasons, or holding and transport conditions. Currently, capture methods target birds of all life stages in all seasons.

► does not provide information on enforcement measures concerning illegal trade, nor does it address information that fraudulent permits are being used to export parrots from the country (Notification to the Parties No. 2012/021).

EIA, Eurogroup for Animals, Pro Wildlife and World Parrot Trust urge the Standing Committee to find that the Management Plan presented in SC62 Doc. 27.3 does not meet the requirements established by the Significant Trade Review and, therefore, the zero export quota for *P. erithacus* from Cameroon should be maintained.

We note that this is the second time that trade in this species from Cameroon has been subject to a trade prohibition via the Review of Significant Trade.

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#### References:

- Fotso, R. 1998b. Survey Status of the Distribution and Utilization of the Grey Parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*) in Cameroon. CITES, Geneva, Switzerland.
- McGowan, P. 2001. Status, Management and Conservation of the African Grey Parrot, *Psittacus erithacus* in Nigeria. CITES, Geneva, Switzerland.
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