Extinct Species and CITES: Listing the Woolly Mammoth to Protect Elephants

19th International Wildlife Law Conference (IWLC-19)
4 June 2019
Barcelona, Spain

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Roadmap

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- International trade in elephant and mammoth ivory
- CITES CoP18 proposal to list the woolly mammoth
- Potential implications
- Concluding thoughts

CITES

- Regulates international trade of endangered animals and plants to help prevent over-exploitation

- Species may be listed in Appendix I, II, or III

- Requirements for international trade vary depending on the Appendix in which a species is listed

- Asian elephants and some African elephant populations are listed in Appendix I (a few African elephant populations are listed in Appendix II)
International Trade in Elephant and Mammoth Ivory

- International trade in elephant ivory continues to negatively impact elephant populations
- Mostly unregulated trade in mammoth ivory
- May be difficult to distinguish between elephant and mammoth ivory
- Risk of elephant ivory being mislabeled as mammoth ivory
CITES 18th Conference of the Parties (CoP18)

Proposal to list the woolly mammoth *(Mammuthus primigenius)* in CITES Appendix II

Mammoth as a “look-alike” species under CITES Article II, paragraph 2(b)

Goal is to help prevent elephant ivory from being laundered as mammoth ivory by regulating international trade in mammoth ivory

Proposed listing would *not* prohibit trade in mammoth ivory
Potential Implications

- Possible benefits
  - Help prevent laundering of elephant ivory
  - Improved identification and regulation
  - Increased data and knowledge

- Possible drawbacks
  - Distraction
  - Diversion of resources
  - Unintended negative effects on elephants

Concluding Thoughts

- Predicted outcome at CoP18
- What the proposal represents more broadly
- A note on de-extinction

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Thank you!

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