

113TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. RES. 220

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the contributions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 17, 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (for himself, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. FARR, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. BORDALLO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the contributions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Whereas the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Convention) was concluded on March 3, 1973, with the United States as an original signatory nation, and entered into force on July 1, 1975;

Whereas 178 nations are now party to the Convention;

Whereas the Convention aims to ensure that international trade in wild plants and animals does not threaten their survival;

Whereas the Convention both recognizes and provides the basis for international cooperation in the control of international trade to not threaten species' survival;

Whereas the international wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars per year and to involve hundreds of millions of plants and animals and derived products such as food products, leather and fur, ornamentals, medicinal, and timber;

Whereas high levels of exploitation of and trade in wild animals and plants, together with other factors such as habitat loss, are capable of bringing some species close to extinction;

Whereas parties to the Convention have an international obligation and responsibility to protect endangered animals and plants worldwide;

Whereas it is widely accepted that adherence to protective measures adopted by the parties to the Convention has benefitted the conservation of animals and plants;

Whereas nearly 5,000 species of animals and 29,000 species of plants are protected by the Convention against over-exploitation through international trade;

Whereas the species covered by the Convention are listed in 3 appendices, according to the degree of protection they need;

Whereas the parties of the Convention meet every 2 to 3 years at the Conference of the Parties to review the status of species in danger of extinction and to establish trade restrictions with respect to endangered species;

Whereas the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held in March 2013;

Whereas between 2002 and 2012, more than 10,940 African elephants were illegally killed for their ivory, an increase of 4,374 compared to the analysis submitted to the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in 2010;

Whereas poaching still continues with 2011 having the highest levels of poaching since comprehensive records started in 2002;

Whereas as sea ice declines, polar bears will not be able to adapt to a terrestrial-based life resulting in increased mortality, reduced reproduction, increased human-bear conflicts, and overall drastic decline of populations;

Whereas polar bears are still being hunted for sport trophies despite habitat loss and population declines;

Whereas a proposal to move the polar bear from appendix II to appendix I was rejected at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

Whereas the scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, porbeagle, and whitetip sharks have been severely depleted with declines as high as 99 percent in some areas as a result of the high demand for their fins or meat;

Whereas proposals to include these 5 sharks on appendix II were accepted at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and

Whereas overfishing, both legal and illegal, increased consumer demand, and inadequate enforcement of infractions have led to historically low populations of northern and Atlantic bluefin tuna: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1           (1) recognizes the important contributions that  
2           the Convention on International Trade in Endan-  
3           gered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora has made in  
4           regulating international trade in endangered species  
5           and protecting endangered species worldwide;

6           (2) recognizes the increasing importance of the  
7           Convention in addressing effects of trade on species,  
8           while taking into account multiple and compounding  
9           threats on species and ecosystems such as over-ex-  
10          ploitation, habitat loss, invasive species, disease, and  
11          the effects of climate change;

12          (3) applauds the Convention's recent leadership  
13          in reaffirming strong protections for the African ele-  
14          phant, five sharks, and other endangered species;

15          (4) urges renewed, expanded, and accelerated  
16          commitments to the Convention by all parties to en-  
17          sure and enhance the Convention's contribution to  
18          species conservation through appropriate controls of  
19          international wildlife trade;

20          (5) urges the United States delegation to the  
21          Convention to utilize international cooperation to en-  
22          courage other parties to the Convention to collabo-  
23          rate effectively to curb excessive exploitation of spe-  
24          cies for international trade; and

1           (6) urges the Convention to adopt stronger pro-  
2       tections for the polar bear, bluefin tuna, and other  
3       endangered species at the 17th meeting of the Con-  
4       ference of the Parties in South Africa in 2016.

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