

Musical Instruments and the Proposed Listing of Woolly Mammoth (*Mammuthus Primigenius*) on Appendix II without Annotation

Overview

Israel and Kenya have submitted a proposal for consideration during at the 18th Conference of Parties in Sri Lanka to list Woolly Mammoth, *Mammuthus Primigenius*, in Appendix II without an accompanying annotation. We oppose an Appendix II listing of Woolly Mammoth and believe that, at minimum, any listing should be accompanied by an annotation that would have the effect of exempting musical instruments from permit requirements for noncommercial and commercial trade.

Mammoth ivory is used in the construction of bows for stringed instruments, nuts, and saddles for guitars and on other musical instruments.

The musical instrument community fully supports the goal of protecting elephant populations. When instrument makers stopped using elephant ivory approximately 30 years ago, the makers turned to mammoth ivory as a substitute. Today, lawfully made bows and other instruments containing mammoth ivory are being played, exhibited, and sold throughout the world by makers, dealers, and musicians who depend on them as indispensable tools of their trade. For musicians, instruments are highly personal, integral to their sound and performance quality, while often representing a very substantial personal financial investment. Mammoth tips are functional and make important contributions to the bow's artistic and acoustic qualities. Replacing the mammoth tip of a bow to avoid burdensome permitting requirements would risk damaging the bow's wooden stick and artistic value.

The use of mammoth ivory in musical instruments does not affect the ivory trade

The proposal states that its purpose is "to prevent illegal trade in living elephants by preventing 'laundering' or mislabeling of elephant ivory." Bows typically contain less than 1 gram (.25 gram when finished) of mammoth ivory. The overall scale of bow making is very limited. In the USA, for example, approximately 50 bow makers make some 350 bows per year. Not all of these bows are made using mammoth ivory, despite its valuable qualities. As has been widely acknowledged, because of the *de minimis* use of mammoth ivory in musical instruments, musical instruments are not contributing to the illegal elephant ivory trade.

An Appendix II listing of Woolly Mammoth is inappropriate

While our organizations strongly support efforts to combat illegal trafficking of ivory and conserve elephants, we oppose this listing. The main purpose of CITES Appendix II is to regulate trade to prevent species from becoming extinct. The proposal points to a lack of data on the trade in mammoth ivory and the potential beneficial impacts on the illegal elephant ivory trade. The proposed listing would, therefore, divert resources from the regulation of trade of extant species and impose burdens on all involved without providing a clear, commensurate conservation value.

Any listing should be accompanied by an annotation that has the effect of exempting musical instruments

If the Parties were to list Woolly Mammoth on Appendix II, we would strongly urge the inclusion of an annotation that would have the effect of exempting musical instruments. Doing so would help ensure that enforcement efforts are targeted on commodities linked to illegal trade while avoiding the imposition of unfair and undue costs and burdens on makers, dealers and musicians, all of which would negatively impact the international trade in art and culture.