The Committee will be issuing weekly updates on news, cases, and events relating to issues in International Animal Law. If you have information you would like included, please contact emilybergeron@mac.com.

**Prison Sentences for Traffickers in Endangered Species:** Mozambican government unanimously passed the first reading of a bill imposing heavy prison sentences on traffickers of endangered species and wildlife. Prior to changes in the law, those caught in possession of rhinoceros horns, elephant tusks, lion teeth and claws, or other products of illegal hunting were only fined. The law now imposes prison terms between 12 and 16 years on poachers and traffickers. Additionally, Malawi’s new National Parks & Wildlife Act was passed in Parliament today, giving courts the power to put serious wildlife criminals behind bars for up to 30 years with no option of a fine.

**California Court Upholds Ban on Ivory and Rhino Horn:** In a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the state ban on the sale of ivory and rhino horn, the Ivory Education Institute asserted that the law rose to the level of a taking by rendering legally acquired, pre-1977 ivory objects worthless. The Los Angeles Superior Court, however, upheld the ban and rejected the constitutional challenge.

**UN Biodiversity Conference Begins in Cancun, Mexico:** The Biodiversity Conference opened on December 2 in Cancun, Mexico to address strategic actions to improve the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to promote the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity targets. The focus will be on mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors including agriculture, fisheries, and tourism to contribute to sustainable development goals, climate action, food security, and other human development goals.

**New Zealand Announces Global Leadership Role to Increase Efforts on Combatting Invasive Species:** New Zealand’s Conservation Minister called on global leaders to join forces to help eradicate and control the spread of invasive plants and animals and protect native habitats at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. This was done in response to the 2016 IUCN Honolulu Challenge’s call to address invasive for the sake of biodiversity and to protect human well-being from their impacts.

**Safari Club International and NRA Appeal Ban on Zimbabwean Elephant Trophies:** The organizations have filed a Notice of Appeal in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia challenging the District court’s upholding of an import ban on trophies.

**Mexico Announces Creation of Country’s Largest Natural Protected Area:** The country will create a 5.7 million hectare biosphere reserve comprising near the entire coast of the state of Quintana Roo. The area is inhabited by nearly 1,900 species of flora and fauna, 500 species of fish, and 86 species of coral. Intense traffic from
cruise and cargo ships, reef damage caused by amateur divers, fuel spills, and illegal settlements pose a threat to the area. The new status will prevent the exploration and exploitation of petroleum and protect the Mexican portion of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System.

**EPA Restricts Pesticides to Protect Endangered Species:** The EPA has taken action to restrict the use of eight pesticide products used to kill burrowing animals. Limits on the use of certain gas-cartridge products will be restricted in the habitat areas of the gopher tortoise, Hualapai Mexican vole, Mount Graham red squirril, and Utah prairie dog.

**Tribes and Fisherman Sue Feds for Salmon Die-Off:** The federal government has been hit with two lawsuits claiming its mismanagement of waterways have allowed a deadly parasite to infect 91% of endangered juvenile chum salmon on the California-Oregon border. Four plaintiffs, including the Yurok Tribe, have sued alleging that inadequate water releases from the Klamath Project have caused fatal infections in fish populations (Yurok Tribe, et al. v. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, et al., No. 16-4294, N.D. Calif., San Francisco Div.). The Hoopa Valley Tribe, which filed its case four months ago, moved for an injunction against the Klamath Project to prevent further deaths of salmon (Hoopa Valley Tribe v. U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, et al., No. 16-4294, N.D. Calif., San Francisco Div.).

**ICUN releases its 2016 Red List of Threatened Species:** The 2016 International Union for Conservation of Nature List has been released. The new list recognizes hundreds of new species. Additionally, the Ocean Health Index for 2016, which can be used to inform the protection of marine ecosystems, was released.