

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

Fifteenth meeting of the Plants Committee and 21st meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 20-21 May 2005

REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

A Working Group comprising members and alternate members of the Plants, Animals and Nomenclature Committees considered Document AC21 Doc. 7 and the responsibilities of the Committees under Decision 13.9, namely:

The Animals, Plants and Nomenclature Committees shall draft terms of reference for a review, with the objective of improving and facilitating the performance of their functions. The Committees shall submit the draft terms of reference before the end of 2005 to the Standing Committee.

The Working Group noted that the Standing Committee would consider the draft terms of reference in determining the process and implementing the review.

Matters considered and draft terms of reference for the review are recommended as follows:

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Matters considered by the Working Group in drafting the Terms of Reference and requiring further consideration by the Standing Committee were as follows:

1. The nature and scope of the review, taking into consideration the discussion that took place during CoP13 and the nature of the revision that Parties expressed as desirable (see paragraph 7 of this document - AC21 Doc 7).
2. The particular objectives of the review, in the form of specific results (products) to be obtained at the end of it, and the nature, considering *inter alia*, recommendations, modifications to Resolutions and Decisions, manuals, reference documents, and the development of indicators to monitor the improvement of the performance of the Committees.
3. The entity or entities that could be undertake the review (e.g. members of both Committees, a joint working group, an external consultant, a Working Group composed of Parties, etc.). The Working Group suggested that the review should be done using two parallel processes:
 - The Committees should undertake a self assessment against the terms of reference below
 - An external evaluation should be conducted by a Working Group established by the Standing Committee (this Group could comprise Standing Committee members and a small number of Party representatives)
 - Both evaluations should be undertaken concurrently and discussed jointly in order to produce a final report
4. A timetable of activities and persons, institutions or bodies in charge of the different tasks to be carried out during the review.
5. Agreement that the review should focus primarily on performance over the preceding five years, but should also take account of significant changes in responsibility and functioning, and leaps in performance over the lives of the Committees.

6. Based on the above, the Working Group recommended the following particular elements to be covered, and basic tasks and products to be produced by the review. These are considered to be essential for its completion, and will serve to guide the main activities of the Committees:
 - a) Identify and clearly delimit the functions and tasks that should be taken by the members of the Plants, Animals, and Nomenclature Committees, noting the roles, functions and tasks undertaken by other bodies of the Convention.
 - b) Compile all the available relevant elements and procedures related to the functioning of the Scientific Committees (Resolutions, Decisions, discussion documents, information documents, guiding principles, etc.) that could serve as the basis to measure and improve their performance.
 - c) Perform a gap analysis of duties, again noting the roles of other bodies of the Convention (e.g. Scientific Unit of the Secretariat, observer Parties) as a guide to identify weak points in the performance of the Scientific Committees.
 - d) Undertake an assessment of the achievements of the Committees in relation to roles, tasks and duties assigned to them, including, but not limited to, those covered by the Strategic Plan.
 - e) Make a detailed analysis of the main elements of the Convention on which the Committees depend (e.g. Secretariat support), and also consider those factors that could be compromising their performance. In consultation with Committee Chairs and Members, look at ways to improve or modify relevant procedures within the Convention if needed.
 - f) Examine opportunities for efficiencies in the functioning of the Committees to help ensure that resources available for the implementation of the Convention are optimally used.
 - g) Examine available mechanisms to deliver the products of the revision, including recommendations, strategies, specific proposals for capacity-building activities, financing needs, technical support from external bodies (such as the CBD, FAO or the IUCN SSC Specialist Groups, etc.), documentation of case studies and best practices, indicators, or general mechanisms to assist the Committees in having a significant impact on the implementation of the Convention by Parties.
 - h) Consider options for ongoing or periodic review of the Committees to ensure that improvements are sustained.
7. The Review should be undertaken in time to allow consideration of its results by the Plants and Animals Committees at AC22 and PC16.