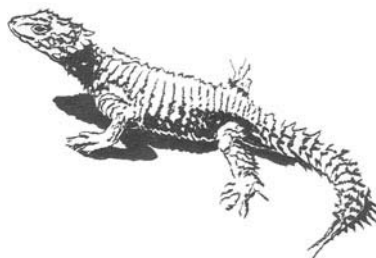


CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Twentieth meeting of the Animals Committee
Johannesburg (South Africa), 29 March-2 April 2004

Regional reports

NORTH AMERICA

1. This report has been prepared by Rodrigo A. Medellín, the regional representative for North America, and Dr. Javier Alvarez (Alternate Member).

General Information

2. Number of Parties in North America: 3.
3. Number of Parties responding to communications since the 19th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC19, Geneva, August 2003): 3.
4. Names of other institutions and NGOs contacted since AC19:
 - a) Canada: Provincial and territorial Management and Scientific Authorities, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA), Canadian Furbearers Management Committee (CFMC), Canadian Peregrine Foundation, Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO);
 - b) Mexico: IFAW (Latin America), National University of Mexico (UNAM), TRAFFIC (Europe, North America and South America), Project Seahorse.

Follow-up on agenda items since last Animals Committee (AC)

5. Regional directories and representatives: An updated version of the regional directories of Canada, Mexico and USA is attached as an annex to this document.
6. Canada: Carolina Caceres, former Assistant to the IUCN SSC Chair, is Acting Head of the Scientific Authority. Véronique Brondex, Scientific Advisor for Animals, and Robert Jones, Scientific Advisor for Fisheries and Oceans will participate at AC meetings as observers for Canada.
7. United States of America: Dr. Javier Alvarez of the United States of America was elected as alternate regional representative on the AC. At the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP12, November 2002), the Parties from North America selected Dr. Kurt A. Johnson from the Division of Scientific Authority (DSA) as alternate regional representative, for the intersessional

period between CoP12 and CoP13. Following Dr. Johnson's departure from the DSA, he was replaced by Dr Javier Alvarez from DSA (November 2003).

19th Meeting of the AC and Follow-up on AC19 Agenda Items

8. Canada: At AC19, Canada participated in the working group (WG) charged with reviewing the process for registration and monitoring of operations that breed Appendix I animal species for commercial purposes. The working group requested a Notification to be sent to all Parties to collect information on problems, experiences, and unregistered operations and committed to providing an overview at AC20. Canada responded to Notification to the Parties No. 2003/071 and will assist in the review of the responses submitted by Parties. Regarding the relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation, following AC19 Canada volunteered to examine the relationship with respect to *Falco peregrinus* in collaboration with the United States and the United Kingdom. Upon further investigation of the mandate of the WG, it was decided that information was not required from Canada since production of *F. peregrinus* in Canada was not considered *ex situ* as Canada is a range State.
9. United States of America: The United States sent a seven-person delegation to the AC19. The interagency U.S. delegation included three representatives from the USFWS, three from the National Marine Fisheries Service, and one from the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council. The United States submitted documents on the conservation of *Saiga*, periodic review of the CITES Appendices, implementation of the Appendix-II listing for seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.), and progress made by the United States in developing and implementing the IPOA-sharks. The United States also participated in the meeting of the Nomenclature Committee, and was a member of 8 WGs: significant trade in specimens of Appendix-II species; review of the criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II (chaired by the U.S.); periodic review of animal taxa in the Appendices (chaired by the U.S.); trade in hard corals; production systems; conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles; conservation of seahorses; and conservation of and trade in sea cucumbers.
10. Mexico: The delegation of Mexico at AC19 was composed of two representatives of the Scientific Authority (CONABIO), one from the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and Dr Rodrigo A. Medellín, as the regional representative of North America and advisor of CONABIO. The Mexican delegation participated in five WGs during the meeting: criteria review, significant trade (Queen Conch), relationship between *in situ* production and *ex situ* conservation (Chair), seahorses and sea cucumbers, as well as in the Nomenclature Committee meeting. As part of the tasks of the *in situ* & *ex situ* WG, Mexico prepared and sent the case study for Morelet's Crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*). Finally, in relation to the WG on hard corals, the Scientific Authority consulted a group of Mexican specialists regarding a definition for "fossilized corals" and a practical way to distinguish between fossil and non-fossil corals. This information was sent to the Chair of the hard corals WG.

Significant trade

11. For sturgeon species remaining in the significant trade review (notably, *Acipenser fulvescens*), Canada consulted with provincial authorities to obtain outstanding information as requested by the AC Chair at AC19. This information was provided to the chair in January 2004 so as to allow for recommendations to the Standing Committee to remove the species from the Significant Trade Review.
12. On 11-12 June 2003 the United States, in conjunction with Jamaica and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, hosted a meeting of the International Queen Conch Initiative countries in Montego Bay, Jamaica. The main purpose of this meeting was to discuss the draft report from the Secretariat on the Review of Significant Trade in queen conch (in accordance with Resolution Conf. 12.8). The meeting comprised country reports, an explanation of the Resolution, discussion of the draft Secretariat report, and formulation of the next steps for the major exporting nations. For the first time in the wider Caribbean, almost all countries were represented by one official from their CITES offices and one official from their domestic fisheries agency. By the close of the meeting, delegates had agreed on a number of recommendations which would be passed to officials in each country and to the AC. Delegates also pledged to make specific comments on the draft Secretariat

report by the deadline of 30 June 30 2003, and to coordinate with their regional representatives on the AC prior to the August 2003 AC review of the report.

13. At AC19, the United States and Mexico were active participants in the WG on the Review of Significant Trade (Phase V - Queen conch). This WG developed comprehensive recommendations (based in part on the Montego Bay recommendations) to improve the application of Article IV in the exporting countries, which remain in effect as of January 2004.
14. Representatives from the U.S. Scientific Authority and the National Marine Fisheries Service attended the 56th meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (November 2003; Tortola, British Virgin Islands) to explain the process and outcome of Resolution Conf. 12.8 on queen conch. Participants included NGOs, fisheries scientists, and fishery managers from the wider Caribbean.
15. The Mexican delegation participated at the International Queen Conch Initiative meeting. During the meeting a document prepared by TRAFFIC Europe was discussed. Mexico's Scientific Authority coordinated the revision of the document and sent comments on some of the sections concerning Mexico. Based on this information, the Mexican delegation participated in the formulation of recommendations for each of the categories and proposed the reclassification of Mexico from category ii) "possible concern" to category iii) "least concern", because it doesn't fulfil the prerequisites to continue within the Significant Trade Review. On the other hand, Mexico also participated in the revision of the Action Plan derived from the first Significant Trade Review at a country level for Madagascar.

Criteria review

16. At AC19, Canada, Mexico and the United States participated in the criteria review working group charged with testing the applicability of the criteria to amend the CITES Appendices concerning a variety of animal taxa.
17. Canada: At AC19, Canada participated in the criteria review working group. It tested the applicability of the criteria to *Falco rusticolus* and *Acipenser transmontanus*, in collaboration with the United States.
18. USA: At CoP12, the Parties adopted a Decision directing the Animals and Plants Committees (PC) to continue a review of the criteria with particular emphasis on evaluating their applicability to different taxa. The outcome of this review is to be reported at CoP13, where possible amendments to Resolution Conf. 9.24 are to be considered. At SC49, the Standing Committee established that the AC and PC should submit at SC50 a progress report on the review of the criteria. It also agreed that the review should focus on the finalization of the text in CoP12 Com. I. 3 and that test of the applicability of the criteria should be conducted on a limited number of taxa to be selected by the AC and PC. At both PC13 (Geneva, August 2003) and AC19, the United States was asked to chair the working group on review of the criteria. At their respective meetings, the technical committees discussed and adopted a document (PC13 Doc. 9.4.3) prepared by the Chairman of the PC, in collaboration with representatives from Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States, proposing terms of reference and a schedule for the completion of the review of the criteria. The AC and PC also compiled a list of 24 animal, 16 plant and one fungus species to be used by volunteering Parties to evaluate the applicability of the criteria and recommend specific changes to Doc. CoP12 Com. I. 3 criteria, if necessary. The United States volunteered to evaluate the listing criteria using 3 plant and 8 animal taxa. The results of the reviews were submitted to the Chairs of the AC and PC in late November 2003.
19. Mexico: Mexico participated in the review of the applicability of the amendment criteria, testing the criteria with 3 Mexican species included in the Appendices: One cetacean: Grey whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*) and 2 Psittacids: Yellow-headed Amazon (*Amazona oratrix*) and Lilac-crowned Amazon (*Amazona finschi*). This work was coordinated by CONABIO and carried out in conjunction with specialists from the National Program for Marine Mammals Research and Conservation of the National Ecology Institute (INE) and the National Psittacids Committee, respectively. The formats for the 3 species were completed and sent to the Chair with some comments on the applicability, as well as pertinent modifications to the criteria.

Appendix revision

20. USA: The United States chairs a joint AC-PC WG on review of animal and plant taxa in the Appendices. The WG continues to work with representatives from Australia, Kenya, Republic of South Africa, Spain, and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in the development of guidelines for conducting future reviews of taxa in the Appendices as well as a fast-track process.
21. Mexico: Within the Periodic Review of the Appendices, 2 Mexican species: White turtle (*Dermatemys mawii*) and Mexican axolotl (*Ambystoma mexicanum*) were chosen during the AC15 (Madagascar, July 1999) and Mexico was committed to doing the revision of these species, among others. For this reason, CONABIO coordinated 2 research projects for these species, to determine the current status of wild populations and evaluate their status in the CITES Appendices. The studies were concluded during this period and the final results will be presented during the AC20.
22. Both studies were carried out with the financial support of CONABIO. The first one, 'Current status of wild populations of white turtle (*Dermatemys mawii*) in southeast Mexico' cost approximately USD 11,000, while the second one 'Abundance and structure of Axolotl (*Ambystoma mexicanum*) population in the Xochimilco y Chalco freshwater systems' cost USD 10,000.

Proposals for Amendment of the Appendices

23. The team of scientists that was in charge of the research project 'Evaluation of the Lilac-crowned Amazon (*Amazona finschi*) conservation status in Mexico' (also financed by CONABIO), in coordination with the National Psittacids Committee and CONABIO, prepared the Amendment Proposal (from Appendix II to I) for the species. Mexico's CITES Follow-Up Committee is working with this team to enhance the proposal. Mexico will put forward the proposal for consideration at AC20, and finally submit it to CoP13 (Bangkok, October 2004).

Implementation of Seahorses' inclusion in Appendix II

24. Canada reviewed the draft 'A Guide to the Identification of Seahorses' produced by TRAFFIC North America in collaboration with Project Seahorse (University of British Columbia), US Fish and Wildlife Service and US NOAA Fisheries Service. Comments were submitted on 5 January 2004.
25. In accordance with Decision 12.53, staff from the U.S. Management and Scientific Authorities, along with representatives of the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service, met with representatives of the State of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission regarding the CITES seahorse listing (effective May 2004). The purpose of the visit was to brief state personnel about the CITES treaty and permitting requirements, learn about Florida licensing and monitoring programs, and discuss future collaboration on seahorse conservation. Florida has the only known U.S. fishery for seahorses, and USFWS data indicate there are at least a moderate number of seahorse exporters in the state that will be affected by the 2004 CITES listing of *Hippocampus* spp. At this meeting, Florida experts agreed to participate in the proposed U.S./Mexican workshop on the management of seahorse fisheries (see below).
26. In September 2003, the United States and Mexico agreed to co-host an international workshop on the management of seahorse fisheries in accordance with Decision 12.53. The workshop, to be convened 3-5 February 2004, will involve 37 experts from the United States, the CITES Secretariat, NGOs (Project Seahorse and IFAW), and relevant authorities from other countries significant in the seahorse trade. Invited countries include Brazil, India, Mexico, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and China. CITES Parties that import or trans-ship large amounts of seahorses, including Indonesia, the European Community, and others, should also benefit from the workshop proceedings. This workshop will be a venue to share information on management and monitoring strategies for seahorse fisheries, and other aspects of the recent listing in Appendix II of CITES. A report comprising the recommendations resulting from this workshop will be presented at AC20.

Technical workshop on the conservation of sea cucumbers in the families Holothuridae and Stichopodidae

27. During the AC19, the delegates of Mexico expressed its interest in being invited to participate in the 'Technical workshop on the conservation of sea cucumbers in the families Holothuridae and Stichopodidae', that will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (1-3 March 2004). In response to a formal invitation from the Secretariat, the Management Authority confirmed the participation of Mexico in the workshop through a specialist in that field (Mrs Dinorah Herrero, advisor of CONABIO). For the same purpose, the Scientific Authority, in conjunction with the CITES Authorities and specialists, prepared the national report for the meeting, gathering all the available information about sea cucumber populations' status and fisheries in Mexico.

Non-detriment Findings (NDF)

28. Canada has continued its work on NDF. Work since AC19 has involved clarification of roles and responsibilities within the provinces and territories, development of criteria to identify priority species, as well as presentation and training to use the 'IUCN Guidelines to Assist Scientific Authorities in Making Non-Detriment Findings'. An NDF database and internal website has been developed to assist in the process of developing more comprehensive NDF reports. The website enables Scientific Authorities across the country to participate in criteria selection and identification of priority species, to download the IUCN checklist and guidelines, to view example reports (*Panax quinquefolius*, *Ursus arctos*, *Hydrastis canadensis*, and *Opuntia* spp.), to track NDF reports under development, and to view progress of WGs established to address challenges in coordinating a national approach and making information available to the public. NDF reports will be made and updated according to this coordinated national strategy for priority species and eventually all Appendix II native species. NDF reports have recently been initiated for the Canadian CITES-listed furbearing species and narwhal (*Monodon monocerus*).

Captive Breeding Operations

29. To date, Canada has re-registered 7 of 9 operations that breed Appendix-I species for commercial purposes and there have been no new registrations. The facilities registered for 2004 are breeding *Falco rusticolus*, *Falco peregrinus* and *Tragopan caboti*.

Marine and/or fish species

30. In response to Notification to the Parties No. 2003/068 on biological and trade status of sharks, Canada summarized information requested in the questionnaire, attached as an annex to the Notification. The completed questionnaire reporting on progress towards implementing the FAO IPOA-sharks was forwarded to the AC in early 2004.
31. In response to Notifications to the Parties Nos. 2003/051 and 2003/068, regarding conservation and management of sharks and the biological and trade status of sharks, respectively, Mexico prepared a summary of the advances in the implementation of the International Plan of Action for Shark Management and Conservation (IPOA-Sharks) and the resulting establishment of a National Plan of Action. Mexico sent the information requested in the attached questionnaire of the Notification.

Research

32. With CONABIO's financial support (USD 14,000) a group of Mexican crocodile specialists began a research project to determine Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*) populations status in Mexico and to evaluate its status in the CITES Appendices. Financial support for this field research, costing a total of USD 77,300 has also been received from other national institutions. The main goal of the project is to sample 54 localities in Mexico (26 localities that were surveyed during 2002 and 28 new localities selected in conjunction with CONABIO and other specialists). The field surveys will last 12 months, comprising rainy and dry seasons, so that enough data can be collected during the 2 surveys and a tendency of wild populations in Mexico can be appreciated. The project includes habitat characterization and the evaluation of human populations impacts on crocodile populations.

Capacity Building

33. Regarding the Canadian CITES Website (www.cites.ca), development of a new permits section is currently under review by the provincial and territorial Scientific and Management Authorities. This section will enable the public to download all application forms, instructions, and information notes specific to certain cases including orchids, cacti, ginseng, hunting trophies, primates, pets, and many others. The website has also been updated with a new CoP13 section, complete with general information, calendar, information on proposals, and public consultations; a new 'Animals and Plants' section for species with specific permit requirements; and a new 'Site Plan' feature to help public and staff find the section of the website that is needed. The national CITES newsletter, 'CITES Monthly' is also available on the website and archived.
34. Mexico's CITES Authorities and related governmental agencies had a meeting with Traffic-North America to analyse a diagnostic document (prepared by a consultant hired by Traffic) regarding the operation and proper implementation of CITES in Mexico. One of the goals of this document was to analyse the main identified problems and to provide some recommendations to deal with them.
35. CONABIO, in coordination with the rest of Mexico's CITES Follow-Up Committee, began to compile the CITES Specialists Directory, which will be a part of the Scientific Authority's official advisors directory. This will fulfil the AC commitment of gathering and sharing this information within the different regions. This directory will soon be published at CONABIO's Website (www.conabio.gob.mx).
36. Mexico's Law Enforcement Authority (PROFEPA) organized and imparted several training courses for the personnel in charge of the inspection at airports, frontiers, and ports, so that a better control of illegal trade can be achieved. The personnel was instructed in several fields, such as those related to sanitary problems, pests and proper use of identification guides for CITES species, among other relevant topics.

Enforcement

37. In the past month, an interactive CD on CITES training was produced in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat. In 2004, a report will be produced on a project done in collaboration with the Canadian Customs on CITES requirements to import and export 5 targeted groups (tropical wood, birds, reptiles, corals and sturgeons) and a CITES identification guide on amphibians will be published. Ongoing work on forensic issues is being done, particularly with sturgeon DNA and chemical analysis of bird feathers to determine whether the origin is from the wild or captivity.
38. On 15 and 20 October 2003, respectively, Environment Canada prosecuted two flight attendants for illegally importing Russian sturgeon caviar into Canada from Poland. The individuals were each convicted of one count under subsection 6(2) of WAPRIITA and sentenced to 13 days incarceration (8 x 500 gram tins imported) and 23 days (25 x 500 gram tins imported), respectively.

Meetings

39. A meeting between Mexico's CITES Scientific Authority and the representative of TRAFFIC North America in Mexico was held, with the objective of reinforcing the cooperation in CITES-related topics, such as information exchange, experts advice, and development of joint projects.

CITES AUTHORITIES DIRECTORY 2004

CANADA

The Management and Scientific Authorities at the **Canadian Wildlife Service** (ENVIRONMENT CANADA) have the overall responsibility of the implementation of the Convention in Canada. These authorities are within the Wildlife Trade Unit of the Species at Risk Branch. There are also other Federal departments involved, such as:

- the **Department of Fisheries and Oceans** (DFO): marine species and fish;
- the **Canadian Forest Service** (NRC-CFS): trees / Timber;
- the **Canadian Customs and Revenue Agency** (CCRA);
- the **Canadian Food Inspection Agency** (CFIA);
- the **Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade** (DFAIT).

Also 12 of the 13 Provinces or Territories have their own designated MAs and SAs.

However, in any case, CWS should be contacted at the numbers and addresses below under "**general information**" and CWS will forward any messages.

When sending email, please use cites@ec.gc.ca

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ACTING HEAD

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MEXICO

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* Recognized signatures for permits and other official CITES documents pertaining the Management Authority.

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Enforcement Authority (EA)

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

For all issues pertaining to the Animals Committee, letters or documents should be sent (mail and/or e-mail) to the Scientific Authority; they will then be forwarded to the Management Authority.

Management Authority

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