

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

Forty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 22-25 April 2003

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE APPENDICES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP12) on the Establishment of Committees, the Conference of the Parties resolves that, in Annex 2, within the policy agreed to by the Conference of the Parties, the Animals and Plants Committees shall:
 - h) undertake a periodic review of animal or plant species included in the CITES Appendices by:*
 - i) establishing a schedule for reviewing the biological and trade status of these species;*
 - ii) identifying problems or potential problems concerning the biological status of species being traded;*
 - iii) consulting the Parties on the need to review specific species, working directly with the range States in the selection process, and seeking their assistance in such reviews; and*
 - iv) preparing and submitting amendment proposals resulting from the review, through the Depositary Government, for consideration at meetings of the Conference of the Parties.*
3. The implementation by the Committees of the provisions in paragraphs h) iii) and iv) in particular has sometimes been problematic. The reviews are generally conducted on a voluntary basis and can take a long time to complete. They vary considerably in scope and level of detail. Range States do not always respond and may not be able to assist in the reviews.
4. Recognizing these problems, the Animals Committee at its 18th meeting (San José, April 2002) drafted internal guidelines to facilitate the identification of species to be reviewed and to outline the process for conducting reviews. It agreed to develop a rapid assessment process for expediting future reviews in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC, and to involve IUCN once the methodology was in place. The issue will probably be further discussed at the next meeting of the Animals Committee.
5. The Plants Committee has also recognized problems, particularly the need to improve involvement of range States and to define the procedure to follow after the completion of a review. For example, no guidance is provided on the appropriate action in cases where one

or more, or all of the range States of a species oppose a proposal resulting from a review by the Animals or Plants Committee. The Plants Committee has noted that, in cases where the results of a review indicate that it would be desirable to amend the Appendices, ideally one or more range States of the taxon concerned would prepare and submit a proposal to do so – although Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP12) states that the Depository Government should submit the proposal.

6. This issue was touched on in the report of the Chairman of the Plants Committee for the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP12 Doc. 10.2). The recommendation of the Committee on this issue was adopted and became Decision 12.96, directed to the Standing Committee, as follows:

The Standing Committee shall develop mechanisms to obtain greater involvement of the range States in the periodic review of the Appendices and provide guidance to reach a clear recommendation after the completion of the review.

7. The Secretariat believes that what is required is a transparent review process based on the provisions in Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP12), and improved collaboration between range States of species under review, members of the Committees and the Depository Government. It notes that the Animals and Plants Committees have both formulated suggestions in this regard.

Recommendations

8. The Secretariat suggests that the following procedure be followed in order to implement this element of the terms of reference of the Animals and Plants Committees.
 - a) The Animals and Plants Committees should share their experience regarding the undertaking of periodic reviews of species included in the Appendices (including the process, the format and output) and establish a schedule for the periodic review of the Appendices, listing the species they propose to review during the next two intersessional periods between meetings of the Conference of the Parties.
 - b) The Secretariat should send a copy of this list to all Parties requesting that range States of the species send their comments on the need to review these species to the Secretariat, to relay to the members of the Committee concerned.
 - c) Taking these comments into account, the Animals and Plants Committees should finalize the selection of the species to be reviewed. They should conduct or organize the reviews, seeking information from the range States. A draft of each review (in an agreed format) should be provided to the range States for comment before it is considered final.
 - d) In cases where a review indicates, and the Committee agrees, that it would be appropriate to transfer a species from one Appendix to another, or to delete a species from Appendix II, the Committee should, in consultation with the range States, prepare (or arrange the preparation of) a proposal to amend the Appendices.
 - e) The Committee (or the Secretariat on behalf of the Committee), should provide copies to the range States and request that one or more should submit the proposal for consideration at the following meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

- f) If no range State is willing to submit the proposal, the Secretariat should request the Depositary Government to submit it [as specified in Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP12)] and to include the comments of the range States in the supporting statement.