

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



Fifty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 14-18 July 2008

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

Sturgeons

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE

1. This document has been prepared by the Chairman of the Animals Committee.
2. In Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish*, the Conference of the Parties:

DIRECTS the Animals Committee, in collaboration with the Secretariat, interested Parties, international organizations and relevant experts, to monitor progress on the relevant provisions of this Resolution and to carry out on a three-year cycle starting in 2008, and using information from preceding years, an evaluation of the assessment and the monitoring methodologies used for stocks of Acipenseriformes species subject to the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a)...

and

DIRECTS the Animals Committee to provide to the Standing Committee its recommendations on actions to be taken based upon the above-mentioned monitoring of progress and three-year cycle evaluation.

3. At its 24th meeting (Geneva, April 2008) the Animals Committee reviewed progress on the relevant provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) and established a process for carrying out the evaluation mentioned in the Resolution.
4. Regarding the evaluation, the Animals Committee adopted the following recommendations:

Caspian Sea

- a) The Animals Committee notes that the working group confirmed that the existing stock assessment methodology as presented in document AC23 Doc. 13.2 is the one currently employed by all the Caspian range States and has been used for several years.
- b) The Animals Committee urges the CITES Secretariat to promote the holding of a workshop to review existing sturgeon stock assessment / Total Allowable Catch (TAC) determination methodology and elaborate a scientific methodology that is internationally acceptable, using the FAO review on the Caspian Sea stock assessment methodology.

- c) The participants should be stock assessment experts from range states, intergovernmental organizations [e.g. FAO and the Sturgeon Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)] and other appropriately qualified experts.
- d) The workshop is to take place as soon as possible in 2008 and the results and recommendations should be presented at the next Animals Committee meeting in 2009.
- e) The Animals Committee requests the Secretariat to communicate its recommendations to FAO in order to encourage allocation of funding from the current FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) for Caspian fisheries management to support the above-mentioned workshop. This request could be made at the upcoming joint FAO / World Bank Caspian Fisheries Technical Workshop in Rome, 28-30 April 2008.

Amur / Heilongjiang River

- a) The Animals Committee notes that the documentation made available at its 23rd meeting was incomplete and/or was not up-to-date. The CITES Secretariat should ask the range States to provide to the Animals Committee the updated methodologies used in this basin if they have not done so.
- b) The range States should establish a joint uniform methodology on sturgeon stock assessment. The Animals Committee encourages these range States to discuss this at their next joint meeting in 2008 and to report on progress at AC24.
- c) This agreed methodology should be reviewed in a manner similar to that performed for the Caspian Sea assessment (by FAO if possible) as soon as it is established.
- d) The Animals Committee urges the CITES Secretariat to promote the holding of a workshop to review existing sturgeon stock assessment / Total Allowable Catch (TAC) determination methodology and elaborate a scientific methodology that is internationally acceptable, using the FAO review on the Amur River stock assessment methodology.
- e) The participants should be stock assessment experts from range States, intergovernmental organizations (e.g. FAO and IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group) and other appropriately qualified experts.
- f) The workshop is to take place as soon as possible and the results and recommendations should be presented at the subsequent Animals Committee meeting.

Black Sea, Danube River and Azov Sea

- a) The Animals Committee notes that the documentation made available at its 23rd meeting did not contain an adequate explanation of the methodologies currently employed in the basins. The CITES Secretariat should ask the range States to provide to the Animals Committee the updated methodologies used in each basin.
- b) The range States should establish a joint uniform methodology for each basin on sturgeon stock assessment.
- c) These agreed methodologies should be reviewed in a manner similar to those performed for the Caspian Sea and Amur River assessments (by FAO if possible) as soon as possible.
- d) The Animals Committee urges the CITES Secretariat to promote the holding of a workshop to review existing sturgeon stock assessment / Total Allowable Catch (TAC) determination methodology and elaborate a scientific methodology that is internationally acceptable, using the FAO reviews on Caspian Sea and Amur River stock assessment methodology.
- e) The participants should be stock assessment experts from range States, intergovernmental organizations (e.g. FAO and IUCN Sturgeon Specialist Group) and other appropriately qualified experts.

- f) The workshop is to take place as soon as possible and the results and recommendations should be presented at the subsequent Animals Committee meeting.

Funding

Where external funding is needed, the Animals Committee requests the Secretariat to pursue as a priority funding for these recommendations as per Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP14) and Decision 14.125.

- 5. When some of the activities outlined above have been completed, the Animals Committee will provide the Standing Committee with recommendations on actions to be taken. However at the present meeting, the Standing Committee is simply invited to note this report.