

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



Fifty-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 6-10 July 2009

Strategic matters

NATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE POLICY REVIEWS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat, in consultation with Kuwait.

Regional workshop

2. During its April 2008 meeting and based on a suggestion made by Kuwait, the League of Arab States' working group on biodiversity and desertification agreed to organize a regional workshop on wildlife trade policy reviews. Kuwait announced this decision at the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, July 2008) and requested assistance from the CITES Secretariat for its implementation. A formal workshop proposal was thereafter prepared by the Secretariat and Kuwait, responding not only to the League of Arab States' decision but also to Decisions 14.21 – 14.24 of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. The workshop responded as well to Decision 14.11 on regional cooperation and coordination.
3. During its October 2008 meeting, the League of Arab States' working group on biodiversity and desertification approved the workshop proposal. The Regional Workshop for Arabic-Speaking Countries on Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews, hosted by the Environment Public Authority of Kuwait, took place from 8 to 11 March 2009 in Kuwait City.
4. Participants in the workshop included representatives from the CITES authorities of Algeria, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait (including members of the national CITES committee), the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, as well as the competent authorities of Bahrain and Iraq. The Comoros, Djibouti, Lebanon, Morocco and Somalia were also invited but could not attend. Representatives of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and an animal rescue centre in Kuwait attended as observers.
5. Technical and financial support for the workshop was provided by Kuwait, the League of Arab States and the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (LAS/CAMRE), UNEP's Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA), and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO). Workshop facilitators were provided by the CITES Scientific Authority of Viet Nam (one of four pilot countries that undertook a CITES Policy Review during 2006-2008), UNEP's Economics and Trade Branch and the CITES Secretariat. External funds provided by the European Union were used to cover the cost of air tickets for the workshop facilitators from Viet Nam and the Secretariat.
6. During the workshop, participants had an opportunity to discuss the value and drivers of CITES trade, the ABCs of policies, the evolution of CITES Policy Reviews, the revised draft Framework for Reviewing National Wildlife Trade Policies and the national review that had been undertaken by Viet Nam. They also addressed issues related to various aspects of CITES implementation, regional cooperation, certain types of CITES trade (e.g. in agarwood, falcons and eels) and joint activities undertaken with other stakeholders.

7. The workshop resulted in:

- a compilation of existing national policies related to wildlife trade and public policy reviews that had already been undertaken in the region;
- the sharing of other relevant information and experience in Asia;
- the identification of reasons for undertaking a national or regional policy review;
- the development of knowledge, skills and tools for undertaking wildlife trade policy reviews;
- improved understanding of CITES and the broader policy and institutional context in which it is implemented; and
- improved understanding of methodologies or tools such as value chain analysis, stakeholder mapping, data gathering, policy response identification, social science research, etc.

8. A set of recommendations unanimously adopted by workshop participants is contained in the Annex to this document. Participants were provided with a CD-ROM containing the workshop materials, and it is expected that a workshop report will be made available at a later date.

Additional developments

9. Viet Nam has obtained external funds to undertake, during 2009, an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of its wildlife trade policy implementation.

10. During the second half of 2009, the Secretariat will finalize the Framework for Reviewing Wildlife Trade Policies and the synthesis report of national reviews undertaken by the four pilot countries and will arrange for their translation and distribution.

11. The CITES Management Authority of Jamaica has advised the Secretariat that it is continuing to work with a consultant to develop a national wildlife policy. When completed, it may be adopted as a 'green paper' by the country's Cabinet (i.e. an initial policymaking proposal put forward by the government for national discussion) which should allow it to be shared with others.

Recommendations

12. The Secretariat thanks Kuwait and its partners for having organized the workshop described in this document and invites the Standing Committee to take note of the workshop recommendations contained in the Annex.

Regional Workshop for Arabic-Speaking Countries  
on Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews  
(Kuwait, 8-11 March 2009)

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Invite the member States of the region to initiate the process of reviewing, updating and/or developing policies on wildlife trade, in accordance with existing national policies and domestic laws, with the support of the CITES Secretariat, UNEP/ROWA, CAMRE, the GCC Secretariat, and other concerned stakeholders and specialized regional organizations.
2. Call upon CAMRE, the authorities in charge of CITES at the national level, the GCC Secretariat, UNEP/ROWA, ISESCO and the CITES Secretariat, with the support of other specialized, international organizations and donors, to carry out regional/subregional wildlife policy reviews for possible presentation (if completed) at the forthcoming 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP15) to be held in Doha, Qatar during the first quarter of 2010.
3. Encourage the replication of the Regional Workshop for Arabic-Speaking Countries on Wildlife Trade Policy Reviews in other Asian and African regions or sub-regions.
4. Urge concerned regional/subregional organizations to allocate the funds necessary for the Arabic translation of CITES materials relevant to wildlife trade policy reviews.
5. Call upon the Arab States party to CITES to consider the possibilities of seconding an expert from the region to work with the CITES Secretariat and provide financial support, as other Parties have done, to assist the Secretariat in providing further technical support related to CITES implementation in the region.
6. Include species-related issues identified in the workshop, such as agarwood, falcons, caviar and eels, in the development of regional or national wildlife trade policy reviews.
7. Enhance networking and cooperation between CITES Parties and non-Parties in the region through appropriate mechanisms (expert group meetings, workshops, exchange of information, any Arabic version of the CITES website that may be developed and maintained in the future through external funding, etc.)
8. Invite non-Parties (Bahrain, Lebanon, and Iraq) to join the Convention and provide them, if possible, with technical support for the adherence process.
9. Call upon the CITES Secretariat, UNEP/ROWA and other interested organizations to cooperate in the mobilization of funds to sponsor delegates from Arab countries to attend the forthcoming meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP15, Doha, Qatar, 2010).
10. Invite CAMRE to take the action necessary for including the Arabic language as an official language and/or working language of the Convention.