

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



Sixty-first meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 August 2011

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Species trade and conservation

TORTOISES AND FRESHWATER TURTLES

1. This document has been prepared by the Chair of the Animals Committee.*
2. At CoP15, the Conference of the Parties adopted the following Decisions on *Tortoises and freshwater turtles*:

Directed to the Animals Committee

15.79 *The Animals Committee, at its 25th meeting, shall review the final study from the IUCN Species Survival Commission, Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group (IUCN-TFTSG) mentioned in Decision 14.128 and make recommendations to the Standing Committee and/or at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as appropriate.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

15.80 *The Standing Committee, taking into account the recommendations of the Animals Committee, shall review the pertinent sections, conclusions, and recommendations of the final study mentioned in Decision 14.128 and make its own recommendations at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to Parties

15.81 *The Parties, particularly those engaged in the trade of tortoises and freshwater and terrestrial turtles, are encouraged to review their implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13), taking into account the conclusions and recommendations of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group (IUCN-TFTSG) mentioned in Decision 14.128, in order to determine what national actions may be necessary to strengthen their implementation and enforcement of CITES and their trade management and conservation of these species.*

15.82 *The Parties, particularly those engaged in the trade of tortoises and freshwater and terrestrial turtles, are encouraged, as a matter of priority, to develop national tariff Customs codes, based on the World Customs Organization harmonized system of tariff codes, for monitoring the trade in tortoises and freshwater and terrestrial turtles and for products thereof.*

15.83 *In fulfilment of paragraph m) of Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP13), the Parties are encouraged to consider the conclusions and recommendations contained in the final study mentioned in Decision 14.128 in preparation of their biennial (or other periodical) reports.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

3. The text of the final study referred to in these Decisions can be found in Annex 2 to the present document. At its 25th meeting (Geneva, July 2011), the Animals Committee duly reviewed this study and the recommendations which it wishes to make to the Standing Committee can be found in Annex 1 to the present document.
4. The Standing Committee is requested to consider these recommendations and, taking them into account, review the pertinent sections, conclusions and recommendations of the study in Annex 2, and make its own recommendations at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE

1. Subject to external funding and with appropriate assistance, the Animals Committee should engage independent consultants to undertake a study to identify and discuss factors that are of particular relevance to make non-detriment findings for tortoises and freshwater turtles, including (but not limited to) turtle population status and dynamics, trade dynamics, and the trade in parts, products and derivatives. This study should provide guidance for Parties to make non-detriment findings for tortoises and freshwater turtles. The Animals Committee should report on progress at AC26 and CoP16.
2. The Animals Committee shall review at its 26th meeting the results of the North American Turtle Trade Workshop, held in St. Louis in September 2010, and the Asian Turtle Conservation Workshop held in Singapore in February 2011, and additional pertinent information, and make recommendations for the consideration of the Parties to amend the CITES Appendices with regard to turtle species.
3. The Animals Committee requests the Secretariat to prepare a Notification to encourage Parties to engage partners with expertise and resources when evaluating disposal options for confiscated live turtles, such as repatriation or addition to *in situ* or *ex situ* conservation breeding programs, taking into account Resolution Conf. 10.7 (Rev. CoP15) on the disposal of confiscated live specimens, to maximize the conservation value of such confiscated specimens of rare tortoises and freshwater turtles.
4. The Animals Committee wishes to inform the Standing Committee that the ability of Parties to make accurate NDFs is undermined by the often undocumented trade in parts and derivatives, and by the sometimes questionable use of source codes C, F and R, and therefore the Animals Committee requests the Standing Committee to place particular emphasis on these topics in its recommendations.
5. The Animals Committee notes with concern the trade management challenges identified in the Annex to document AC25 Doc. 19 for tortoises and freshwater turtles. The Animals Committee requests that the Standing Committee consider proposing a Decision at CoP16 directing Parties to report on their implementation of recommendations contained in the Annex to document AC25 Doc. 19 regarding enforcement and compliance.