

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

Summary record of the first session of Committee II

15 March 2010: 09h30 - 11h50

Chairman: W. Dovey (New Zealand)  
Secretariat: W. Wijnstekers  
A. Abalos  
J. Barzdo  
J. Vasquez  
M. Yeater  
UNEP: T. Kapiga  
Rapporteurs: J. Jorgenson  
C. McLardy  
K. Malsch  
J. Robinson

The Chair drew the attention of Committee II to the working programme in document CoP15 Doc. 2 (Rev. 2). It was agreed that the Committee would commence by considering agenda item 6.

6. Financing and budgeting of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

6.1 Terms of reference of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 6.1.

Australia, supported by Chile, referred to paragraph 2 a) of the Annex and proposed that the words "one day" be deleted in order to allow greater flexibility in deciding on when the Subcommittee should meet. This was agreed.

Noting the lack of representation of West African Parties, Ghana requested to serve on the subcommittee. Clarifying a question about membership of the Subcommittee, the United States of America noted that Parties not members of the Standing Committee could also participate to represent their region. In response to a question from Israel about the length of service on the Subcommittee, the Secretary-General referred to Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP14), which states that working groups shall have a defined life span which shall not exceed the period until the following meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Therefore, the Subcommittee and its membership would have to be re-established after each meeting of the Conference. China emphasized the need for members of the subcommittee to represent the view of the region as a whole.

The Terms of Reference in the Annex of document CoP15 Doc. 6.1 were accepted, with the amendment proposed by Australia.

6.2 Financial reports for the years 2007 and 2008

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 6.2 (Rev. 1) and the contents were noted.

### 6.3 Implementation of the costed programme of work for 2009

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 6.3 (Rev. 1).

The United States noted the difficulties of obtaining all the external funding required to implement the Costed Programme of Work (CPW) and suggested that one possible approach to raising funds could be to contract a professional fundraiser. The Secretary-General responded that this approach would be extremely costly and Parties might not wish the Trust Fund to be used in this way. The Secretariat added that a lot of time and money were also spent on project management for externally-funded activities. Norway drew attention to the problem of relying on voluntary contributions to implement the Secretariat's programme. Agreeing with this point, the Secretary-General added that many donors provided funds only for earmarked projects and that more unrestricted funds were needed.

The United States expressed their view that contributions to the Trust Fund were voluntary, not mandatory, and indicated that they would not support measures to penalise countries for failing to make their contributions. Chile commented that Parties were called on to contribute to many other conventions.

The Environmental Investigation Agency suggested that the Conference of the Parties should increase funding for enforcement activities.

Document CoP15 Doc. 6.3 (Rev. 1) was noted.

### 6.4 Implementation of the costed programme of work for 2010 and 2011

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 6.4 (Rev. 1).

The United States, supported by South Africa, expressed concern about low staffing levels for enforcement activities in the Secretariat and indicated that they would support an increase in voluntary contributions in order to employ additional professional enforcement officers. Saint Lucia asked for higher priority to be given to capacity building in developing countries and especially Small Island Developing States. The Secretary-General stated that any additional staff for enforcement activities should be paid by the Trust Fund rather than external funding.

It was agreed to refer further discussion on this item to the budget working group.

## 6. Financing and budgeting of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

### 6.5. Costed programme of work for 2012 to 2013

The Chair stated that he intended to establish a budget working group on Thursday to consider document CoP15 Doc 6.5 (Rev. 1) and urged developing countries to consider offering to chair the group. The Secretary-General said that the working group should include representation from all regions, from developed and less-developed countries and from Parties with opposing views on the proposed budget for the biennium 2012-2013 outlined in Annex 4a of the document.

He explained that the approach for a one-off two-year Costed Programme of Work (CPW) had been developed so that his successor would have an opportunity to present his own draft budget for the period 2014-2016. He stated that the working group should focus on the proposed increase in contributions from Parties rather than adapting the CPW in Annex 1 of the document. He urged the working group to carefully consider Annex 3, which provided various scenarios for increases in annual contributions, noting that an increase of 16 % would only allow the Secretariat to maintain its current activities. He reiterated that the Secretariat remained understaffed, especially in the area of enforcement assistance.

Following a query by the United States, the Secretary-General clarified that it was necessary for the working group to keep track of decisions taken during the present meeting that affected the CPW for 2010-2011, outlined in document CoP15 Doc. 6.4 (Rev.1).

Israel, supported by Mali, noted expressed concern that smaller delegations would have difficulty in participating in meetings of the budget working group and encouraged consultation with smaller

countries that were unable to participate fully. The Chair clarified that, as far as possible, the working group should meet over lunchtimes.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, supported by Jamaica and Saint Lucia, believed that the most critical activities to be addressed in the CPW for developing countries were capacity building and enforcement assistance. Saint Lucia supported an increase in contributions and the continuation of the Sponsored Delegates Project to support to small developing countries. They also noted the importance of external assistance for workshops and activities that they wished to see remain in the CPW.

Noting the gaps in capacity for many Small Island Developing States, Grenada suggested creating further synergies with other conventions such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reduce duplication of effort and gain efficiencies in terms of finance, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Israel, supported by Chile and Mexico, referred to financial difficulties experienced following the recent global recession. Israel and Mexico stated they could not support any increase in the CITES budget. Israel further suggested that traders should have an increased responsibility in paying for the regulation of trade in CITES items, many of which are luxury goods, such as caviar, furs and snakeskin items. They urged the working group to consider this issue.

#### 6.6 Non-payment of contributions

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc 6.6 (Rev. 1), drawing attention to the request in Resolution Conf. 14.1 that directed Parties to pay their contributions. They noted that, after Annex 1 of the document had been produced, Paraguay, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Islamic Republic of Iran had either provided a payment or committed to do so this year.

Mali, Nepal and Suriname, all questioned the accuracy of the document in relation to the payment of their contributions and the Secretariat undertook to discuss this with them bilaterally.

Malaysia stressed that contributions from Parties were vital to the functioning of CITES and supported the Secretariat's recommendation in Annex 2 of the document, as did Chile. The United States reiterated their earlier comment that they perceived their contribution to CITES as entirely voluntary and that, while they supported a system of voluntary contributions, they would not support a system that penalized Parties for non-payment.

Mexico supported the proposed draft decision but noted that, as for many Parties, budgetary constraints posed a problem. They agreed with the sentiments described in paragraph 8 of document CoP15 Doc. 6.6 (Rev. 1) that unpaid contributions should not be cancelled as it would set an undesirable precedent.

The Chair acknowledged that the global economic crisis has widespread effects on donors and recipient countries alike, and urged the working group to take this into account. With no further comments, the draft decision was agreed by consensus.

Brazil and the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed concern about paragraph c) of the draft decision, regarding the involvement of the Standing Committee in the collection of arrears. The Islamic Republic of Iran also queried the role of the permanent missions in Geneva. Regarding the latter, the Secretary-General clarified that the Secretariat contacted the designated Management Authorities about contributions due and sent copies to the permanent representatives in Geneva. Regarding the former point, the Secretariat pointed out that Resolution Conf. 14.1 instructed the Secretariat to consider all financial and budgetary matters and that the Secretariat therefore monitored contributions from the Parties and reports to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee also facilitated the work of the Secretariat by providing assistance through the regional representatives. The Secretary-General confirmed that the Standing Committee had no role in punishing Parties that were in arrears.

#### 8. Implementation of the Strategic Vision: 2008-2013

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 8, highlighting that a full set of indicators, as developed by the Standing Committee, was now available on the CITES website (under 'How CITES works'). The

Chair of the Standing Committee Working Group on Special Reporting Requirements was announced as Mr James Williams of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Secretariat drew attention to paragraph 11 of the document, which recommended that the Conference of the Parties adopt the proposed revisions to Decision 14.37 contained in document CoP15 Doc. 21 on *National reports*, noting that the Parties could either adopt the proposed revisions or discuss them as part of the broader discussions on document CoP15 Doc. 21. The Secretariat also drew attention to a recent analysis of biennial reports compiled for the Secretariat by UNEP-WCMC, contained in document CoP15 Inf. 43.

Chile proposed that Decision 14.37 be discussed under agenda item 21 on *National reports*. The United States concurred, noting that Resolution Conf. 14.2 instructed the Standing Committee to report at CoP15 and CoP16 on the progress of implementation of the Strategic Vision, but Parties were still deciding on *how* to report. The United States stated that they would propose modifications to Decision 14.37 in order to accelerate this process, meet the objectives of the Strategic Vision and make progress on evaluating the effectiveness of CITES.

The session was adjourned at 11h50.