

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 ninth session of Committee II

21 March 2010: 11h10 - 12h00

Chairman: W. Dovey (New Zealand)
Secretariat: J. Barzdo
J. Sellar
M. Silva
Rapporteurs: K. Malsch
J. Robinson

18. Review of Resolutions

The United States of America, as chair of the drafting group considering endorsement of permits, relating to Annex 11 of document CoP15 Doc. 18, offered the following new paragraph f) for Section XIV of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev CoP14).

- f) Export permits and re-export certificates be endorsed, with quantity, signature and stamp, by an inspecting official, such as Customs, in the export endorsement block of the document. If the export document has not been endorsed at the time of export, the Management Authority of the importing country may liaise with the exporting country's Management Authority, considering any extenuating circumstances or documents, to determine the acceptability of the document.

The Secretariat suggested that "may liaise" be changed to "should liaise" to indicate a recommendation; the United States agreed with this suggestion. The draft text was accepted by the Committee.

30. Electronic permitting

30.1 Electronic permitting toolkit

The Secretariat introduced document CoP15 Doc. 30.1 outlining the work on developing an electronic permitting toolkit. It highlighted that 30% of the Parties were already developing their own electronic permitting systems and that this was expected to grow exponentially in the coming years. It emphasized that electronic permitting was not obligatory, but that the toolkit would offer a common set of guidelines for the development of electronic permitting systems meeting international standards and facilitate information exchange between the Parties. It noted that capacity building would be essential to assist Parties that wished to initiate electronic permitting. The Secretariat noted that electronic permitting was more secure and easier to trace than paper documents, but that paper permits would still be used in parallel to the e-permits. Emphasizing the ease of information exchange, it noted that the electronic transmission of annual report data to UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring would provide valuable insight into trade levels on a more real-time basis and urged Parties to consider the toolkit.

Switzerland, speaking as the Chair of the Working Group on Information Technologies and Electronic Systems, thanked Italy, the out-going Chair, for their work on this issue. They recognized the importance of the toolkit and the benefits it could have for CITES reporting, making legal trade more secure and faster than the current system, but noted it would need regular updating. Stressing that

electronic permitting should not be restricted to only certain countries, they supported the need for capacity building. They urged Parties to adopt the draft decisions in the Annex to the document.

Guatemala, on behalf of Central and South America and the Caribbean, considered the integration of electronic permitting to be highly important, especially given their obligations to develop such systems under free trade agreements. They offered their regional support for the continued development of electronic permitting, but requested that the toolkit be translated into all three working languages of the Convention. Brazil and the Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo supported the views expressed by Guatemala. Brazil informed the Committee that they had been using electronic permitting for the last four years and had found it to be safer, quicker and cheaper. The Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo stated that they were exploring the possibility of hosting a regional workshop.

Spain, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, and supported by Algeria, welcomed the toolkit and supported the draft decisions of the Secretariat for its further development, noting that such a tool could increase security and reduce the possibility of fraud. They considered the preparation of the toolkit and promotion of its use to be in keeping with their draft amendment contained in document CoP15 Doc. 30.2 and considered that good progress had been made in fulfilment of Decisions 14.56 and 14.57. Jamaica also supported the three draft decisions and stated that they were presently reviewing their system.

The United States, supported by Algeria, agreed with the comments by Spain and stressed the need for capacity building. However, they were concerned that the Parties had not had sufficient opportunity to evaluate the toolkit. They were not able to support the first draft decision directed to Parties in the Annex to the document. Malaysia, supported by China and South Africa, agreed with the Secretariat that the use of electronic permitting should be voluntary and suggested amending the first draft decision by changing "Parties should" to "Parties are encouraged to".

The United States proposed an amendment to the draft decision directed to the Secretariat to add "subject to external funding:" to the end of the first sentence after "the Secretariat shall".

Addressing the concerns Parties had raised over translation, the Secretariat stated that most of the toolkit was not translatable, but that the Introduction would be translated and that they were working to develop guidance materials in all three languages.

The draft decisions, with the amendments proposed by Malaysia and the United States, were accepted.

30.2 Proposed revision of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14) on *Permits and certificates*

Spain, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, introduced document CoP15 Doc. 30.2 (Rev. 1) and stressed that the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14), provided in the Annex to the document, did not place an explicit requirement on Parties to adopt the use of electronic permitting.

The United States proposed an amendment to section "I. Regarding standardization of CITES permits and certificates", to amend paragraph b) under "AGREES" to read "Permits and certificates may be issued in paper format or electronic format provided all Parties involved have agreed with the electronic format;"

The draft revision of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14), with the amendment proposed by the United States, was accepted.

The session was adjourned at 12h00.