

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

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Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties  
Bangkok (Thailand), 3-14 March 2013

Administrative matters

REPORT OF UNEP

The attached document has been prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).\*

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# **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**

## **Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties**

**Bangkok, 3–15 March 2013**

### **Report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme**

#### **Introduction**

1. The present report is submitted by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) pursuant to paragraph 34 of the memorandum of understanding between the Standing Committee of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Executive Director of UNEP, which became operative on 1 September 2011, concerning secretarial services to and support of the Convention, for consideration at the current meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. It contains updates on the administrative support provided by the Executive Director to the CITES secretariat and the programmatic collaboration that has taken place between UNEP and CITES.
2. Section I of the report describes the substantive technical and scientific support provided by UNEP to CITES.
3. Section II of the report provides details of the administrative and financial management support services provided to the CITES secretariat by the Executive Director of UNEP, along with information on the implementation of the memorandum of understanding mentioned in paragraph 1 above.

#### **I. Technical and scientific support provided to CITES**

##### **A. Support for the implementation of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements through regional focal points for the agreements**

4. UNEP regional focal points for the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements were established in 2009 as a pilot programme in four UNEP regional offices (the Regional Office for Africa, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Office for Western Asia). The focal points have been undertaking various activities, in consultation or conjunction with the convention secretariats, with the aim of providing technical and advisory advice to States on the synergistic implementation of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, including CITES, at the regional and national levels.
5. During the pilot phase, the focal points have liaised with CITES secretariat staff on national queries and requests and collaborated with the CITES secretariat in supporting regional capacity-building workshops and preparatory consultations for meetings of the Conference of the Parties; providing preparatory support and secretariat services for the fifteenth and current meetings of the CITES Conference of the Parties; providing regional intelligence on issues of interest to CITES; and linking CITES-related concerns to the process under the Convention on Biological Diversity of reviewing, revising and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans. During the reporting period, the focal points also supported the efforts of the secretariat to facilitate accession to CITES by Bahrain and Lebanon. The work of the focal points has been very well received by both CITES secretariat staff and CITES national focal points, enhancing regionally relevant services and helping to build trust with key stakeholders.
6. The focal points coordinated regional initiatives under existing mechanisms such as the secretariat of the South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), the League of Arab States, the African Union Commission and the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) to strengthen the regional implementation of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. The focal points represented the multilateral environmental agreement secretariats under such mechanisms and promoted their programmes of work, especially the decisions of their conferences of the parties, catalysing partnerships and mobilizing resources.
7. Building on the success of the pilot phase, a project on support for implementation of the biodiversity and ecosystems and the chemicals and waste clusters of multilateral environment agreements, developed under the European Commission's thematic programme for Environment and

Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP), was approved in mid-2012. The project provides a solid base for the provision of strategic support to countries and multilateral environmental agreement secretariats, consolidating and enhancing regional efforts by various stakeholders. As a preparatory step, in June 2012 the focal points of the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements jointly planned and implemented a briefing and planning exercise with the CITES secretariat in Geneva, together with the secretariats of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), with a view to reaching agreement on priority focus areas and developing regional workplans. Areas for collaboration in support of CITES implementation at the regional level include identifying regional scientific networks and building alliance with key regional bodies; providing substantive inputs to regional CITES-related meetings; providing support for regional wildlife enforcement work; identifying or assisting specific countries requiring attention in the respective regions; helping to address species-specific issues; and promoting electronic tools such as the CITES Virtual College and e-permit system.

8. UNEP, in collaboration with the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species and in consultation with the CITES secretariat, organized and conducted a three-day workshop on the integration of the objectives and obligations of biodiversity-related conventions into the updating of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The workshop, which was held from 26 to 28 November 2012 in Harare, was attended by 46 participants, including national focal points of CITES, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species and officials from the Ministry of Environment of Zimbabwe, together with conservation non-governmental organizations. The participants discussed the importance of integrating other objectives of the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements into national biodiversity strategies and action plans and expressed their interest in replicating the workshop in their respective countries. They also plan to develop common best practice guidelines with tangible targets to improve the policy, legal and administrative coordination of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements in the national biodiversity strategy and action plan process. The workshop demonstrated that planning, coordination and cooperation among the national focal points of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements are key to the success of the new national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Furthermore, the participants plan to ensure that the issue of synergies among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements is given greater political prominence in their respective countries.

9. In addition, in preparation for the current meeting, the regional multilateral environmental agreement focal point for West Asia supported two key meetings in the Middle East and Near Asia region at which the objectives of the Convention and its future programmes for the region were explained. The first of these meetings, the thirteenth meeting of the working group under the League of Arab States on the implementation of biodiversity and desertification-related multilateral environmental agreements, took place in Cairo, and was concerned with reviewing the implementation of CITES in the Arab region. The decisions arising from that meeting were relevant to a report submitted by Kuwait, as regional representative for Asia, to the CITES Standing Committee and intended to support Kuwait in leading discussions by the Arab group on the sidelines of the meeting. The draft decisions of the League of Arab States were transmitted to the CITES secretariat and regional partners to highlight the priorities of the region in relation to capacity-building needs and the listing of species in the CITES appendices. Another Arab regional meeting in preparation for the current meeting took place in Amman, on 27 and 28 January, in coordination with Kuwait, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the Royal Society for Nature Conservation (a CITES management authority) in Jordan. UNEP has also supported Bahrain as a new signatory of CITES and is supporting Iraq and Lebanon in their efforts to accede to the Convention.

## **B. Multilateral environmental agreement information and knowledge management initiative**

10. The multilateral environmental agreement information and knowledge management initiative, facilitated and supported by UNEP, develops harmonized multilateral environmental agreement information systems to assist parties to implement their obligations under the various conventions. It brings together 17 secretariats servicing 43 global multilateral environmental agreements hosted by four United Nations agencies and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to develop interoperable information systems in support of knowledge management activities. Its steering committee meets once a year and provides strategic direction for the information and knowledge management initiative initiative, and its working group meets periodically during the year and is responsible for the technical implementation of projects.

11. The CITES secretariat, working together with the UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, serves as a co-chair to the multilateral environmental agreement information and knowledge management initiative. In order to ensure full representation by participants in the initiative in the development of the joint web-portal InforMEA ([www.informe.org](http://www.informe.org)), the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions tagged CITES decisions and resolutions on behalf of the CITES secretariat.

12. The initiative has made use of lessons learned gained from projects related to information and knowledge management that have been successfully developed and implemented by the CITES secretariat, such as the CITES Virtual College, the CITES e-permit toolkit, and work in support of CITES parties in the establishment of so-called “single window” environments for trade-related documentation. Some of these concepts have been included in funding proposals to potential donors for implementation on a joint basis.

13. The above project concepts were endorsed by the multilateral environmental agreement information and knowledge management initiative and provided the basis for funding proposals to potential donors. Following the positive response to the InforMEA concept by the European Commission under the ENRTP process, a number of features will be implemented under the co-sponsorship of UNEP and CITES over the coming years. New features will include an e-learning facility on multilateral environmental agreements, using lessons learned from the development of the CITES Virtual College, an information portal for trade-related conventions, a search facility that can probe into national reports and plans and a multilingual thesaurus on environmental law and conventions.

### **C. Great Apes Survival Partnership**

14. The Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) works to balance field projects undertaken in collaboration with the partnership – including member States, research institutions, conservation organizations, United Nations agencies and private supporters – with a policy agenda that uses legislative, educational, and communication resources to affect change. Recent achievements are summarized below.

15. GRASP is collaborating with the Swedish Government and with CITES, the Global Resource Information Database centre in Arendal (GRID-Arendal), the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC),<sup>1</sup> the Pan-African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) and a host of law enforcement monitoring agencies to conduct the first comprehensive survey of the illegal trade in great apes. The publication of a report is expected for 2013, with funding provided by Sweden.

16. GRASP convened the second meeting of the GRASP Council from 6 to 8 November 2012 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. This was the first meeting of the complete GRASP partnership since 2005. The Council reviewed and revised documents on the management of GRASP and the global strategy for the conservation of the great apes and set new priorities for GRASP in its future work in such areas as habitat protection, illegal trade, advocacy and the green economy, among others. The CITES secretariat actively participated in this meeting through its Secretary-General, who gave a keynote presentation on combating wildlife crime, and its Enforcement Support Officer. It was agreed at the meeting that CITES would represent relevant multilateral environmental agreements on the GRASP Executive Committee.

17. GRASP joined with government officials, the CITES secretariat, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Customs Organization (WCO) and non-governmental conservation organizations to discuss great ape conservation and illegal trade issues at a round-table meeting on the illegal trade in endangered species organized by Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam in January 2012. GRASP also participated in the International Chiefs of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (ICECE) summit organized by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and UNEP in Lyon, France, in March 2012 and the second seminar on great apes and integrity (GAPIN II) organized by WCO, with external support from Sweden, in Kampala in September 2012.

18. At its fifteenth meeting, held in Doha in 2010, the Conference of the Parties to CITES adopted decision 15.44 by which it agreed to undertake, in conjunction with GRASP, INTERPOL and WCO, a technical mission to a limited number of gorilla range States. Pursuant to that decision, GRASP joined CITES and WCO in meetings with the Ugandan Wildlife Authority in Kampala in September 2012. In December 2012, a mission to Cameroon and Gabon was led and funded by the CITES secretariat and

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<sup>1</sup> Composed of CITES, INTERPOL, UNODC, the World Bank and WCO.

joined by colleagues from GRASP, INTERPOL, WCO and UNODC. Meetings were held in Yaounde and Libreville with agents from the ministries of water and forests, the national park authorities, the Customs authorities, the police, the judiciary and non-governmental organizations to discuss the issue of illegal trade in live animals and also in bushmeat and body parts.

19. GRASP reached an agreement with the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to transport confiscated great apes to sanctuaries in East Africa, thereby bolstering efforts by regional law enforcement authorities to use regularly scheduled transport routes. The first such transport occurred in July 2012, when a chimpanzee was relocated from the northern town of Beni, and others are being planned.

#### **D. Monitoring the illegal killing of elephants**

20. For more than a decade CITES, through its Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme, has monitored and analysed levels and trends of illegal killing of elephants in 43 elephant range States in Africa and Asia. Together with its sister programme, the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS), MIKE provides an objective and up-to-date picture of the dynamics of the illegal ivory trade chain, from poaching on the ground to destination markets. The MIKE programme has documented alarming increases in the illegal killing of elephants across Africa starting in 2006. Poaching levels hit a record high in 2011, and it is feared that poaching is now having a substantial impact on many elephant populations across Africa. The enhanced knowledge base developed under MIKE has facilitated awareness of and decision-making on elephant conservation and ivory trade control requirements; it has also informed and reinforced applied management, protection and law enforcement measures. MIKE has also made critical contributions to capacity-building, enabling range States to make effective adaptive management and enforcement decisions at the protected area and national levels. MIKE has also fostered international cooperation on elephant conservation and management. One of the milestones in this regard was the adoption in 2010 of the African Elephant Action Plan, developed by African elephant range States under the auspices of MIKE, which led to the establishment of the African Elephant Fund.

21. The UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions has hosted the MIKE programme's Central Coordination Unit since 2007, and both have benefitted from a very productive collaboration.

#### **E. The African Elephant Fund**

22. The African Elephant Fund was established under UNEP as a multi-donor technical cooperation trust fund for the Implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan, which, as noted in the preceding section, was adopted by African elephant range States in March 2010. The Fund was approved at the twenty-sixth session of the UNEP Governing Council in February 2011 and took effect on 1 February 2011.

23. The CITES secretariat worked with all African elephant range States to establish a steering committee for the African Elephant Fund, which currently comprises eleven members, including eight African elephant range States representing the four subregions of Africa (Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Sudan) and three donor States (France, Germany and the Netherlands) that qualified as members by committing themselves to contributing \$50,000 or more to the Fund. At the time of writing the present report (January 2013), the total amount raised so far is \$628,723, consisting of the following contributions: France: \$63,690; Germany: \$108,800; the Netherlands: \$66,108; the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: \$178,409; South Africa: \$11,716 and China: \$200,000. With assistance from the CITES secretariat, the steering committee developed rules of procedure and terms of reference for its operation, which the committee adopted at its first meeting, held from 12 to 14 December 2011 in South Africa.

24. UNEP has taken note of the terms of reference and rules of procedure and has informed the chair of the steering committee that it is necessary to introduce some amendments to them to reflect, inter alia, the need to observe relevant provisions of the UNEP financial rules.

25. While the role of UNEP as the manager of the African Elephant Fund has been accepted, UNEP has informed the Chair of the steering committee that there is a need for clarification regarding the additional role of UNEP of providing secretariat support to the steering committee. It would be very useful to include this matter as an agenda item for the next meeting of the steering committee, which will be organized in the margins of the current meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. This would allow for a clear discussion of the matter and a clarification of the role to be played by UNEP as the secretariat of the African Elephant Fund.

26. In the meantime, UNEP has issued small-scale funding agreements for three of the projects approved at the first meeting of the steering committee. UNEP will disburse the agreed funds for these projects as soon as it receives the agreements duly signed by the beneficiary parties. In addition, UNEP expects to receive the necessary information and amended project proposals to initiate another three agreements with more countries as agreed at the last meeting of the steering committee. In view of the modest size of the trust fund and the complexity of its governance structure, UNEP suggests that the steering committee discuss how to enhance its effectiveness, including through possible synergies with other operations that would allow for the achievement of economies of scale.

## **F. Technical and scientific support from the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre**

27. Technical and scientific support is provided to the CITES secretariat through the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). This work is implemented under contracts with the CITES secretariat and other donors, including the European Commission.

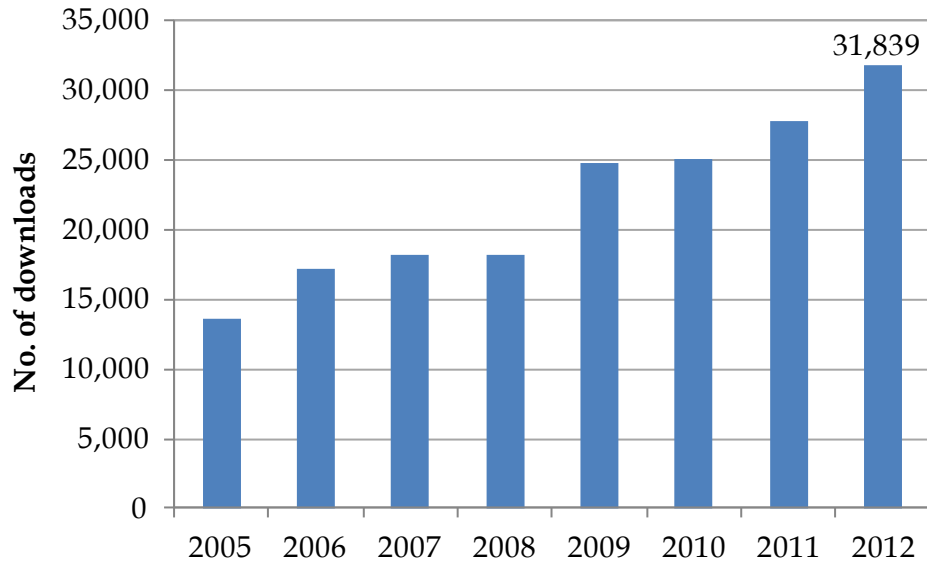
28. Under a contract with the CITES secretariat, UNEP-WCMC maintains the CITES trade database, which comprises data on trade in CITES-listed species compiled from the information submitted by parties in their annual reports to CITES. This invaluable resource is available online and now contains over 12 million trade records. In 2012, UNEP-WCMC uploaded data from a total of 160 annual reports to the CITES trade database, comprising some 931,200 trade records and, of these, three annual reports had to be manually keyed into the database. The data entry and checking involved both visual and automated checks, the reformatting of data where necessary (89 of the 161 reports) and correspondence with some 50 parties to obtain clarifications and further details so that the data could be presented in the correct format for the database (as outlined in the guidelines for the preparation and submission of annual reports contained in notification to the parties No. 2011/019 of 17 February 2011). In addition, over 2,803 caviar permits were entered into the caviar trade database in 2012. To streamline the data-entry process in line with the development of new databases (see below), a number of new automated data-checking processes were developed and tested by UNEP-WCMC.

29. UNEP-WCMC also developed a new annual report upload facility for Parties electronically to register their annual reports with the CITES secretariat, prior to incorporation of the data into the database. In addition, UNEP-WCMC was contracted to develop a new web interface for the CITES trade database and this was delivered to the secretariat in 2013. This new interface is being translated into the three official languages of CITES and can replace the existing interface when the secretariat so decides.

30. The CITES trade database is used regularly by the secretariat, national authorities, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to demonstrate trends and patterns of trade and to determine how well the Convention is being implemented. This is also an important tool in helping the Convention's animals and plants committees to determine which species are eligible for inclusion in the process of reviewing significant trade. To facilitate the analysis of trends in trade, the CITES trade data dashboards were updated in July 2012. In addition, many users also download data directly and in 2012 (by 7 December), 31,839 downloads had been made from the online trade database, originating in at least 91 countries. This represents an increase of 13 per cent over the 27,764 downloads made in 2011 (see figure 1 below). The number of downloads is increasing steadily and has more than doubled since 2005 (the first year with complete data on usage).

Figure 1

Total data downloads from the online CITES trade database, 2005–2012



31. Roughly one fourth of the data downloads in 2012 (7,176 downloads) were made by the CITES management and scientific authorities and enforcement agencies of at least 63 parties.

32. The UNEP-WCMC species database includes the accepted nomenclature for CITES species, together with information on quotas, suspensions, distribution data and other matters. During 2012, information on CITES quotas and suspensions was added to the species pages and distribution references were updated for 1,487 species and country combinations. User statistics indicate that the species database receives over 33,000 hits in an annual cycle.

33. In addition to managing the CITES trade database and the UNEP-WCMC species database, UNEP-WCMC responded to some 70 trade-data information requests from the CITES secretariat and CITES authorities in 2012, requiring different levels of input. UNEP-WCMC also provided advice to the CITES secretariat on levels and trends in trade, scientific and technical matters (e.g., distribution of species and nomenclature), together with support on issues relating to reporting, information management, capacity-building and training. With the support of the CITES secretariat, discussions were initiated in with several regional authorities which have requested assistance to develop the capacity to undertake national and regional trade analyses, but for which funding will be required.

34. To provide an overview of recent trade trends, UNEP-WCMC was contracted by the CITES secretariat, through a project generously funded by the European Commission, to prepare an analysis of trade in Appendix II-listed species over the years 1996–2010. For this analysis, a new methodology was developed to estimate the value of key animal-based commodities in international trade and this revealed that, for many taxa, there were decreases in the trade in wild-sourced specimens accompanied by increases in captive-produced or ranched specimens. The final report and a brochure highlighting the key findings will be distributed at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

35. UNEP-WCMC has also been contracted by the CITES secretariat to develop an integrated species information platform that will combine the CITES species and trade databases into one system in order to enhance the provision of CITES species information services. The platform will support future CITES developments, including electronic permitting, improved data-exchange mechanisms, trade visualization tools and future links with other species-related treaties and relevant external databases. The initial stages of this development will focus on developing the interfaces for the species information and, for the first time, will enable the 2013 checklist of CITES species, including both an index of CITES species and a history of CITES listings, to be generated electronically. The automated checklist will provide tailored outputs so that national or taxonomic subsets can also be generated through the website. The beta version of the automated checklist will be demonstrated at a side-event at the current meeting with completion due in August 2013, when amended listings agreed at the current meeting enter into force.

36. Fund-raising is under way for future phases of the information management project to include incorporation of the CITES trade database, the addition of web services, such as an application

programming interface (API), and integration of other CITES data holdings, such as, among others, the significant trade database, the Wiki-ID manual and the caviar database. The planned development of an API would enable Parties to draw CITES species data (including taxonomy, distribution, legislation, etc.) directly from the platform into their national databases. It is envisaged that, with an API, national authorities would no longer need to update their national databases locally with changes to nomenclature, CITES listings, quota or suspension information, but could support the delivery of this information (including regular updates) from the CITES data holdings via web services into national systems. It is planned that the trade database will be restructured by 2014, and that the API and links between the new system and other CITES databases will be delivered in 2015 – but these components will be dependent on the success of fund-raising to deliver the next phases of the re-development project.

37. Contributions relating to the e-permit initiative have been a feature of the support furnished by UNEP-WCMC to CITES in 2012.<sup>2</sup> These include participation in the CITES working group and regional meetings on the e-permit toolkit. With support from the European Commission, UNEP-WCMC maintains the electronic permit information exchange (EPIX) system, which facilitates the electronic exchange and verification of permit details among CITES authorities. A brochure explaining EPIX was distributed at the sixty-second meeting of the CITES Standing Committee, held in Geneva in July 2012. Discussions with individual working group members have resulted in draft plans to develop a conduit to facilitate permit exchange and verification. UNEP-WCMC has also had discussions with the CITES secretariat about the development of an out-of-the-box CITES e-permit system to facilitate the electronic management and issuance of CITES permits by least developed and other interested countries. Additional discussions to decide on the next steps will take place at the current meeting.

38. Other working groups to which UNEP-WCMC has contributed technical comments include: the working group on taxonomic serial numbers;<sup>3</sup> the working group on the evaluation of the review of significant trade;<sup>4</sup> the working group on captive breeding and ranching;<sup>5</sup> the working group on identification of corals in trade;<sup>6</sup> and the working group on special reporting requirements in relation to national reporting.<sup>7</sup> For the latter, UNEP-WCMC further refined the proposed revisions to the guidelines for the preparation and submission of annual reports, in order to improve reporting and ensure that reports are received in a consistent, standardized way suitable for transfer into the CITES trade database,<sup>8</sup> including the exact format needed for automated input into the database. In addition, UNEP-WCMC has provided information to the chair of the working group on special reporting requirements and the secretariat on the development of an online reporting system that could be used for CITES biennial reports and would facilitate synergies with the reporting processes for other biodiversity conventions. The online reporting system was developed by UNEP-WCMC for the Convention on Migratory Species, where it was used to capture report data in preparation for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties; it has also been used by parties to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, adopted under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species, in their most recent reporting cycle and is under consideration for use by parties to the Ramsar Convention.<sup>9</sup>

39. For the review of significant trade, in 2013 UNEP-WCMC will prepare reviews of a further 91 species country combinations for consideration by the animals and plants committees in 2014 in support of the next phase of the review of significant trade.

40. With support from the Scientific Review Group of the European Commission, UNEP-WCMC also assisted with the review of two taxa under the CITES periodic review process.

41. To assist with the reporting of trade in artificially propagated specimens of Appendix II-listed plants, UNEP-WCMC was recently contracted by the CITES secretariat to collate and combine

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<sup>2</sup> See the document on electronic permitting prepared for the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, held in Bangkok from 3 to 14 March 2013 (CoP16 Doc. 34).

<sup>3</sup> See the document on the use of taxonomic serial numbers (CoP16 Doc. 41 (Rev. 1)).

<sup>4</sup> See the report of the chair of the Animals Committee (CoP16 Doc. 10.2.1 (Rev. 1)).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See the taxonomic checklist of all CITES-listed coral species (CoP16 Doc. 43.1, annexes 5.1 and 5.2).

<sup>7</sup> See the document on national reports (CoP16 Doc. 30 (Rev. 1)).

<sup>8</sup> See the document on special reporting requirements (SC62 Doc. 24.2).

<sup>9</sup> See resolutions XI.6 and XI.8 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention at its eleventh meeting, held in Bucharest from 6 to 13 July 2012.



information on parties' reporting practices with a review of recent trade data and of the literature regarding illegal trade.

42. Working with the Finnish Ministry of Environment and in consultation with relevant convention secretariats, UNEP-WCMC launched a study on promoting synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements in May 2012. This study analysed the potential for synergies between the six global biodiversity-related conventions (Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES, Convention on Migratory Species, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources, Ramsar Convention and World Heritage Convention), with a focus on the areas of science-policy interface, national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, national reporting, and capacity-building. In November 2012, UNEP-WCMC contributed to the regional workshop for Africa on integrating the objectives of the Convention on Migratory Species and CITES into national biodiversity strategies and action plans, held in Harare (see also paragraph 8 above).

43. To gather together information on ape and gibbon species listed in CITES Appendix I and to inform relevant management decisions, UNEP-WCMC, the Max Planck Institute and the Great Ape Section of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Primate Specialist Group, with generous funding from the Arcus Foundation and the World We Want Foundation, have collaborated in developing the Ape Populations Environments Surveys (APES) portal and dashboard. These tools offer a wealth of information and analyses to assist decision-makers in identifying areas for conservation action, including 169 regional datasets for orangutans and African apes; 200 contextual datasets; and over 680 publications on apes. The APES dashboard is an analytical tool that allows users to explore the relative pressures affecting species living in important ape sites, so as to inform management action.

44. In December 2012, UNEP-WCMC built on this initial work with a study on the spatial overlap between mining operations and ape occurrence for an ape conservation and status report to be distributed by the Arcus Foundation in 2013. Using global data on mining operations, the report analysed the prevalence of development and active mines within ape ranges, to consider whether conclusions could be drawn on potential impact on ape species from this industry sector.

## **E. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services**

### **1. Negotiating process**

45. Two sessions of a plenary meeting to determine the modalities and institutional arrangements for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services were held, the first in Nairobi, in October 2011, and the second in Panama City, in April 2012, and these led to the establishment of the Platform on 21 April 2012 as an independent intergovernmental body. At the Panama City meeting participants also agreed that the seat of the Platform's secretariat would be located in Bonn, Germany, and adopted a wide-ranging intersessional work programme to prepare for the first session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The establishment of the Platform was subsequently welcomed by the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session.

46. The first session of the IPBES Plenary was held in Bonn, from 21 to 26 January 2013. The Platform currently has 105 members and over 600 participants attended its first meeting, including from the CITES secretariat and committees. The Plenary elected the Chair of the Platform, Mr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, from Malaysia, along with nine other members of the IPBES Bureau (see [www.ipbes.net/plenary/current-bureau-members](http://www.ipbes.net/plenary/current-bureau-members)), and 25 members of the IPBES Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (see [www.ipbes.net/plenary/current-mep-members](http://www.ipbes.net/plenary/current-mep-members)). The chairs of the CITES animals and plants committees are invited to attend meetings of the Panel as observers. The Plenary also requested UNEP to provide secretariat services for IPBES.

47. The Plenary agreed on an updated set of rules of procedure, and also adopted a procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests put to the Platform, which encouraged requests to the Platform from multilateral environmental agreements, along with specified accompanying information to enable the Platform to prioritize the requests accordingly. Inputs and suggestions are also welcomed from other stakeholders.

48. Agreement was reached on an intersessional process (see below) to prepare for the second session of the IPBES Plenary, anticipated to be held in the second week of December 2013.

## **2. Intersessional processes between the first and second sessions of the IPBES Plenary**

49. In addition to maintaining and enhancing the IPBES catalogue of assessments, a number of additional elements of the intersessional processes adopted by members at the first session of the IPBES Plenary are relevant to the multilateral environmental agreements, including CITES. In its capacity as the IPBES secretariat, UNEP will be inviting input from CITES and also from other multilateral environmental agreements on these points, in particular on the following issues:

- (a) The submission of requests for inclusion on the Platform's work programme, which will feed into the agreed process for the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel and the Bureau to develop a draft work programme for the period 2014–2018 that will be considered by the Plenary at its second session;
- (b) Developing further procedures for the recognition of indigenous and local knowledge, including through the convening of an international expert workshop to develop such procedures further, for which nominations will be invited from the multilateral environmental agreements;
- (c) Further developing the draft conceptual framework that might be adopted at the Plenary's second session to guide the activities of IPBES, including through the convening of an international expert workshop, for which nominations will be invited from the multilateral environmental agreements;
- (d) Further developing the draft scoping process and procedures by which IPBES reports and other deliverables will be prepared, reviewed and adopted;
- (e) Further developing potential bioregional approaches to IPBES work, including in the future regional composition of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel;
- (f) Developing, in collaboration with IUCN and the International Council for Science (ICSU), a stakeholder engagement strategy for IPBES;
- (g) Preparing guidance on the development of possible strategic partnerships with different categories of partners, such as multilateral environmental agreements, focused on supporting the IPBES work programme, for consideration by the IPBES Plenary at its second session.

## **F. International forums on environmental law and environmental crime**

### **1. World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability**

50. After two preparatory meetings in Kuala Lumpur (October 2011) and Buenos Aires (April 2012), UNEP organized the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 17 to 20 June 2012, working in partnership with CITES and a range of global and regional organizations active in the area of environmental law and sustainable development, including the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions Working Group on Environmental Auditing (INTOSAI-WGEA), the Organization of American States, the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), IUCN and the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE). The CITES Secretary-General served as a member of the Executive Steering Committee for the Congress.

51. Through the World Congress, over 250 of the world's chief justices, attorneys-general and auditors-general were able to contribute to the debates on the environment at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. This marked the first time in history that these three key groups of national stakeholders declared their unified commitment to cooperate to build and support the capacity of courts and tribunals, and also of prosecutors, auditors and other related stakeholders, at national, subregional and regional levels to implement environmental law and to facilitate the exchange of best practices in order to achieve environmental sustainability. The CITES Secretary-General made several presentations on CITES and the joint CITES-United Nations Television (UNTV) video documentary "Rhinos under Threat" was screened during a plenary session.

52. The outcome of the World Congress is closely relevant to the work of CITES and can contribute to the strengthening of its agenda in the future by calling for strengthened international governance institutions to protect the global environment, affirming the role of law as an indispensable tool on the path towards sustainable development and greener economies. The Congress declared that no diplomatic outcomes related to the environment and sustainable development, including from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, will be implemented without adherence to the rule of law, or without open, just and dependable legal systems, and it adopted a set of guiding principles for the advancement of justice, governance and law for environmental sustainability. These

principles are being promoted globally through initiatives by the World Congress members, along with UNEP and the partners of the Congress, including CITES.

53. The outcome also calls upon UNEP to lead the establishment of an international institutional network for, among other purposes, the continued development and implementation of environmental law at all levels and the further expansion of environmental jurisprudence. CITES and other multilateral environmental agreements will have a crucial role to play in this endeavour.

54. In December 2012, UNEP followed up by establishing the International Advisory Council for the Advancement of Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability called for by the World Congress. This nine-member advisory council includes chief justices, senior judges, auditors and law academics. Led by UNEP, it will provide strategic guidance to the international community in improving the legal foundations for achieving international environmental goals and overcoming legal barriers to inclusive sustainable development.

55. In addition, on 17 February 2013, on the eve of a historic Governing Council, the first with universal membership, UNEP will convene a high-level meeting on the rule of law and the environment, which will bring together ministers of the environment and government representatives together with chief justices, heads of jurisdiction, attorneys-general, auditors-general, chief prosecutors and other high-ranking representatives of the judicial, legal and auditing professions, as well as representatives of partner organizations, to discuss important recent developments and new opportunities relating to the rule of law in the field of the environment and the manner in which the rule of law can be promoted for greater effect in the quest for environmental sustainability, sustainable development and social justice. The topics of this meeting include transnational environmental crime, which is of particular importance to CITES, and CITES has accordingly been invited to participate in the event. This effort is being undertaken with the active involvement of the CITES secretariat and underpinned in general terms by the outcomes of the World Congress and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and more specifically by the recently adopted General Assembly resolution 67/1 on the rule of law and the report before the UNEP Governing Council proposing a decision on the matter (UNEP/GC.27/13).

## **2. International Summit on Environmental Crime**

56. In response to the clear need to create a strong forum for chiefs of environmental enforcement worldwide, from 27 to 29 March 2012, INTERPOL and UNEP convened the first international summit of national leaders of environmental, biodiversity and natural resources agencies and departments with law enforcement responsibility. The event was organized with the strong involvement of the CITES secretariat. Around 70 countries attended the summit, whose objectives were to forge a consensus among all representatives and create strong departmental support in INTERPOL member countries; consider the formation of an international environmental compliance and enforcement steering committee; offer advice to the global enforcement community; and make recommendations relating to global efforts to promote the environmental rule of law.

57. Particular concern was voiced by many representatives about the scale of environmental crime and its connection with organized transnational crime, including such issues as smuggling, corruption, fraud, tax evasion, money laundering and murder. They stressed that member countries should increase their commitment to cooperate and communicate with the mandated intergovernmental organizations, such as UNEP and the multilateral environmental agreements with which members countries were associated either as parties or members, in order to ensure environmental security for all the world's citizens. They argued that good governance and the rule of law needed a consistent approach at local, national, regional, and international levels and that participative governance was needed to deliver results and reduce the impact of environmental crime. A temporary advisory board has been established to assist in developing and promoting the outcomes of the first ICECE summit in relation to raising public and political awareness and profile of environmental crime, facilitation of information and intelligence exchange and strategic and tactical planning.

## **G. Key outcomes of the eleventh meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity of relevance to CITES**

58. The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Hyderabad, India, from 8 to 19 October 2012, adopted several decisions of relevance to CITES, as described in the following sections.

### **1. Strategy and indicators**

59. The Conference of the Parties developed work on key strategic documents that are important for CITES parties, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, the Aichi Targets, the

Updated Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011–2020, and also called for revisions of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. It also took note of the suite of indicators for the Aichi Targets (decision XI/3); several of the indicators are of direct relevance for CITES as CITES is a partner in the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. Decisions on a strategic approach to replenishment of the Global Environment Facility were also of relevance to CITES parties. The Conference of the Parties welcomed the progress made under the Convention on Migratory Species, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the World Heritage Convention, the Ramsar Convention and CITES in reflecting the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in their work and welcomed the work carried out under CITES and the Convention on Migratory Species to support parties in incorporating the objectives of those conventions into the revision of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

60. The Conference of the Parties also encouraged parties further to strengthen cooperation and synergy among convention focal points and focal points for other relevant sectoral processes and partners at the national level so as to enhance their capacity to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, to avoid the duplication of activities and further to enhance the effective use of resources, recognizing that national biodiversity strategies and action plans provide a useful tool for such collaboration. The Conference of the Parties encouraged parties to incorporate the objectives of the biodiversity-related conventions and the other Rio conventions into their revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans, as appropriate, and to support this by all appropriate means (decision XI/6).

## **2. Joint information management**

61. The Conference of the Parties welcomed the cooperation of convention secretariats in areas of joint information management through the UNEP multilateral environmental agreements information and knowledge management initiative (InforMEA) (decision XI/6) and encouraged the development of further synergies.

## **3. Sustainable use**

62. Through decision XI/25,<sup>10</sup> the Conference of the Parties invited the Issue Management Group on Biodiversity of the Environment Management Group to promote guidance on sustainable use and noted the support afforded by the CITES secretariat to the work of the liaison group on bushmeat. The Conference of the Parties reiterated the need to strengthen cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES so as to enhance both the sustainable use of species and the livelihood benefits associated with community conservation programmes, with a focus on developing sustainable small-scale food production and income-generating alternatives. The Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to liaise with organizations such as CITES on the establishment of a collaborative partnership on sustainable wildlife management, focusing initially on bushmeat.

## **4. Invasive alien species**

63. The Conference of the Parties encouraged parties and other Governments to take action to tackle the threats posed by invasive species and acknowledged that implementation of CITES resolution Conf. 13.10 (Rev. CoP14)<sup>11</sup> on trade in alien invasive species will contribute to the implementation of Article 8 (h) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (decision XI/28).

64. Other relevant work areas addressed by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity that are relevant to CITES, include the revised capacity-building strategy for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (decision XI/29) and the use of the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity (TEEB) methodologies to support the application of positive incentive measures (decision XI/30). The Conference of the Parties also recognized the competence of fisheries management bodies to manage fisheries and encouraged collaboration with them, an area in which CITES and FAO have been working for some time.

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<sup>10</sup> [www.cbd.int](http://www.cbd.int)

<sup>11</sup> [www.cites.int](http://www.cites.int)

## **II. Administrative and financial management support provided to the CITES secretariat**

### **A. Delegation of authority**

65. The delegation of authority signed between the Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary-General of CITES is still effective. In the reporting period, the delegation of authority has proved to be an efficient tool and reference guide in striking the proper balance between the responsibilities of the CITES Secretary-General and those of the UNEP Executive Director in running the day-to-day work of the Convention. The delegation enabled the secretariat efficiently and effectively to undertake and implement activities without referring to UNEP headquarters on various routine administrative matters. The document is a generic framework adapted specifically to the needs of the CITES Secretariat. The nature, content and intended purpose of the delegation of authority is explained briefly in the following paragraphs.

66. The provisions of the delegation of authority define the accountability of, and the authority and responsibility vested in, the Secretary-General; the delegation also covers programme management in relation to the implementation of the programme of work approved by the Conference of the Parties to CITES; this includes management of the implementation of the budget approved by the Conference of Parties and all other CITES budgets, including those financed from trust fund resources and the CITES allotment from the UNEP special account for programme support costs and other resources; and management of the human resources assigned to CITES.

67. More specifically, the Secretary-General is delegated with the power effectively and efficiently to run the day-to-day operations of the secretariat. In line with the performance assessment requirements of the United Nations, the Secretary-General is required to submit an annual workplan which is to be agreed with the Executive Director and for which the Secretary-General is fully accountable.

68. Furthermore, the Secretary-General is responsible for compliance with all financial and substantive reporting arrangements set forth in projects and legal instruments. In this context, the Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring that all United Nations financial, procurement, human resources, audit and other policies are upheld. In addition, the Secretary-General is expected to ensure the efficient and effective use of resources and for ensuring that they are used for the purposes for which they are intended, including the adequate performance of certifying, approving, bank-signatory and petty-cash management functions within the secretariat.

69. The Secretary-General is accountable to the Executive Director for the management of the resources assigned to the CITES secretariat, and must ensure the timely initiation and performance of related human resource management actions, in accordance with the staffing table approved by the Conference of the Parties and as set out in the CITES budgets, including in relation to the mandatory ethics, integrity initiatives and financial disclosure policies of the United Nations.

### **B. Memorandum of understanding between the Standing Committee of CITES and UNEP Executive Director**

70. A memorandum of understanding between the Standing Committee of the Conference of the Parties to CITES and the Executive Director of UNEP entered into force on 1 September 2011. The main purpose of the memorandum of understanding is to set out clearly the respective roles and responsibilities of UNEP, the parties to the Convention and the Convention secretariat and to highlight the provision of secretariat services and related support provided by UNEP to the Convention.

71. The memorandum of understanding determines the basis for dealing with issues relating to cooperation between UNEP and the CITES secretariat. It highlights such areas as the relevance of United Nations and UNEP rules and regulations and their applicability to the operations of the secretariat; financial and budgetary matters; administrative support (including programme support costs); the staffing of the secretariat (including the recruitment process); and programme evaluation and management review.

72. The memorandum of understanding makes provision for its review following each meeting of the Conference of the Parties. UNEP considers that, while it has provided an excellent basis for strengthening the ties between the UNEP and CITES secretariats, it would be useful, in the light of lessons learned over the last 16 months, to amend the memorandum in order to shed further light on some of its clauses and to facilitate full compliance with all its provisions.

## C. Support provided to CITES from the programme support costs

73. As stated in the MoU, the Secretariat is allocated 67% of the annual Programme Support Costs (PSC) income attributable to all of the trust funds of the Convention. Since the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, the posts of three administrative staff directly assigned to the CITES Secretariat have been funded from the programme support costs (component of the CITES Secretariat budget). These include the costs of an Administrative and Financial Management Officer (P4), an Administrative Assistant (G6), and a Finance Assistant (G6). Remaining funds of the allocated 67% of the PSC are to be used by the Secretariat for administrative support to the Convention activities. Any under or over expenditure against the 67% is to be adjusted in the following years' allocation.

In addition, 33% of the programme support costs is used to finance the part of UNEP central administrative functions that support the CITES secretariat, including those performed by the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the United Nations Office at Geneva<sup>12</sup>, United Nations Headquarters, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the Board of Auditors. These central administrative functions include the following:

- (a) Recruitment, classification and selection process;
- (b) Payroll and administration of staff entitlements, including education grants, medical insurance (including that covered under appendix D to the Staff Rules, home leave and repatriation;
- (c) The United Nations financial disclosure programme, billed by United Nations Headquarters in New York;
- (d) Accounting and finance functions, including the preparation of statements, the issuance of allotments and allocations, payables and receivables, cash-flow management, and treasury and contributions receipt and recording;
- (e) Administration of end-of-service and post-retirement benefits, including the administration of pension fund deductions and after-service health insurance;
- (f) Non-expendable property asset management;
- (g) Regular internal audits, investigation, inspection and external audits;
- (h) Participation in the United Nations administration of justice system;
- (i) Shipping, pouch, visas and United Nations laissez-passer;
- (j) Access to the corporate United Nations and UNEP intranet, internet and mail systems.

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<sup>12</sup> Excluding services contracted locally by the CITES Secretariat to UNOG.