

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



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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade control and marking

E-COMMERCE OF SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 15th meeting (CoP15, Doha, 2010), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 15.57 and 15.58 on *E-commerce of specimens of CITES-listed species* as follows:

Directed to Parties

15.57 *Parties are urged to:*

- a) *submit information to the CITES Secretariat on best practices and on websites adhering to codes of conduct for posting on the CITES website;*
- b) *publish results of scientific research on correlations between use of the Internet and the rate of wildlife crime, and share these results with the CITES Secretariat;*
- c) *assess the extent of and trends in commerce of CITES-listed species via the Internet and submit such information to the Secretariat for analysis; and*
- d) *submit information to the CITES Secretariat for analysis on any changes in trade routes and methods of shipment that have been observed as a result of increased use of the Internet to promote trade in wildlife.*

Directed to the Secretariat

15.58 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *develop an Internet portal on the CITES website to compile, publish and disseminate information submitted by Parties and stakeholders related to e-commerce of CITES-listed species; and*
- b) *write to Interpol encouraging it to establish a secure interactive website or electronic forum containing information and intelligence regarding Internet-related wildlife crime, capable of being updated in a 'real-time' manner by authorized contributors.*

3. At CoP15, the Conference of the Parties also adopted the following text in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP15):

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

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RECOMMENDS that Parties:

- a) *evaluate or develop their domestic measures to ensure that they are sufficient to address the challenges of controlling legal wildlife trade, investigating illegal wildlife trade and punishing the perpetrators, giving high priority to the offer for sale of specimens of species listed in Appendix I;*
- b) *establish, at the national level, a unit dedicated to investigating wildlife crime linked to the Internet or incorporate wildlife trade issues into existing units that investigate or monitor computer or cyber-crime; and*
- c) *establish at the national level a mechanism to coordinate the monitoring of Internet-related wildlife trade and to provide for the timely sharing between designated contact points in CITES Management and Enforcement Authorities of information that results from these activities;*

RECOMMENDS further that Parties and Interpol:

- a) *submit information to the Secretariat on methodologies used by other agencies that may assist in the evaluation of mechanisms to regulate legal commerce of CITES-listed species via the Internet;*
 - b) *ensure that sufficient resources are directed to the investigation and targeting of illegal Internet-related trade in specimens of CITES-listed species;*
 - c) *use the data acquired during monitoring activities to establish strategies regarding enforcement, capacity building and public awareness; and*
 - d) *consider ways in which funding may be provided for the establishment of a full-time position, dedicated to e-commerce aspects of wildlife crime, within the General Secretariat of Interpol. The responsibilities of such a position should include ensuring that all information or intelligence regarding e-commerce is consistently collected and disseminated to the relevant Enforcement Authorities designated by Parties.*
4. At its 58th meeting (Geneva, July 2009), the Standing Committee established the Working Group on E-Commerce of Specimens of CITES-Listed Species. It then re-established the Group at its 61st meeting (Geneva, August 2011), and extended its mandate at its 62nd meeting (Geneva, July 2012). Summaries of activities undertaken by the Working Group are available in documents SC61 Doc. 29¹ and SC62 Doc. 28².
 5. On 6 March 2012, the CITES Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2012/019 on *E-commerce of specimens of CITES-listed species* to inform Parties that the Secretariat and the working group had not received the information requested under Decision 15.57 and by the Standing Committee.

Progress made in the fulfilment of Decision 15.58

6. Through Notification to the Parties No. 2010/35 of 9 November 2010, the Secretariat announced the establishment of the new sections on e-commerce on the CITES website.
7. The Secretariat also wrote to INTERPOL on 17 February 2012 regarding the establishment of a secure connection between the Interpol General Secretariat and the CITES Secretariat. In its reply of 15 March 2012, INTERPOL suggested that the "INTERPOL Environmental Crime Programme and the CITES Secretariat Unit for Enforcement Support prepare a joint business case to support this initiative". INTERPOL also suggested discussions on the establishment of an electronic forum. The Secretariat will provide an oral summary of the results of these discussions at the present meeting.

¹ <http://www.cites.org/eng/com/sc/61/E61-29.pdf>.

² <http://www.cites.org/eng/com/SC/62/E62-28.pdf>.

Recommendations

8. The Secretariat encourages Parties to submit information to the Secretariat in accordance with Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP15) and Decision 15.58.
9. The Secretariat also reminds Parties to contribute information on e-commerce of CITES-listed species in accordance to Decision 15.57.
10. The Secretariat notes that Decision 15.58 has been implemented.