

29th Animals Committee & 23rd Plants Committee INFORMATION KIT



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Information & Media Kit

29th Meeting of the Animals Committee, 18-22 July, 2017

23rd Meeting of the Plants Committee, 22-27 July, 2017

Joint Animals Committee 29/ Plants Committee 23 Session, 22 July, 2017

CICG, Geneva Switzerland

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Media Contacts:

Programmes and Communications Officer, Yuan Liu – yuan.liu@cites.org

Communications Assistant, Amy Reid – amy.reid@cites.org

Full Agenda & Documents:

[29th Animals Committee](#)

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29th Meeting of the Animals Committee & 23rd Meeting of the Plants Committee

About:

The Animals and Plants Committees meet twice between meetings of the Conference of the Parties (which occur every 3 years) with their major roles being to fill gaps in biological and other specialized knowledge regarding species of animals and plants that are (or could potentially become) subject to CITES trade controls. Their roles are to provide technical support to decision-making about these species.

The main roles of the Committees involve:

- providing scientific advice and guidance to the Conference of the Parties, the other committees, working groups and the Secretariat;
- dealing with nomenclatural issues;
- undertaking periodic reviews of species, in order to ensure appropriate categorization in the CITES Appendices;
- advising when certain species are subject to unsustainable trade and recommending remedial action (through a process known as the 'Review of Significant Trade'); and
- drafting Resolutions and/or Decisions on animal and plant matters for consideration by the Conference of the Parties.

Members:

Members of the Animals and Plants Committees are individuals from the six major geographical regions (**Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and Oceania**) as well as one specialist on nomenclature on each of the two Committees. These members are elected at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

Any Party may be represented at a meeting of either Committee as an observer and the Chairman may also invite any person or organization to participate as an observer.

Backgrounder: understanding CITES.

Thousands of species of wild fauna and flora are used by people in their daily lives for food, housing, health care, cosmetics or fashion. CITES recognizes that commercial trade in these plants and animals may be beneficial both to conservation and to the livelihoods of local people.

However, unregulated wildlife trade can seriously affect species populations, especially those that are already vulnerable as a result of other factors, such as habitat loss. Governments responded to this concern by adopting CITES in 1973 to regulate international wildlife trade and ensure that it remains at a sustainable level. With [183 Parties](#), CITES remains one of the world's most powerful tools for biodiversity conservation through the regulation of trade in wild fauna and flora.

CITES provides three regulatory options in the form of [Appendices](#). Animals and plants listed in Appendix I are prohibited from international commercial trade except in very special circumstances. Appendix I contains all the great apes, various big cats such as cheetahs, the snow leopard and the

tiger, numerous birds of prey, cranes and pheasants, all sea turtles, many species of crocodiles, tortoises and snakes, and some cacti and orchids.

Commercial international trade is permitted for species listed in Appendix II, but it is strictly controlled on the basis of CITES permits to ensure legality and sustainability, with any such trade to be reported to the Secretariat.

Finally, Appendix III includes species that are protected within the borders of a member country. By including a species in Appendix III, a country calls on others to help it regulate trade in the said species by making the issuance of a certificate of origin necessary to enter into trade.

CITES does much more than regulate trade in large charismatic mammals. It sets up what some regard as a green certification system for [non-detrimental wildlife trade](#) (based on CITES permits and certificates), combats illegal trade and related wildlife offences, promotes international cooperation, and helps establish management plans so that range States can monitor and manage sustainably CITES-listed species.

CITES requires each member State to adopt the necessary national legislation and to designate a Management Authority that issues permits to trade. Governments must also designate a Scientific Authority to provide scientific advice on imports and exports. These national authorities are responsible for implementing CITES in close cooperation with Customs, wildlife enforcement, police or similar agencies.

As the impact of trade on a population or a species increases or decreases, the species can be added to the CITES Appendices, transferred from one Appendix to another, or removed from them. These decisions are taken at the triennial CITES conferences and must be based on the best biological information available and on an analysis of how different types of protection can affect specific populations.

The CITES Secretariat produces recommendations on the proposals described above after analysing them against the various listing criteria. These criteria relate to: biology (what is the scientific evidence that populations are declining or increasing?); trade (is the species being actively traded? Is trade really the problem rather than, say, habitat destruction?); and other technical matters (e.g. has the proponent consulted thoroughly other range States?)

For more information visit: <https://cites.org/>

2017 Meetings

29th Animals Committee

The 29th Meeting of the Animals Committee, the first meeting since CoP17, will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, the home of the CITES Secretariat.

This is the first time in 5 years that the Animals Committee will meet in Geneva, bringing together Committee members and participants from across the world to discuss and solidify CITES decisions and process for the sustainable trade and conservation of CITES-listed fauna. The Committee brings scientific support and specialized knowledge to addressing the outcomes of the CITES CoP17 in Johannesburg in September 2016 and fostering future ambitions of the Standing Committee and paving the way for CoP18 in 2019.

This meeting also welcomes an unprecedented number of visitors with 304 participants already registered for the Animals Committee Meeting.

Meeting Highlights

Two overarching compliance mechanisms will be discussed during the 29th Meeting of the Animals Committee;

1. **The Review of Significant Trade** – which will assess the sustainability of animal species included in CITES Appendix II, which are permissible to be traded internationally when authorised with the correct CITES permits.
2. **Trade of ‘Ranched’ & ‘Captive Bred’ Animals** – to evaluate the status of trade of species indicated to be ranched or bred in captivity under a totally redeveloped review process, assess potentially problematic species/country combinations and propose remedies where needed.

Aquatic Species

Along with the increasing support by CITES for the sustainable management of marine species, in response to [UN Sustainable Development Goal 14](#) and decisions made at the 17th Conference of the Parties, at Johannesburg in September 2017, the Animals Committee will highlight particular marine-related agenda items for AC29.

Queen Conch- AC29 will endeavour to address questions around problematic processes of setting export quotas. Given the need for research in support of sustainable queen conch fishery and trade, as well as other technical matters, advice regarding the appropriate means of developing non-detriment findings for trade will be sought after.

Sharks and Rays –AC29 will consider Party responses and questions in regards to current methods of producing non-detriment findings, challenges in regards to listed-species identification and legislative issues concerning conservation and management of sharks and rays.

Eels- With confirmed financial support of the European Union as part of the project entitled 'Implementation of CITES CoP17 Resolutions and Decisions', a update on the organisation of two studies to assist with the collation of significant information on eel management, conservation and trade will be given.

Precious Corals- AC29 will note information on the current status of precious corals from a number of parties indicating current/historical abundance, conservation activities, current legislative measures in place and indication of the need to include further coral species in CITES Appendices.

Banggai cardinal fish- With a specific lens on Indonesia and their initial progress report on management of the banggai cardinal fish, including the development of a five-year national plan of action and their proposed conservation and monitoring activities, in particular their community- level focus.

Other aquatic species on agenda:

- Sturgeons and paddlefish
- Freshwater Stingrays
- Black Sea bottlenose dolphins

Terrestrial Fauna

As underpinned by UN Sustainable Development Goal 15 and Decisions from the most recent 17th Conference of the Parties, held in Johannesburg in September 2016, The Animals Committee agenda will address substantial sustainable wildlife management and conservation issues where CITES works with considerable dedication and success.

African lions and African Wild dogs - Recognising the benefits of a unified front, the proposed Joint CMS-CITES African Carnivores Initiative, focusing on African lions, leopards, cheetahs and African wild dogs is expected to increase conservation means for the four species through pooled funding, resources and technical knowledge.

Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles - Highlighting the already extensive work that has taken place towards the development of guidance procedures for Parties for non-detriment finding (NDF) reports on tortoises and freshwater turtles including;

- A Study entitled- *Non-Detriment Findings and Trade Management for Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles – a guide for CITES Secretariat and Management Authorities*
- *The CITES Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles Task Force, held in Singapore in April 2017*

Snakes – AC29 will take into consideration a range on guidance for the development of non-detriment finding reports on various snake species, as well as current and future systems for the traceability of python skins.

Other terrestrial species on agenda:

- **African grey parrots from DRC**

23rd Plants Committee

The 23rd Meeting of the Plants Committee, the first meeting since CoP17, will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, the home of the CITES Secretariat.

This is the first time since 2011 that the Plants Committee will meet in Geneva, bringing together Committee members and participants from across the world to discuss and solidify CITES decisions and process for the sustainable trade and conservation of CITES-listed flora.

This meeting also welcomes an unprecedented number of visitors with 185 participants having already registered for the Plants Committee.

Meeting Highlights

Timber and Tree Species

Given CITES' recent focus on various timber and tree species, PC23 will address many issues regarding the sustainable management and international trade of these species, as well as their many derivatives such as logs, sawn woods and musical instruments.

Report on the outcomes of the international workshop on CITES-listed tree species- PC23 will highlight conclusions and recommendations of this international workshop, held in 7-9 February, 2017 in Guatemala. Including, but not limited to; issues of communications between actors involved in CITES implementation, importance of collaboration between origin and exporting countries, continued work on identification manuals and strategies and stakeholder commitments to activities to enhance education and awareness about tree species.

Rosewood Timber Species - challenges based on identification and necessity for timber specialists, non-detriment findings, enforcement inconsistencies and key management issues.

African Tree Species – The intersessional working group on African tree species and its recommendations to the Plants Committee on current trends on developing export quotas, capacity building of range States of African tree species and the exchange of experiences among these range states on sustainable use and management of species.

Orchids

With an abundance of wild orchid trade being reportedly undocumented and therefore uncompliant with CITES regulations, the Plants Committee will endeavour to assess the current situation for the species and make recommendations to begin addressing this complicated issue.

Other species on agenda:

- ***Agarwood-producing taxa***
- ***Malagasy ebonies and palisanders and rosewoods***
- ***African cherry***
- ***Neotropical tree species***
- ***East African sandalwood***

Side Events

Supporting CITES Implementation for Commercially Fished Aquatic Species	17:45 - 18:45 on 18.7.17 Room 5 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
The power of CITES trade data	12:40 - 14:00 on 21.7.17 Room 6 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
Legal Acquisition Findings for Animals	12:45 - 13:55 on 21.7.17 Room 7&8 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
Wildlife Trade in the Amazon Countries	12:45 - 13:55 on 22.7.17 Room 7&8 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
Preliminary informal meeting of the Advisory Committee for the CITES Tree Species Programme	12:30 - 14:00 on 24.7.17 Room 5 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
Legal Acquisition Findings for Plants	12:45 - 13:55 on 24.7.17 Room 7&8 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
CITES CoP17 Rosewood Listings	12:45 - 13:55 on 25.7.17 Room 5 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
Think you know orchids?	12:45 - 13:55 on 26.7.17 Room 5 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva
CITES and medicinal Plants	12:30 - 14:00 on 26.7.17 Room 7&8 (Classroom style) / CICG-Geneva

More information on side events available [here](#).

