

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 18-21 August 2003

Regional reports

EUROPE

1. As this report was submitted after the deadline, it will be provided in its original language (English) only.

Introduction

2. This report outlines activities in the framework of CITES of Parties within the European Region in the period between the 18th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC18, San José, April 2002) and the present meeting. Currently there are 41 Parties to the Convention in the European Region. Both AC members of the European Region have made great efforts to gather information pertaining to this report from the CITES member States in their part of the region. Unfortunately, the feedback was not impressive. In order to make the report more substantial and complete, the authors therefore, in composing this report, included to a certain extent, and selectively information already published in the report of the regional representatives for Europe to the 49th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC49 Doc. 24.4). Should the report seem somewhat biased to the reader then he must be reminded of the fact that some Parties have reported more extensively and in depth than others and some Parties have not reported at all.

Activities directly linked to AC issues

3. Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom continued to contribute to the work assigned to the SC working group on time-sensitive biological samples. The United Kingdom finally prepared a useful information document (CoP12 Inf. 9) on how to implement a facilitated transfer of time-sensitive biological samples together with the respective CITES documentation.
4. The UK Scientific Authority (Fauna) assisted the UK Management Authority including:
 - a) chairing the final session of the Coral Working during the AC18.
 - b) attending the Second wider Caribbean range States hawksbill turtle dialogue meeting, (Grand Cayman, May 2002).
 - c) producing revised versions of the checklists of CITES-listed fauna and placing them on the UK CITES website (www.ukcites.gov.uk).

5. The UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) contributed to the following programmes and projects in support of CITES and related conservation initiatives:
 - a) GBP 60,000 to IUCN; GBP 40,000 for the Shark Specialist Group; and GBP 20,000 for the African Elephant Specialist Group.
 - b) GBP 10,000 for a tiger mission to Thailand and snow leopard and Tibetan antelope projects.
 - c) GBP 40,000 to UK NGO 21st Century Tiger (partnership between London Zoo and the Global Tiger Patrol) for tiger conservation projects in the Russian Far East and South East Asia.
 - d) GBP 25,000 to UNEP-WCMC for its World Atlas of Great Apes.
 - e) GBP 20,000 to the Global Tiger Forum for capacity building initiatives in support of the Government of India's new wildlife Crime Cell.
 - f) GBP 3,000 to UK NGO the Shark Trust for the March 2003 edition of its publication "*Shark Focus*".

6. Additionally, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provided the following financial support to the following CITES activities:
 - a) GBP 100,000 to UNEP for the Great Ape Survival Project (GrASP). This was the first payment of a 3-year allocation amounting to GBP 300,000. The first payment is for activities supporting National Great Ape Survival Plan workshops and conservation projects identified by GrASP.
 - b) GBP 39,305 for training and capacity building facilitating assessment of the status and exploitation of marine turtles in the Caribbean. FCO has committed a total of GBP 62,659 to this work.
 - c) GBP 9,000 to support participation by UK Overseas Territories at the Hawksbill Turtle Dialogue Meeting in the Cayman Islands (May 2002).

Capacity building activities

7. During the reporting period, the following Parties sent information on CITES-related conservation, capacity building and training courses and projects for government officials that they had organized or supported: Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK. For a complete and more substantial information on these activities, refer to document SC49 Doc. 24.4.

8. In May 2002 Slovenia organised a training seminar on CITES for customs which was attended by 33 customs officers. In June 2003 a 3-day follow-up seminar focused on EU wildlife trade regulations was attended by 34 customs officers that will be responsible for control at future EU border ports designated for CITES. 13 lecturers from the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Botanical Garden of Ljubljana, the Management and Scientific Authorities of Slovenia, Natural History Museum and Customs Administration of RS and UK - HM Customs and Excise participated at the seminar. In addition, two informative seminars for criminal police and one for veterinary inspection have been carried out during the reporting period.

9. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the International University of Andalucía, Spain, has organized the Fourth Masters Degree in *Management, Access and Conservation of Species in Trade: The International Framework*. The course was supported by the strong cooperation of the CITES Authorities in Spain and was directed by Prof. Dr. Margarita Clemente (Full Professor at the University of Córdoba, Spain), Chairman of the CITES Plants Committee and member of the Spanish Scientific Authority. Special mention has to be made regarding the collaboration of the CITES Scientific Authorities (Fauna and Flora) of the United Kingdom, and Forensic Laboratory and CITES Scientific Authority of the United States of America for their kind contribution to the Masters course by funding the travel of their officers and giving lectures in the Masters Degree course.

10. The course (400 hours) was held at the University headquarters in Baeza, province of Jaén, from 21 April to 4 July 2003. 26 participants from 18 countries attended the course (Argentina, Botswana, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Russian Federation, Spain, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand and Uganda). All participants received a grant from the International University of Andalucía.
11. The course was given by 81 Lecturers from 13 countries. In addition to the CITES experts from the Spanish Scientific Authority (Spanish Ministry for the Environment and Directorate General for Nature Conservation) and Management Authority (Ministry of the Economy–General Secretariat for Foreign Trade), other participating experts came from the Management or Scientific Authorities of Argentina, Chile, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States of America; the CITES Secretariat; the European Commission; the Plant Genetic Resources Secretariat of the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO); the Spanish Office for Climate Change; COFIDES; Spanish Agency for International Co-operation (AEI); Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) of Spain; the University of Córdoba; the Polytechnic University of Madrid; the University of Reading, UK; the Autonomous University of Barcelona; the Rey Juan Carlos University-UNESCO Chair; the Castilla-La Mancha University; the Catholic University of Ávila; the Spanish Environmental Police (SEPRONA); the British and Spanish Customs Authorities; the Forensic Laboratory of USA; National Gene Bank of Spain; the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK; the Botanic Garden of Córdoba; the National Museum of Natural Science, Madrid; the Spanish Environmental Science Institute; The Spanish Oceanographic Institute; Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology; ATECMA; UNEP-WCMC; Pharmamar; IUCN-World Conservation Union; Biodiversity Foundation of Argentina; Greenpeace and Adena-WWF, among others.
12. Practical training for the participants took place at the Botanic Garden of Córdoba, the Fuengirola Zoo, the Jerez Zoo, the Customs Office of Madrid, Cazorla Natural Park, with the participation during the training of the staff members of these institutions and also the participants visited the Doñana National Park.
13. The students undertook weekly tests and are now preparing their thesis in their respective countries. The thesis works (equivalent to 100 hours of teaching) deal with specific topics studied during the Masters Programme. The submission of this work is a prerequisite to obtain the Master's degree.
14. The Austrian Ministry for Environment, in cooperation with WWF- Austria, funded the creation of a new TRAFFIC office in Budapest, Hungary. This new office is closely working together with government and non-governmental organizations in east European countries to strengthen CITES capacities in these States.

Legislative and implementation activities (on the national and the EU-level)

15. On 1 March 2003, Commission Regulation (EC) No. 349/2003, suspending the introduction into the European Community of specimens of certain wild fauna and flora, entered into force. This regulation replaced Regulation (EC) No. 2087/2001 of 24 October 2001 which has now been repealed. The above-mentioned new regulation lists in its Annex the CITES and non-CITES species for which the introduction into the Community has been suspended. The English version of the new suspension regulation is available through internet at the following address: http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/2003/l_05120030226en.html.
16. Further revisions and/or additions to national legislation to implement CITES were reported from Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Turkey and UK. For a complete and more substantial information on these activities, refer to document SC49 Doc. 24.4.
17. According to the provisions of Article 5 of its National Regulation on the Implementation of CITES, which had entered into force on 27 December 2001, the Ministry of Environment of Turkey published the *Communiqué on Exportation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* and the *Communiqué on Importation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* in the Official Gazette on 21 February 2003.

18. From October 2002 to January 2003 the Italian CITES Management Authority worked on a draft for national legislation for the implementation of the (EU) Council Directive No. 1999/22/EC of 29 March 1999, which relates to the keeping of wild animals in zoos ('EU Zoo Directive'). The draft is at present under discussion at the Department of EU Policies in Italy, for its approval.
19. In collaboration with TRAFFIC-Italy, the CITES Identification Manual was translated into Italian.
20. In November 2002 Italy adopted a simplified procedure to identify animal and plant specimens included in the Annexes of the EU CITES Council Regulation, which originate either from captive-breeding operations or artificial propagation facilities. This procedure has been disseminated to the CITES Scientific Authority and all officers of the State's Forest Corps involved in the enforcement and issuance of CITES permits or certificates. The new established procedure should assist to ensure that the breeding stock was established in accordance with the provisions of the EU regulations and national Legislation.
21. In the UK the Magistrates Association, representing around 80% of Magistrates in England and Wales, in conjunction with the UK CITES Management Authority and other interested parties, dedicated its AGM in October 2002 to an exploration of wildlife and environmental crime, from identification of criminals, through difficulties in collecting evidence, to sentencing and produced an online toolkit "*Costing the Earth*" in November 2002 for use by Magistrates, legal advisors and Judges, on wildlife and conservation offences. The toolkit can be found on the Magistrates Association website at www.magistrates-association.org.uk. It covers a wide range of subjects including the importance of environmental protection, the seriousness of these crimes, sentencing criteria and case studies.
22. Slovakia reports the construction of a new rescue centre for confiscated live animals in Zoo Bojnice (state zoo under the Ministry of Environment).
23. Slovakia further reports that the identification manuals were translated into Slovak for enforcement authorities.
24. A new CITES checklist in Norwegian (the 5th edition), including indexes in English, Latin and Norwegian was posted on the internet in March 2003 (www.dirnat.no/cites). The checklist is mainly meant as a helping tool for enforcement personnel.
25. The Scientific Authority of Spain is elaborating the identification sheets of the three species of the family Lacertidae in the CITES Appendices. These concern: *Gallotia simonyi* (Appendix I), *Podarcis lilfordi* and *Podarcis pityusensis* (Appendix II).
26. Switzerland also reports the submission and further elaboration of sheets for the Identification Manual, in particular for a number of parrot species.
27. The UK CITES Management Authority has funded the development of an on-line identification guide for CITES-listed coral species. Currently around 2000 coral species are encompassed by the taxa listed in Appendix II of the CITES Convention. The taxonomy of corals, particularly the Order Scleractinia is still developing, and the identification of many coral species requires considerable expertise. It is intended that the site will be used by the UK CITES Management Authority and Customs officers in the UK, as well as being available to all CITES parties world-wide. It will also provide a useful resource for the UK overseas Territories which have much of the world's coral resource. A major aim is also to inform the public as to which corals they should avoid buying on holiday as souvenirs or use in their aquaria. This project is also seen as a pilot for the possible further development of a more extensive on-line identification guide for other (groups of) CITES-listed species.
28. From September 2002 to June 2003 the Slovenian Management Authority worked on the preparation of the new regulation on trade in wild fauna and flora. The regulation will completely transpose the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations into a national legal system (including the leghold traps and whales regulations and seal pups directive). The regulation will provide some additional measures (e.g. trade with non-Party States, pre-Convention specimens, circuses, disposal of confiscated specimens, the competences and duties of authorities etc.) than those regulated by EU legislation. It

will be adopted in autumn 2003. Additionally, in 2002, an amendment to the Slovene Nature Conservation Act was adopted which allows the customs and inspectors to confiscate (not only to seize) illegally-traded specimens.

Law enforcement activities

29. During the reporting period, the two first meetings (11 November 2002 and 24 February 2003) of a new established enforcement body, the European CITES Group, were convened at the Europol headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands. Both meetings were attended by representatives from national police and other CITES enforcement authorities from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. One major objective of the newly-formed group is to strengthen the straight forward cooperation in specific investigation cases of fraud against the provisions of CITES.
30. Portugal reported several significant seizures during the reporting period. Among these seizures were two chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes* and *Pan paniscus*) which had been offered to a Zoological Garden, 44 eggs from different *Psittacidae* at the Lisbon Airport, and three months later, another 44 eggs at the Airport of Porto. The latter two seizures were both associated with flights from Brazil.
31. Italy controlled significant quantities of CITES specimens, leading to important confiscations of about two thousand specimens of live animals (including many live reptiles imported by travellers as pets), corals, shells, caviar, reptile leather skin products such as bags, belts or shoes, ivory products, embalmed turtles, hunting trophies and game birds. In the course of the many document controls and investigations carried out by the State's Forest Corps, due to their complexity and importance, the following cases were considered worth noting:
 - a) The persistent illegal introduction of caviar and unfertilized eggs of sturgeons coming from Bulgaria, Iran, Latvia and the Russian Federation by air.
 - b) The use of the postal channel for illegal trafficking of CITES protected animals and plants, ivory carvings, hunting trophies, goods made of reptiles skins and also live animals, such as some species endemic to Italy, which are also protected by other international conventions. Among those were salamanders, aimed at the US and German markets;
 - c) The frequent seizures of reptiles species during road controls, carried out in collaboration with the Traffic Police. Some of the snakes, even if not included in the CITES annexes, were very rare and poisonous.
 - d) Major seizures of shipments of various game birds which originated from Eastern Europe along the Adriatic Coast;
32. In addition to the forementioned, about 40.000 controls have been carried out at commercial shops and breeding operations, which led to administrative sanctions amounting to 257,000 Euros.
33. In May 2002 Slovenia established an Intersectoral Committee by a joint decision of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Environment, Spatial planning and Energy. The aim of the Committee is to facilitate the exchange of information among the governmental agencies responsible for the enforcement of CITES.
34. A number of seizures and confiscations were made by Slovenian customs. Most significant seizures include:
 - a) several hundred specimens of corals and *Strombus* shells
 - b) 6 kg of kaviar
 - c) sea turtle shells
35. Additionally, Slovene Customs have confiscated more than 5,000 protected non-CITES birds in transit from Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina to Italy. Consequently seven people have been

arrested and sentenced according to the Penal Code of the Republic of Slovenia to imprisonment of 6 to 9 months with additional fines from 10,000 to 20,000 Euros. Several cases of smuggling of protected date shells [*Litophaga litophaga* (approximately 150 kg of shells confiscated)] have been reported by Slovene Customs at the Croatian border.

36. In April 2002 the UK's National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit was launched. Its main role is to counter organized trade in illegal wildlife and reduce opportunities for wildlife crime by:
- a) collecting and analysing intelligence from a wide variety of sources;
 - b) working closely with Police and Customs officers to take forward investigations and prosecutions;
 - c) identifying the main individuals involved in serious wildlife crime;
 - d) gathering intelligence in relation to priority species and related products; and
 - e) having access to police and other databases, as well as to sophisticated intelligence gathering systems and analysis techniques.

Public awareness activities

37. Public awareness activities, in the form of updated free accessible websites, roadshows, exhibitions, campaigns, publications of posters, brochures, leaflets, CD-Roms and directed at government officials, a wide public, travellers, medicine practitioners, were reported by Austria, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, and the UK. More substantial information on these activities can be found in document SC49 Doc. 24.4.
38. Slovenia additionally reports the publication of a manual (167 pages) designed for all concerned with the implementation of CITES in Slovenia, available in Slovene and English. The publicity material was distributed to more than 1,000 addresses in Slovenia and abroad including 740 schools, travel agencies, libraries, bookstores etc.).

Activities related to CITES-relevant research

39. The UK Management Authority's research on the seasonal movement and behaviour of basking sharks is now well underway and is beginning to produce some unique and fascinating results. The satellite tagging work has shown that basking sharks do not hibernate (as previously thought) and revealed significant movements across international boundaries (England to France to Ireland to Scotland) by individual sharks. The research has also indicated some deep-diving patterns and exploitation of zooplankton communities at continental shelf-break fronts. The research is now entering the final year of a three-year project and 10 further sharks will be tagged in summer 2003.
40. The UK is intending to fund further research on the conservation genetics of basking sharks in the near future. The project aims to elucidate further elements of the life history of the basking shark in the north-east Atlantic (especially within EU and UK territorial waters) and globally. In particular, the project will aim to determine the population structure of basking sharks by genetic analysis, in order to contribute towards the future recovery and sustainable management of basking shark populations. The work will contribute not only to the Appendix-II CITES listing and the EC CITES regulations, but also to the implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, the establishment of any catch quotas under the Common Fisheries Policy, the EC shark action plan, and, therefore, ultimately to the implementation of the FAO International Plan of Action (IPOA) for Sharks.
41. The UK Management Authority's research on Marine Turtles in UK overseas Territories is progressing well and is on target to report in 2004. The research team (the University of Wales' Marine Turtle Research Group and UK NGO, the Marine Conservation Society) produced a leaflet reporting on progress for the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and further copies of this can be supplied on demand (as hard copy or as a PDF file) from the UK CITES Management Authority (Defra). The project is the UK's contribution towards furthering the understanding of marine turtle

ecology and exploitation in the Caribbean. It was launched in November 2001 and is now taking forward a programme of habitat monitoring, genetic stock analysis and socio-economic surveys, in order to assess the status and evaluate the use of marine turtles in the UK overseas Territories of the Caribbean region. Based on the data from this research, a series of recommendations will be produced in 2004, which will be provided to the Governments of Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands and the UK. These recommendations will be used to inform the future conservation, monitoring and management of marine turtle populations in these Territories. Further information can be found at www.seaturtle.org/mtrg/projects/tcot.