

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



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CITES CAPACITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

1. This information document has been prepared by the Secretariat and presents information obtained from the needs assessment carried out under the CITES Project "Strengthening the CITES implementation capacity of developing countries to ensure sustainable wildlife management and non-detrimental trade". (see document SC61 Doc. 19 for more information on the Project and its activities). This Project is funded by the European Commission, and the Secretariat is grateful for this important funding contribution to CITES capacity building efforts.

The CITES needs assessment questionnaire

2. CITES Parties participating in the Project were invited to take part in a capacity needs assessment by means of a questionnaire (see the Annex) sent to CITES authorities and implementing agencies, to be completed by designated workshop participants. This assessment was meant to identify in-country needs for the implementation of CITES, and help focus capacity building actions for countries participating in this project. Some 107 Parties in five regional divisions were invited to complete and submit questionnaires. Of these, 81 Parties provided 164 completed questionnaires (40 questionnaires received from 20 Parties in East/Southern Africa, 41 from 19 Parties in West/Central Africa, 31 from 15 Parties in South/Southeast Asia, 42 from 17 Parties in Central/South America, and 10 questionnaires from nine Parties in West/Central Asia).
3. The Parties that provided completed questionnaires are: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Gabon, the Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Indonesia, Iran (the Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, the Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
4. The questionnaire aimed to identify the causes behind implementation problems, how important these are according to national trade, what actions are necessary to address them, and how to prioritize corrective actions. Results of the questionnaires have been used in choosing and prioritizing subjects for regionally-focussed e-courses and workshop discussions, skills training, and problem-solving exercises. The results have also guided the development of training courses and capacity building materials produced by the Secretariat.

Overall results

5. Participating Parties ranked the importance of receiving external technical assistance for CITES implementation and the importance of receiving external technical assistance in meeting import requirements as being "very important". This suggests that Parties have difficulty in implementing CITES provisions and meeting the requirements of importing Parties without external support and assistance.

6. While there is regional variation over the main causes behind problems in implementation of CITES, the five regions are generally in agreement over the top causes (see Chart 1). These are a lack of funds and equipment, a lack of manpower, difficulties with making non-detriment findings, and poor communication between the Management Authority and Customs. The lack of funding, equipment and manpower is identified by most respondents, but these issues are generally beyond the scope of national capacity-building efforts, though these may be related to a poor knowledge of CITES amongst policy-makers, a factor identified elsewhere in the needs assessment. The three other main root causes behind implementation problems can be addressed through capacity-building: improving species data and the making of non-detriment findings, and improving communication between CITES Authorities and Customs. These findings are consistent with observations made by the Secretariat in the conduct of its capacity-building activities.
7. If the top six causes for CITES implementation problems are compared by region (Chart 2), there is a similarity between the regions on the subject of species data, funding and communication. The need for equipment is highest in Africa, where at the same time the need for increased manpower is lowest. There is a marked regional difference on the making of non-detriment findings, though during the regional problem-solving workshop for the West/Central Africa region, participants acknowledged that the difficulty of making non-detriment findings should have received a higher score. The region of Central/South America appears to have relatively the least difficulty with making non-detriment findings, though this factor is still rated highly compared to other causes.
8. When defining the urgency of addressing the main causes for implementation problems (Chart 3), the regions are again in general agreement, with some regional variation. The respondents identified increasing funding, obtaining species data, increasing equipment and manpower, making non-detriment findings, and improving communication with Customs or other border control agencies as being the most urgent issues to address. These findings are consistent with observations made by the Secretariat in the conduct of its capacity-building activities.
9. When comparing the most urgent problems to be addressed across the regions (Chart 4), the results show little difference over the need for funding and the need for species data. Africa displays a greater need for equipment and improved communication with Customs and border control agencies. However, South/Southeast Asia and Central/South America indicated a greater need for increasing manpower. The West/Central Africa region acknowledged their rating of the importance of making non-detriment findings was an underestimate.
10. The most important needs for overcoming CITES implementation problems and meeting the requirements of importing countries (Chart 5) are identified as obtaining funding, obtaining species data, obtaining equipment, improving communication with Customs and other border control agencies, improving enforcement efforts, and increasing manpower, though there are regional differences in emphasis. The making of non-detriment findings scored lower in the combined analysis, despite problems with non-detriment findings being the main issue resulting in trade suspensions and problems with meeting the requirements of importing countries. Fairly consistent results were given by all regions (Chart 5), though African respondents consistently gave higher ratings for funding, species data, equipment and improving enforcement
11. On the understanding that the difficulty with making non-detriment findings impacts on one of the most central provisions in CITES, and is the basis for many trade restrictions and stricter domestic measures, the question on priorities for improving the making of non-detriment findings (Chart 6) is arguably one of the most important questions of the questionnaire. Respondents were fairly consistent in scoring the five highest priority areas of work, namely obtaining field data on population status (highest score), obtaining monitoring data on population trends, obtaining data on harvesting and collection, obtaining data on factors affecting species, and the need for increasing funding. This suggests that Parties have a good understanding of the information ideally needed to make non-detriment findings. There are relatively few differences in responses between the regions (Chart 7).
12. Respondents identified a great many training needs, reflecting the scope of a Convention that includes conservation science, species management, taxonomy, compliance and law enforcement, legislation, international trade, policy and decision-making, data-handling and administration amongst its usual subjects.. The top priorities are training for enforcement officers and Customs, training on making non-detriment findings, training on conducting population surveys, animal and plant identification, improving training and facilitation skills (training trainers), investigation training for enforcement officers, and awareness-raising for policy-makers and decision-makers. Grouped thematically, the priorities can be expressed as awareness-raising, training for Scientific Authorities, training for trade control and law

enforcement, and building the capacity of trainers. The top nine training needs identified by the respondents by region are compared in Chart 8. The cumulative and comparative findings are consistent with observations made by the Secretariat in the conduct of its capacity-building activities, and all identified subjects are either included in current capacity-building courses and materials, or will be included in the near future.

13. An important element of the Project is the identification of activities that countries can set in motion to address the problems identified in the needs assessment. This involves identifying which activities are urgently needed (Chart 9), and which activities can be initiated with a small amount of funding (Chart 10). This exercise is meant to help Parties develop their own action plans for improving the implementation of CITES, and identify discrete activities that can be funded under the support to national activities available under the Project, or other funding sources. The top six activities identified by the respondents are seeking funding for equipment and technical assistance, conducting field surveys and research, providing specialized training, building the capacity of the Management Authority and Scientific Authority, and improving enforcement efforts. Responses across regions are quite similar, though respondents from Africa identified a greater need to improve the CITES Authorities and conduct field surveys

Conclusions

14. The findings of the CITES implementation needs assessment show a general similarity across regions of the root causes behind difficulties with CITES implementation, namely a lack of funds, equipment and manpower, difficulties with making non-detriment findings, and poor communication between the Management Authority and Customs. Acknowledging that increasing funding and manpower are a consistent need throughout, the most urgent issues that can be addressed through capacity-building are obtaining species data, making non-detriment findings and improving communication with Customs or other border control agencies. The most important needs for overcoming CITES implementation problems and meeting the requirements of importing countries are obtaining species data, improving communication with Customs and other border control agencies, and improving enforcement efforts. The priorities with respect to making non-detriment findings are obtaining data on the status of populations, population trends, harvesting and collection, and on factors affecting species. Training on all CITES-related subjects is needed, and activities that can be initiated in the short-term include seeking funding for equipment and technical assistance, conducting field surveys and research, providing specialized training, building the capacity of the Management and Scientific Authorities, and improving enforcement efforts.
15. While regional variations in the findings exist and individual Parties have specific requirements according to their levels and types of trade, the questionnaire findings suggest that Parties face similar challenges in implementing the provisions of the Convention, have similar needs in order to improve CITES implementation and to meet the requirements of importing Parties, and have similar priorities when trying to address these various challenges. This information can help guide the development and prioritization of capacity-building efforts by Parties, the Secretariat and by others.

Chart 1. Main causes of CITES implementation problems

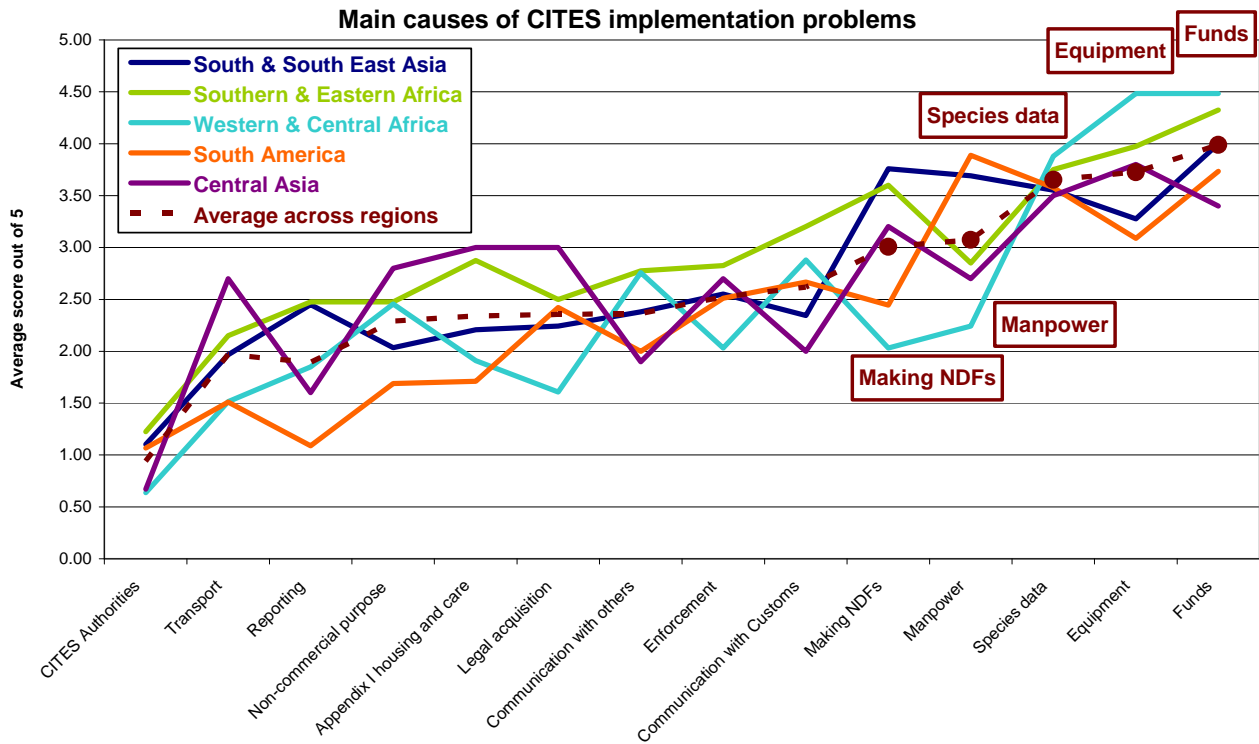


Chart 2. The top six causes for implementation problems, comparison by region

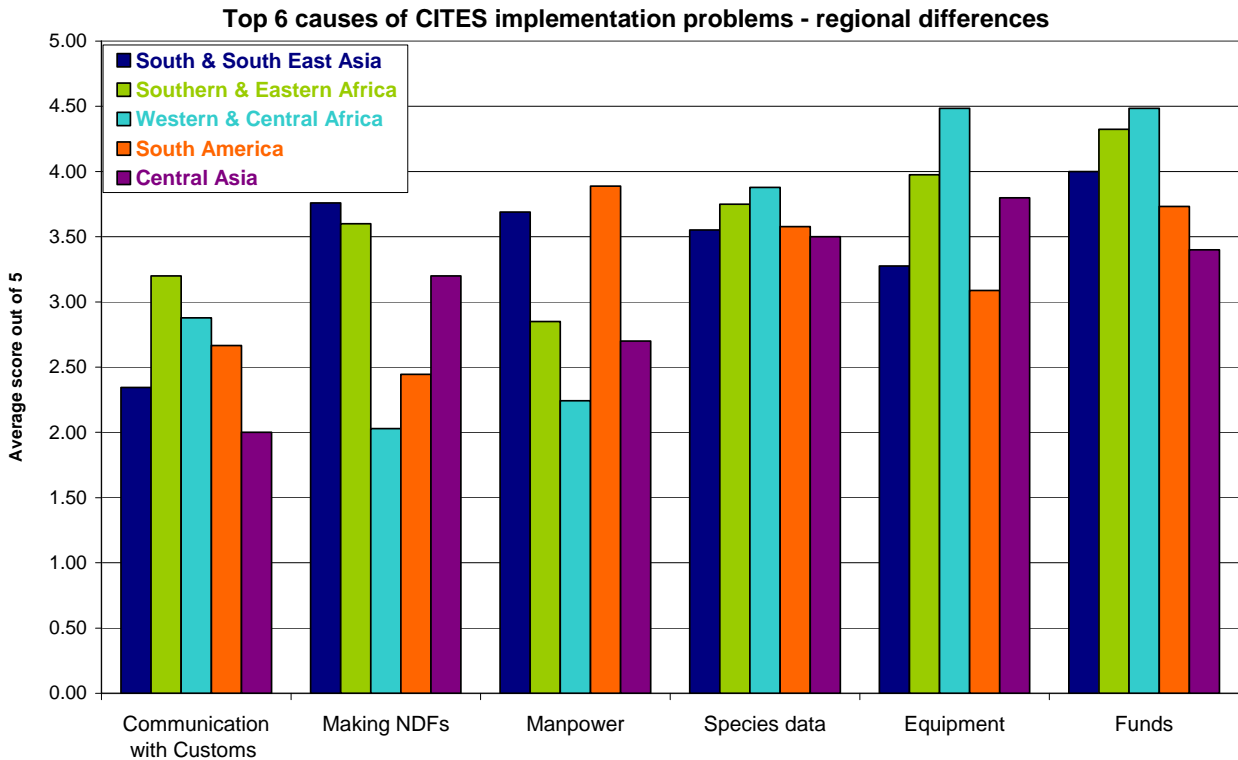


Chart 3. Rating the urgency of addressing the main causes for implementation problems

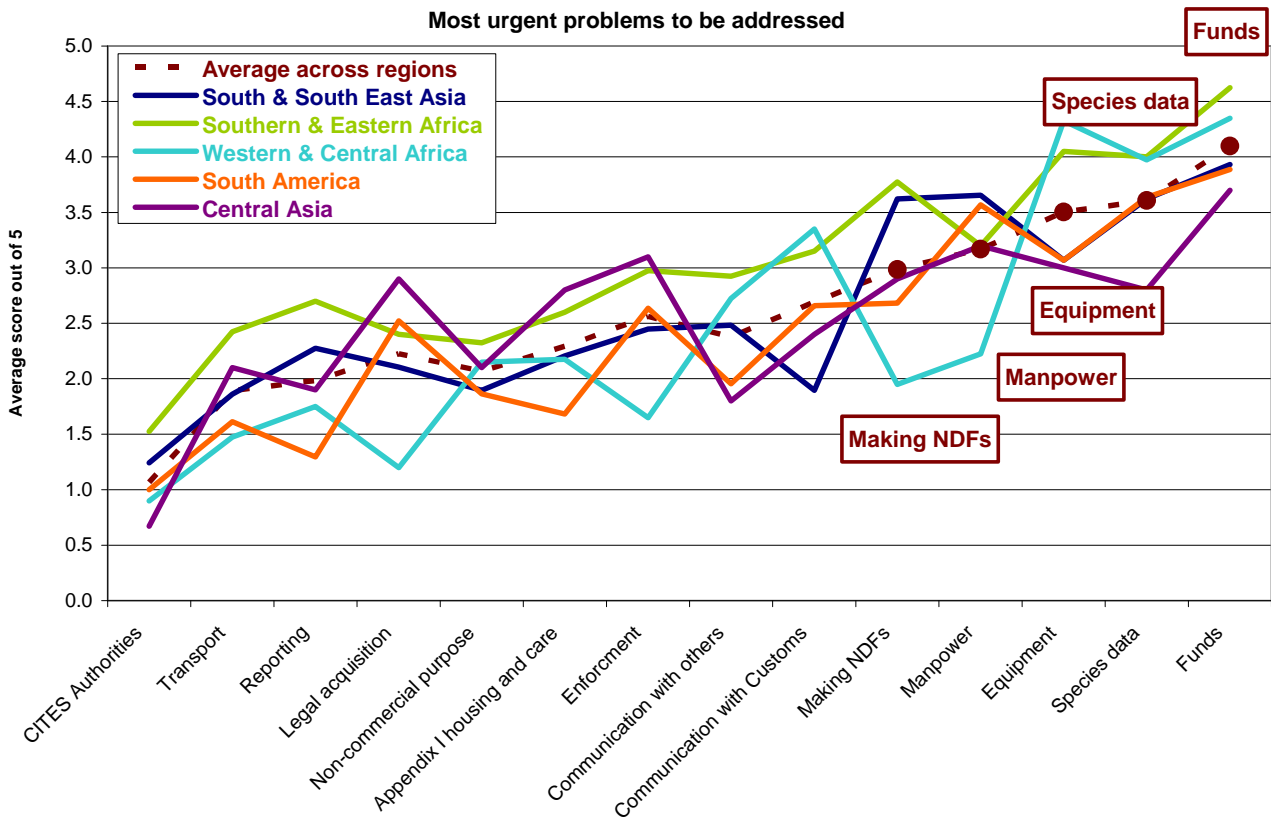


Chart 4. Most urgent problems to be addressed, comparison by region

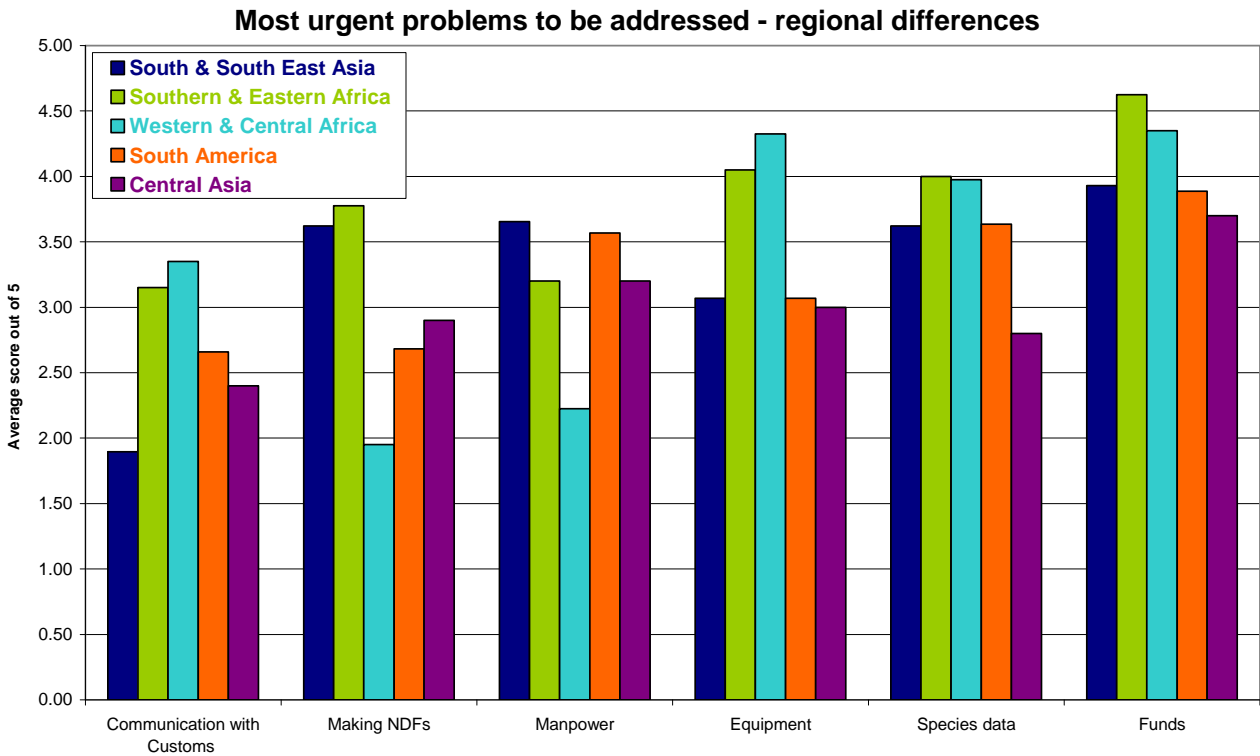


Chart 5. The most important needs for overcoming CITES implementation problems and meeting the requirements of importing countries

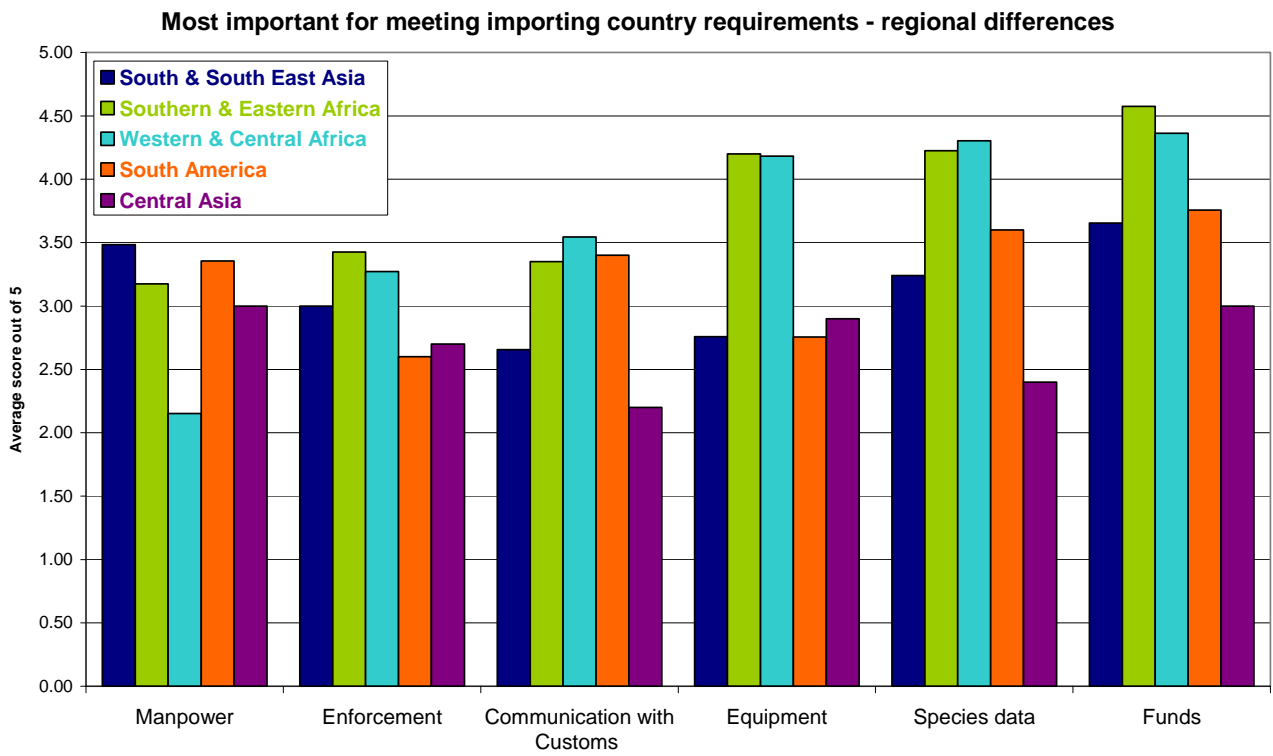


Chart 6. Priorities for improving the making of non-detriment findings

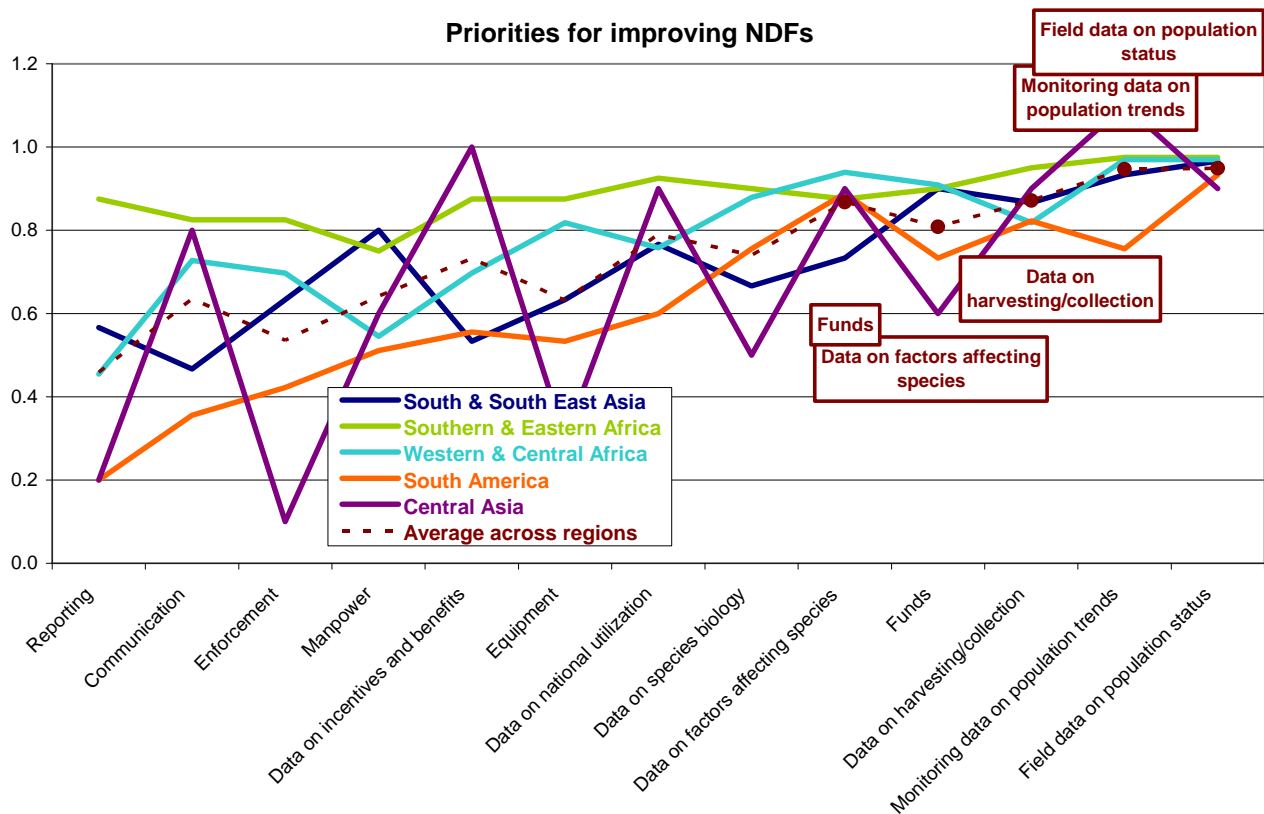


Chart 7. Priorities for improving the making on non-detriment findings, comparison by region

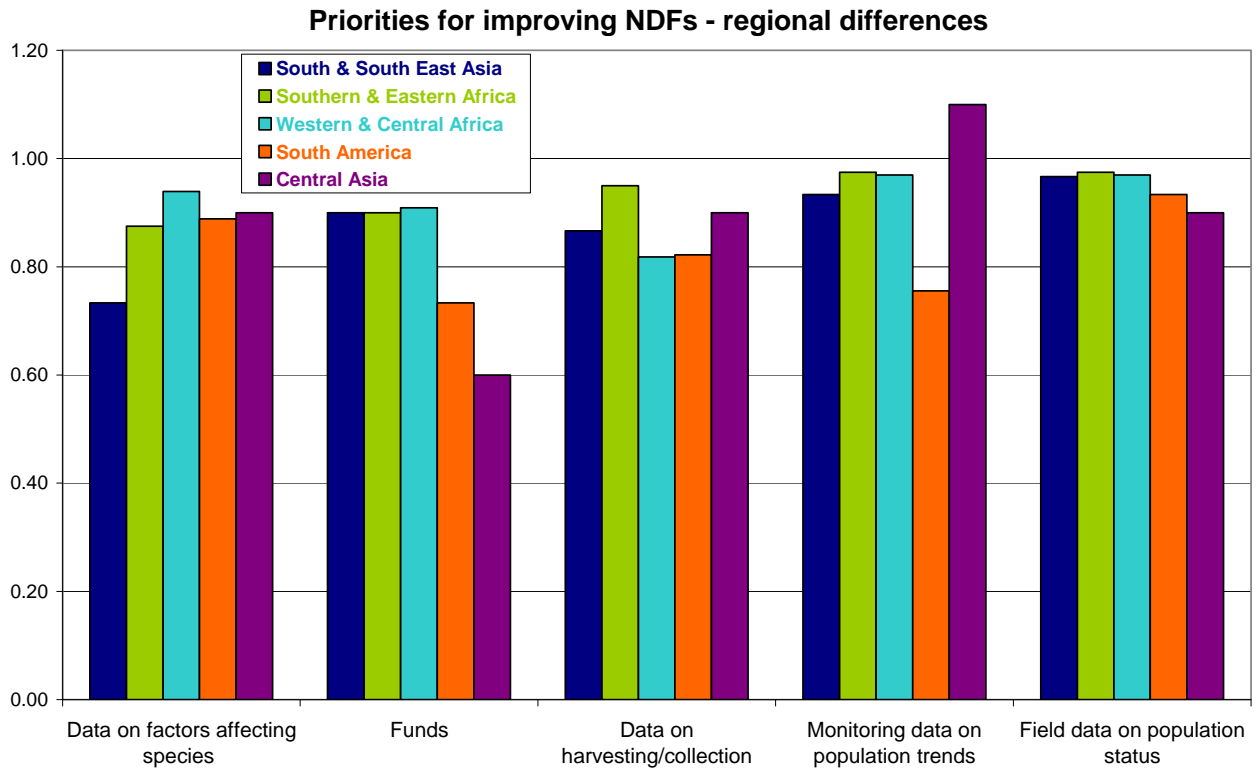


Chart 8. Top nine training needs, compared by region

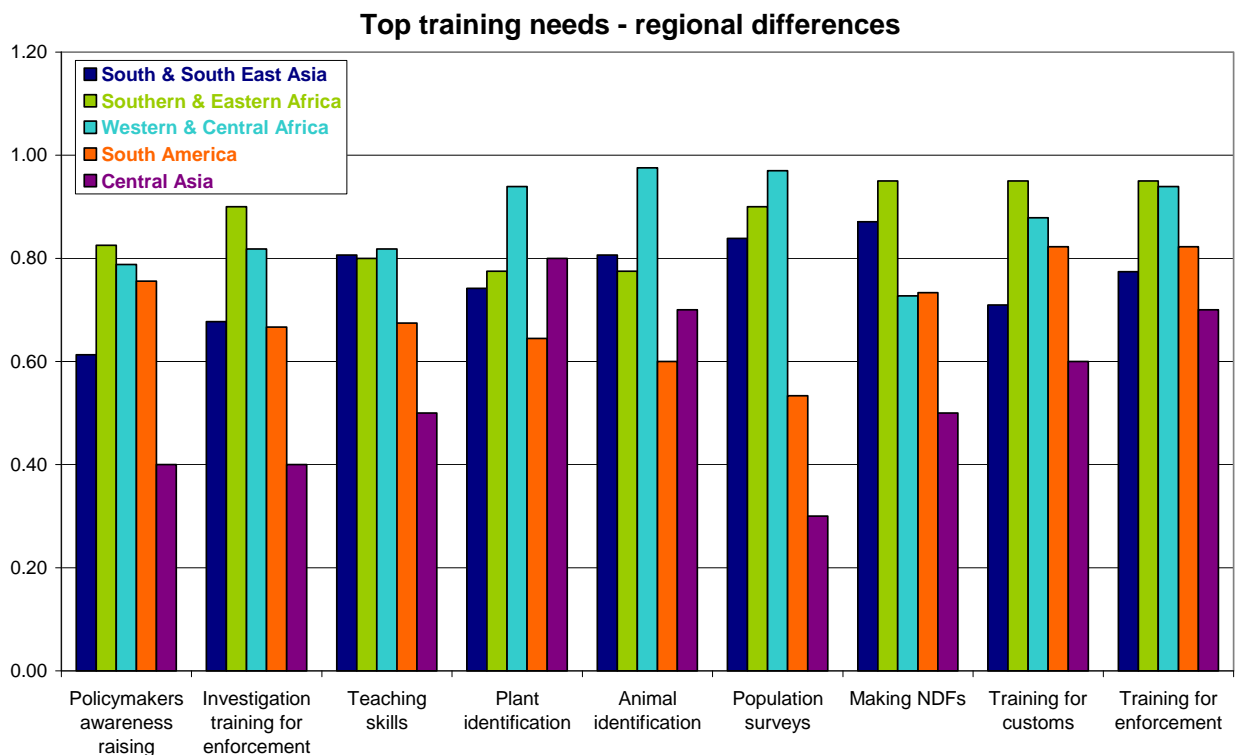


Chart 9. Activities to address the problems identified in the needs assessment

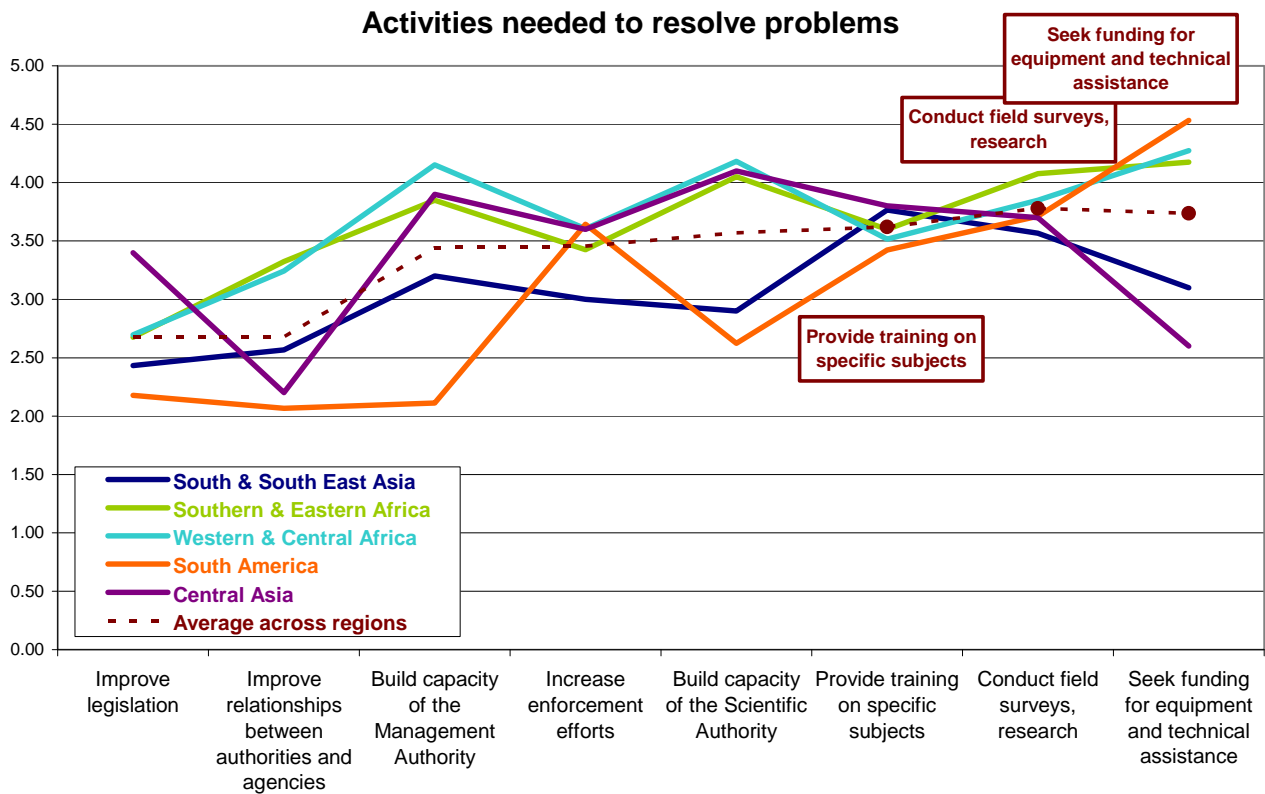
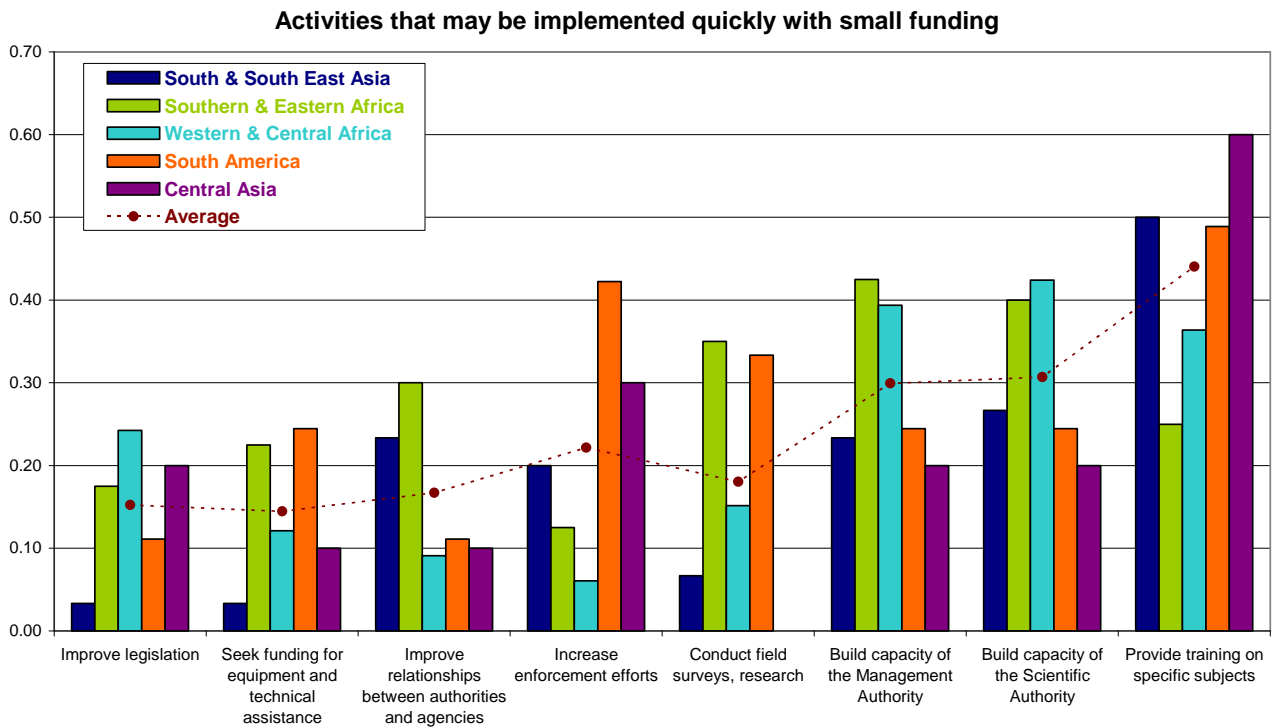


Chart 10. Activities that can be implemented quickly with a small amount of funding



Questionnaire for identifying priorities for capacity building and technical assistance

A. Technical assistance for CITES implementation

1. How important is external technical assistance for CITES implementation in your country?

- 1 – No need for external assistance
- 2 – Not very important
- 3 – Important
- 4 – Very important
- 5 – Essential

2. How important is external technical assistance in your country for meeting the requirements of importing countries?

- 1 – No need for external assistance
- 2 – Not very important
- 3 – Important
- 4 – Very important
- 5 – Essential

B. Causes for CITES implementation problems

3. Which of the following do you think are the main causes behind problems with implementation of CITES? Please provide a rating for your choices in terms of importance (1=least important, 5=most important)

- CITES Authorities are not designated
- Difficulty with making non-detriment findings
- Lack of data on species (e.g. population, status, distribution, biology)
- Difficulty with determining legal acquisition
- Difficulty with transport requirements
- Difficulty with determining if proposed recipients of Appendix I specimens are equipped to house and care for specimens
- Difficulty with determining non-commercial purpose
- Lack of communication with Customs or other border agencies
- Lack of communication with other Government bodies
- Lack of manpower
- Lack of funds
- Lack of equipment
- Lack of enforcement effort
- Difficulty with reporting requirements
- Other (please explain)

4. For the causes of implementation problems you have identified above, please provide a rating in terms of their urgency to be addressed (1=lowest priority, 5=highest priority)

- CITES Authorities are not designated
- Difficulty with making non-detriment findings
- Lack of data on species (e.g. population, status, distribution, biology)
- Difficulty with determining legal acquisition
- Difficulty with transport requirements
- Difficulty with determining if proposed recipients of Appendix I specimens are equipped to house and care for specimens
- Difficulty with determining non-commercial purpose
- Lack of communication with Customs or other border agencies
- Lack of communication with other Government bodies
- Lack of manpower
- Lack of funds
- Lack of equipment

- Lack of enforcement effort
- Difficulty with reporting requirements
- Other (please explain)

5. What needs would you identify as being the most important for overcoming CITES implementation problems and meeting the requirements of importing countries? Please provide a rating in terms of importance (1=least important, 5=most important)

- Improving CITES Authorities
- Improving the making of non-detriment findings
- Obtaining species data
- Improving the making of legal acquisition findings
- Improving transport conditions
- Verification of Appendix I housing and care
- Verifying non-commercial purpose
- Improving CITES legislation
- Improving communication with Customs or other border agencies
- Improving communication with other Government bodies
- Increasing manpower (staffing)
- Increasing funding
- Increasing equipment
- Improving enforcement effort
- Improving reporting
- Other (please explain)

6. Which of the following areas of work would you identify as a priority for improving the capacity to make non-detriment findings? Check each one that applies.

- Obtaining data on the biology of species in trade
- Obtaining field data on population status
- Obtaining monitoring data on population trends
- Obtaining data on harvesting/collection
- Obtaining data on national utilization
- Obtaining data on incentives and conservation benefits from harvesting/collection
- Obtaining data on factors affecting species (other than trade)
- Improving communication between Government agencies
- Increasing manpower (staffing)
- Increasing funding
- Increasing equipment
- Improving enforcement effort
- Improving reporting
- Other (please explain)

C. Training

7. What are the subjects for which you believe training in your country is most needed? Check each one that applies.

- Awareness raising for policymakers
- Basic training on CITES
- Functions of the Management Authority
- Functions of the Scientific Authority
- Making non-detriment findings
- Calculating quotas
- Population surveys
- Data analysis
- Adaptive management
- Review of Significant Trade process
- Drafting legislation
- Application of exemptions/derogations
- Preparation of annual and biennial reports
- General training for enforcement officers

- General training for Customs officers
- Awareness raising for the judiciary
- Investigation training for enforcement officers
- Preparing cases for court
- Wildlife forensics
- Specimen identification (animals)
- Specimen identification (plants)
- Trade facilitation
- Working with the media
- Teaching skills for national capacity-building
- Other (please specify)

D. Activities

- a. **What activities are needed at the national level to resolve problems with the implementation of CITES and to meet the requirements of importing countries? Please provide a rating in terms of their urgency to be addressed (1=lowest priority, 5=highest priority)**

- Build capacity of the Management Authority
- Build capacity of the Scientific Authority
- Conduct field surveys, research
- Improve legislation
- Increase enforcement efforts
- Improve working relationships between authorities and agencies
- Seek funding for equipment and technical assistance
- Provide training on specific subjects
- Other (please specify)

- b. **Which of the above activities could be implemented quickly with a small grant?**

E. Case examples

- a. **What experiences of CITES implementation in your country would you like to share with other Parties in the regional workshop?**

F. Existing capacity building programmes

- a. **What regional capacity building programmes currently exist in your region?**
- b. **What organizations are currently assisting your agency with CITES implementation?**