

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



Thirty-second meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 19 – 23 June 2023

Regulation of trade

Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL OF ANIMALS LISTED IN CITES APPENDIX I

1. This document has been submitted by China.\*

Background

2. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, signed fifty years ago, listed 1,000 species of animals and 300 species of plants. With the improvement of the criteria for amendment of CITES Appendices, the Conference of the Parties has listed forty-thousands of wild species in Appendices I, II and III.
3. The CITES Identification (ID) Manual was initiated in 1977. The CITES ID Committee ended its work more than a decade ago. The CITES Secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) have developed the new ID manuals. To date, six volumes of CITES ID manual and nearly 40 materials can be downloaded through the CITES website. In addition, over 4,000 identification resources are now available on the Checklist of CITES species.
4. CITES Appendix I includes species that are affected or may be affected by international trade and are at risk of extinction. Around 690 species and dozens of subspecies or populations of animals are listed in Appendix I of the Convention. International trade in these animals' living, dead, parts or derivatives is subject to particularly strict regulation. Identifying their specimens is essential for Parties' regulatory, implementation, law enforcement and conservation strategies.
5. CITES CoP 19 adopted a new Resolution Conf. 19.4 on *Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species*, noting that accurate identification of animal and plant specimens is crucial to implementing the Convention. The CoP encourages the development of ID materials and presents an Annex of the main elements for consideration when developing ID materials. Decisions 19.142-144 on *Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species* have directed the Animals and Plants Committees, the Secretariat, and the Parties to support the efforts of ID materials based on a joint working group.

Initiative

6. To support the joint Working Group on Identification Materials of the Animals and Plants Committees and provide information on available ID for the protection, enforcement, inspection, and implementation of the Convention, particularly concerning endangered animals worldwide, the Endangered Species Scientific

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\* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

Commission of the People's Republic of China (ESSC) as China's Scientific Authority, is undertaking a project titled "Identification manual of animals listed in Appendix I".

7. The project aims to support relevant experts and specialists to sort out and summarise existing ID materials for Appendix I listed animal species, and compile an updated " Identification manual of animals listed in CITES Appendix I (A1A-ID Manual)". In particular, the initiative supports the implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.4 and Decisions 19.142-144 on Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species. The project is intended to support the work undertaken by the joint working group to be established by the Animals and Plants Committees in terms of Decision 19.142. The project's outcomes include information on available identification material for the protection, enforcement, inspection, and implementation of the Convention, particularly concerning endangered animals worldwide will be submitted to the Animals and Plants Committee.

#### Strategy

8. China's Scientific Authority will support relevant experts and specialists, via an expert / contact group to work through and summarise existing ID materials for Appendix I listed animal species, and compile an updated "Identification manual of animals listed in CITES Appendix I (A1A-ID Manual)".
9. Committee members, parties and organisations are invited to recommend personnel with expertise in the identification of Appendix I listed animal species. The proposed work schedule is in the Annex to this document.

#### Recommendations

10. The Animals Committee is invited to:
  - a) take into account the integration of the A1A-ID project with relevant mandates of the Animals Committee; and
  - b) review the strategy as outlined in paragraphs 8 and 9 above, and establish an expert/contact group.

**Annex Proposed work schedule of identification manual of animals listed in CITES Appendix I**

	Activity	Checkpoint	2023			2024						
			7-	9-	11	1-	3-	5-	7-	9-	11	
1	Establish the terms of reference of the expert group	ToR										
2	Clarify the copyrights and usage agreements of existing ID materials	Instructions for using ID materials										
3	Summarise existing ID materials and carry out a gap analysis	Material kits, analysis reports										
4	Issue a notification to share preliminary results and call for more members of the expert group	Notification										
5	Divide the WG members by taxa and assess available ID materials and gap analyses	Division of labour and evaluation results										
6	Supplement the A1A-ID materials by taxa	Progress bar										
7	Collect updated materials and analyse the completeness of A1A-ID	An analysis report on the completeness of the data										
8	Report the progress orally to AC 33	AC recommendations										
9	Invite an external review to the materials and report	Review comments										
10	Improve the materials according to the review comments, and translate the materials according to the needs	Material kits										
11	Summarise and publish the A1A-ID Manual, and consider submitting a report to the CoP20	Websites, databases, and publications										