

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

Species conservation and trade

Fauna

CONSERVATION OF AMPHIBIANS (AMPHIBIA SPP.)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama City, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 19.197 to 19.199 on *Conservation of amphibians (Amphibia spp.)* as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat, in close consultation with the Animals Committee

19.197 *The Secretariat shall, subject to availability of external resources and in close consultation with the Animals Committee:*

- a) *conduct one or more interdisciplinary workshops for CITES Authorities and other relevant authorities and stakeholders about amphibian species in international trade, including but not limited to the following objectives:*
 - i) *identify amphibian species that are in international trade and evaluate whether certain species or groups should be recommended for possible listing in the Appendices;*
 - ii) *share existing national legislation relevant to the trade in amphibians;*
 - iii) *evaluate whether current levels of trade are compatible with the conservation of these species in the wild;*
 - iv) *compile further data on harvesting levels of amphibians subject to high volumes of international trade;*
 - v) *explore the emerging threat of diseases to traded amphibians, including amphibian chytrid fungus and rana viruses; and*
 - vi) *examine current enforcement efforts to deter and detect illegal and unreported trade and identify additional actions needed; and*
- b) *explore modalities to implement this Decision in a cost-effective manner, including through the organization of online events; and*
- c) *report on the progress in the implementation of paragraph a) and b) above to the Animals Committee, including any relevant recommendations.*

Directed to the Animals Committee

19.198 *The Animals Committee shall:*

- a) *consider the report submitted by the Secretariat as per Decision 19.197; and*
- b) *make recommendations to the Standing Committee and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.199 *The Standing Committee shall consider any report submitted by the Animals Committee as per Decision 19.198 and develop recommendations for consideration of the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.*

3. Having secured funding from the European Union and Switzerland, the Secretariat can now implement paragraph a) of Decision 19.197 on *Conservation of amphibians (Amphibia spp.)*, including the preparatory work and two online technical workshops in line with paragraph b) of the same Decision. The Secretariat is in final discussions with technical experts on the preparatory work for the technical workshops and will provide an update on progress at this meeting of the Animals Committee.
4. The preparatory work will include the production of three studies:
 - a) *Identification of non-CITES listed amphibian species that are in international trade* – this study will provide an indication of international trade volumes based on available data; compile additional data on harvesting levels of those species that are traded internationally at the highest volumes; and evaluate whether any particular species appear to be subject to unsustainable levels of international trade, so that Parties can make use of this information to assess whether any species may warrant inclusion in the CITES Appendices.
 - b) *Assessment of the emerging threat of diseases* – this study will explore the emerging threat of diseases to amphibians that are traded internationally, including amphibian chytrid fungus and ranaviruses. This activity will consider the impact of emerging diseases on the extinction risk of amphibians globally and on those that appear in trade; whether trade exacerbates the impact of diseases on traded species or other species; and how the spread of pathogens is affected by trade activities that occur for both CITES-listed and non-listed amphibian species; and
 - c) *Compilation of existing national legislation relevant to the trade in both CITES listed and non-listed amphibians*– this study will also examine current enforcement efforts by countries to deter and detect illegal and unreported trade in amphibians; and based on this information make specific recommendations to the countries concerned to strengthen the relevant legislation and improve its enforcement.
5. Industry representatives, government officials, amphibian experts, relevant intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders will be consulted to cross-validate the findings of the three studies, and to identify – and where possible fill – data or knowledge gaps. A summary document, with key findings and draft recommendations, will be prepared for consideration at the technical workshops.

Technical workshops

6. The Secretariat has secured the funding to convene two online workshops in the last quarter of 2023 or first quarter of 2024 to consider the conservation of amphibia taxa involved in international trade. It is envisaged that one workshop will focus on the Asian region and will be conducted in English; the second will focus on the Latin American region and will be conducted in Spanish and English interpretation will be provided. The objective of the workshops will be to review the three studies referred to in paragraph 4 above and to determine if and which amphibian taxa are negatively impacted by international trade and make recommendations to ensure the conservation of those taxa, as needed. The results of the workshops will be presented for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting in 2024.

Recommendations

7. The Animals Committee is invited to note the information in this document and any oral update provided by the Secretariat.