

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Panama City (Panama), 14 – 25 November 2022

Interpretation and implementation matters

Regulation of trade

ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES, AND
AUTHENTICATION AND CONTROL OF PERMITS

1. This document has been submitted by the Standing Committee.*

Background

2. At its 18th meeting (Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.125 to 18.128 on *Electronic systems and information technologies* and Decisions 18.129 to 18.131 on *Authentication and control of permits* as follows:

Directed to the Parties

18.125 *Parties are invited to:*

- a) *consider the eCITES Implementation Framework in regard to its potential usefulness in planning and implementing electronic CITES systems and report back on which information is useful to their own particular efforts and what additional support is needed to address other issues affecting implementation such as governance structure, technical capacity, and law enforcement restrictions;*
- b) *call upon donor agencies to take note of the interest of those Management Authorities from developing countries to adopt automated, electronic permit solutions and to provide funding for the implementation of these solutions;*
- c) *consider the implementation of electronic CITES systems in a manner designed to increase transparency and efficiency of the permit issuance and control process, to prevent use of fraudulent permits, and to provide quality data for improved sustainability assessment;*
- d) *take note of the UNCTAD aCITES system (Electronic CITES Certification System) as a low cost, off-the-shelf solution that is now available to Parties for implementation;*
- e) *if using electronic CITES systems:*
 - i) *consider UN/CEFACT Recommendation 14 on Authentication of trade documents as good practice when implementing the electronic equivalent of signatures and seals for electronic CITES permitting systems and exchanges;*

* *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.*

- ii) *authenticate each user who has access to the electronic system using username and passwords, and/or similar technologies, or both;*
- iii) *ensure that electronic CITES systems keep an audit trail, i.e. keep electronic records (including, but not limited to, confirmation of transmission and receipt with associated time stamps and message headers) that enable the Management Authority to identify each person who requested, approved, processed, issued, endorsed, or altered electronic CITES permits and certificates;*
- iv) *keep archives of audit trails for no fewer than five years after the expiry date of the permit or certificate, or no fewer than five years after the date that the trade was reported in the Party's annual report, whichever is later;*
- v) *provide the CITES Secretariat with copies of all valid electronic signatures it uses for issuance of permits and certificates in accordance with Article IX (4) of the Convention and paragraph 3 q) of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on Permits and certificates;*
- vi) *notify the Secretariat immediately when authenticated users are removed or no longer authenticated; and*
- vii) *recognize that in electronic CITES systems that meet the above requirements i) – iv), the electronic equivalent of a physical signature and seal may be provided through the authenticated identification of any of the following individuals: the permit applicant; the official who issued or authorized the permit or certificate; the official who altered the permit or certificate; the issuing authority; and the inspecting official who endorsed the permit or certificate;*
- f) *establish a systematic dialogue and ongoing collaboration between their Management Authorities and their national customs and border control agencies to implement an efficient, risk-based control system for international trade in CITES-listed species where possible and appropriate; and*
- g) *provide information to the Secretariat on the state of automation of CITES permit processes and the implementation of control systems for international trade in CITES-listed species and share their lessons learned.*

Directed to the Standing Committee and to the Secretariat

18.126 *The Standing Committee and the Secretariat shall undertake the following tasks:*

- a) *work with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other relevant partners, to continue the development of joint projects that would facilitate Parties' access to electronic permitting services and their alignment to international trade standards and norms, such as the further development and implementation of the UNCTAD aCITES system;*
- b) *work with all relevant partners on the development of standards and solutions for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permits and certificates and to improve the validation of CITES permit data by CITES Management Authorities and customs officials;*
- c) *work with the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) and other relevant organizations to exchange information and experience on the efforts towards a harmonization of standards and procedures for licenses, permits and certificates frequently used in conjunction of cross-border trade in CITES-listed specimens;*
- d) *monitor and advise on Parties' work related to the development of traceability systems for specimens of CITES-listed species to facilitate their harmonization with CITES permits and certificates;*

- e) *support the development of the capacity of Management Authorities, especially those with the greatest needs, to electronically collect, secure, maintain, and transmit data using systems compatible with those of the Secretariat and other Management Authorities; and*
- f) *make recommendations, as necessary, for the revision of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on Permits and certificates, Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP18) on National reports and the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports distributed by the Secretariat.*

Directed to the Secretariat

18.127 *The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funding:*

- a) *organize in collaboration with the World Customs Organization and other relevant partners an international workshop on modern customs procedures for improved control of trade in CITES-listed species to simplify compliant trade and combat against illegal trade in wildlife and prepare recommendations to the Standing Committee;*
- b) *work with national and international organizations, such as the World Customs Organization (WCO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN Regional Commissions, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Bank to support Parties in the implementation of efficient and risk-based procedures for control in CITES-listed species in relation to the automation of CITES permitting processes using information technologies and modern trade control procedures;*
- c) *provide capacity-building and advisory services to support Parties interested in implementing electronic solutions for the management and control of CITES permits and certificates and support Parties in establishing electronic permit systems and information exchanges;*
- d) *work with relevant partners to explore emerging technologies including Blockchain related technologies for secure and efficient issuance, exchange and control of CITES permits and certificates; and*
- e) *submit reports on activities undertaken under Decisions 18.125, 18.126 and 18.127 and make recommendations to the Standing Committee as appropriate.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

18.128 *The Standing Committee shall review the reports and recommendations of the Secretariat under Decision 18.127, paragraph e), and make recommendations on electronic systems and information technologies as required to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to Parties

18.129 *Parties are encouraged to provide the Secretariat with information on their approaches and experiences in the authentication and control of CITES permits.*

Directed to the Secretariat:

18.130 *Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall:*

- a) *prepare, in consultation with interested Parties, an in-depth study on the current practices in CITES permit authentication and control, using a selection of Parties as case studies to demonstrate the state-of-play on how current trading practices and the use of technologies affect their CITES trade regulation process; and*
- b) *identify possible gaps in relevant Resolutions that could be addressed to provide guidance to Parties, particularly from the point of view of adapting CITES permitting process to match the current range of trading practice.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

18.131 *The Standing Committee shall consider the report on authentication and control of CITES permits prepared by the Secretariat and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties, as deemed necessary.*

Intersessional working group on electronic systems and information technologies

CITES Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) Task Force

3. At its 72nd meeting, the Standing Committee established the intersessional working group on electronic systems and information technologies. As part of the implementation of Decision 18.126, the working group cooperated in April 2020 with the CITES Secretariat, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) to organize an online consultative workshop on CITES Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for Parties from the UNECE and ESCAP regions. The workshop brought together interested Parties and organizations to exchange information on the latest state of electronic cross-border exchange of CITES permits (EPIX) and its implementation and to kick-off electronic CITES permit exchange pilots between interested CITES Parties. Following the workshop, UNECE and UNESCAP established an EPIX Task Force to provide a forum where Parties could continue to share experiences and information related to the piloting and testing of electronic CITES permit information exchange and to network with other interested Parties. The Task Force convened by UNECE is chaired by the Chair of the working group on electronic systems and information technologies.

International workshop on modern customs procedures for improved control of trade in CITES-listed species

4. Pursuant to Decision 18.127 paragraph a), the Secretariat, in close consultation with the working group Chair and in collaboration with the World Customs Organization (WCO), organized an international workshop on modern customs procedures for improved control of trade in CITES-listed species. The workshop also served to address Decision 18.130 on *Authentication and control of permits*, in particular to review the progress of the in-depth study on current practices in CITES permit authentication and control, where some of the working group members provided case studies, and to identify possible gaps in relevant Resolutions, from the perspective of adapting CITES permitting process to match the current range of trading practice. Using the key messages from the workshop, the working group met twice to discuss actions for the implementation of Decisions 18.126. The [summary and the report of the workshop](#) are published on the CITES website.

Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) of CITES permits and certificates

5. The working group agreed that a general guidance document outlining the technical and procedural specifications for electronic permit information exchange between Parties would be useful in order to complement the data standards defined in the CITES e-permitting toolkit. As such, the EPIX guidelines, developed by the CITES Secretariat in cooperation with the UNECE, should act as a reference document for this purpose. The current version of the [EPIX guidelines](#) is available in English on the CITES website and will be translated into French and Spanish before the end of 2022. This is a living document that will evolve over time to take in account technological developments and surrounding policy discussions.

Guidance on electronic signatures on CITES permits and certificates

6. At the request of the working group, the Secretariat prepared a brief overview of the current practice of Parties regarding permit signature and endorsement, including their electronic equivalents. The working group suggested that the place for signature of the applicant on the standard permit form [box 4 on the standard CITES form contained in Annex 2 and Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18)] be made optional. They also suggested that where a place for the signature of the applicant is included in box 4 of the permit or certificate, but this is not signed, the permit or certificate will be considered invalid. See paragraph 7. The working group also agreed to take into consideration the UN/CEFACT Recommendation 14 on Authentication of trade documents which provides recommendations to Governments and the trade community on the use of physical and electronic signatures in trade documents. The working group agreed that it would be useful to turn the elements from Decision 18.125 e) into [guidance on Electronic Signatures on CITES Permits and certificates and to refer to this guidance in Res. Conf. 12.3 \(Rev. CoP18\)](#).

Revision of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on Permits and certificates

7. The main outcome of the activities of the working group consisted of proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) as requested in Decision 18.216, paragraph f). Proposed amendments were endorsed by the Standing Committee at its 73rd meeting (SC73, online, May 2021) and its 74th meeting (SC74, Lyon, March 2022). The amendments proposed at SC74 were informed by the study on current practices in CITES permit authentication and control undertaken by the Secretariat under Decision 18.130. The Secretariat's report on the study is contained in document [SC74 Doc. 42](#).
8. The Standing Committee agreed to submit to CoP19 a number of draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates* with the aim to:
 - a) include a new preambular paragraph referring to benefits that electronic permitting systems can provide;
 - b) refer to the [Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange \(EPIX\) of CITES permits and certificates](#), and the [Guidance on CITES electronic signatures](#);
 - c) include a reference to the use of two-dimensional barcodes to reflect and accommodate the requirements of the electronic permits and certificates;
 - d) clarify that the inclusion of a place for signature of the applicant on a permit is optional for a Party to include (box 4 on the standard CITES form), i.e., the CITES permit or certificate will be rendered invalid only if a place for the signature of the applicant is included but not filled;
 - e) include additional paragraphs on the required security measures and mechanisms for the electronic equivalent of original paper permits and certificates; and
 - f) clarify and improve the consistency of terminology.

The proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) are contained in Annex 1 to the present document.

9. The Standing Committee noted that further issues had been identified by the working group, but the discussions had not yet been concluded. These issues included the possible development of guidance on the dynamic use of two-dimensional barcodes, including for the endorsement of permits and certificates (Box 14), nomenclature changes and the use of the Species+/CITES Checklist Application Programming Interface (API), whether and how national data protection laws might be an issue for the electronic exchange of CITES permit information, the use of HS codes in implementing risk-based control procedures and review of the e-permitting toolkit. The Standing Committee agreed to submit the draft decisions contained in Annexes 3 and 4 to continue discussions on these topics.

Study on permit authentication and control

10. Thanks to the generous support provided by Switzerland, the CITES Secretariat carried out the in-depth study on permit authentication and control as directed by the Conference of the Parties in paragraph a) of Decision 18.130. The study was finalized in May 2021 and is available upon request from the CITES Secretariat. The study was organized around the four pillars of the [eCITES Implementation Framework](#): permit issuance, border control, reporting, and inter-country permit data exchange. Various themes within these pillars are discussed below. A total of 17 Parties from across all six CITES regions were included in the study:

Africa: Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa
Asia: Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates
Central and South America and the Caribbean: Peru
Europe: Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Switzerland
North America: Canada, United States of America
Oceania: Australia, Solomon Islands, Tonga

Implementation of automated online permit systems

11. There is diversity in Parties' approaches to implementing the CITES permitting requirements. Since CoP18, many Parties have moved towards implementing an online system for submitting requests for CITES permits. This may be attributable in part to the pandemic, which has accelerated the need for such systems.

For some Parties, an online permitting system may not (yet) be relevant, for instance because of the costs involved relative to the number of permits issued, the lack of reliable internet access across the country, etc. However, it is also clear that all Parties could benefit from an electronic permit management system where all permit data can be stored in one central database that is maintained by the CITES Management Authority.

12. The Standing Committee thus agreed to submit to CoP19 amendments to paragraph 3 c) of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) to reflect this diversity among the Parties (see Annex 1 to the present document).

Use of security stamps and/or 2D barcodes

13. The study found that nearly half of the Parties surveyed do not include security stamps on their permits. According to the information available to the Secretariat, about 80 Parties are using security stamps (See the [List of Parties that use security stamps](#)). Other Parties opt instead for watermarks and/or other imbedded security features. Almost a quarter of the Parties in the study have incorporated two-dimensional barcodes on their permits.
14. Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) recommends that Parties affix a security stamp to each permit and certificate. If more and more Parties are foregoing the use of security stamps in the future, this recommendation may become out of date. At the same time, the Resolution makes no mention of two-dimensional barcodes.
15. In this context, the Standing Committee agreed to submit to CoP19 amendments to paragraph 3 n) of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) in order to include a reference to two-dimensional barcodes (see Annex 1 to the present document).

Coordination and cooperation at the border

16. The study noted that it was not always obvious which authority has jurisdiction in which situations and how the different authorities communicate and coordinate their activities. For some Parties, enforcement authorities other than customs appear to have more of a leadership role regarding control of trade in specimens of CITES-listed species. For other Parties, customs is the first point of contact for imports and exports and will inform the CITES Management Authority or other designated enforcement authority of shipments of plants and animals for inspection.
17. In light of the above, the Standing Committee agreed to submit to CoP19 a proposal to insert a new paragraph in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Compliance and enforcement* in order to encourage greater cooperation between customs and CITES authorities (see Annex 2 to the present document).

Endorsement of CITES documents at the point of export

18. In two of the surveyed Parties, foreign export and re-export permits that have not been endorsed by the exporting country are accepted as valid. In contrast, at least one other Party usually rejects CITES documents that have not been fully endorsed by the authorities of the country of export. The policies of the other Parties are positioned somewhere between these two approaches. Most Parties will detain the shipment and contact the CITES Management Authority of the exporting country to verify the validity of the export permit.
19. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 24 f) of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18), recommends that:
 - f) *Export permits and re-export certificates be endorsed, with quantity, signature and stamp, by an inspecting official, such as Customs, in the export endorsement block of the document. If the export document has not been endorsed at the time of export, the Management Authority of the importing country should liaise with the exporting country's Management Authority, considering any extenuating circumstances or documents, to determine the acceptability of the document;*
20. The working group on electronic systems and information technologies highlighted the importance of the endorsement of export permits at the time of export. However, this endorsement did not have to be physical (wet stamping) and could take other forms. In light of the above, the Standing Committee agreed to submit draft decision 19.BB to explore possible alternatives to the physical endorsement of permits and certificates at export (see Annex 4 to the present document).

Guidance for physical inspection

21. The report noted that most Parties do not physically inspect every CITES export or import. This is not surprising given the volume and diversity of trade crossing international borders. Most of the Parties indicate that they follow a risk-based or intelligence-led approach to deciding on physical inspections. However, the study notes that it is not always clear to what extent this approach follows established policy and procedures, or whether the decision on when to inspect a shipment is up to the discretion of the individual officer. The lack of a clear procedure or policy entails obvious risks of irregularities in the determination of which shipments to inspect.
22. It might be useful to identify links between the physical inspections (border controls) and the legal acquisition findings (permit issuance). This can be done by connecting the elements for risk assessment identified in the rapid guidance for making legal acquisition findings (see document [SC74 Doc. 40](#)) and by working with the World Customs Organization to identify or develop guidance and elements for a national policy on physical inspections. The rapid guidance includes a number of relevant questions which may facilitate the assessment of legal acquisition. These questions include the requirement to verify the legal acquisition, a non-comprehensive list of risk factors and considerations, chain of custody documentation etc.
23. The Standing Committee agreed to submit to CoP19 draft decisions on risk assessment and analysis as contained in Annex 3 to the present document.
24. The Standing Committee further agreed that Decisions 18.125 to 128 and Decisions 18.130 and 131 had been implemented and could be deleted.

Recommendations

25. The Conference of the Parties is invited to:
 - a) adopt the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev.CoP18) on *Permits and certificates*, as contained in Annex 1;
 - b) adopt the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Compliance and enforcement*, as contained in Annex 2;
 - c) adopt the draft decisions on *Risk assessment and analysis* in Annex 3;
 - d) adopt the draft decisions on *Electronic systems and information technology* in Annex 4; and
 - e) delete Decisions 18.125 to 18.128 and 18.130 to 18.131.

COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference adopt the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates*, Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Compliance and enforcement*, the draft decisions on *Risk assessment and analysis*, and the draft decisions on *Electronic systems and information technology* with the minor amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) as described in paragraphs B and C. The Secretariat also recommends the renewal of Decision 18.129 as it would welcome receiving from Parties information on their approaches and experiences in the authentication and control of CITES permits.
- B. The Secretariat suggests inserting the words “in exchanging permits,” in the new paragraph in the preamble of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates*. The paragraph includes all the aspects of the electronic permitting system except exchanging permit data between Parties. Exchanging electronic permit data is important since this allows Parties to verify the trusted and up-to-date permit information including the quantity. The proposed changes are in bold as follows:

- PREAMBLE

After the sixth preambular paragraph, insert the following new paragraph:

RECOGNIZING that electronic permitting systems can support Parties in regulating trade, in incentivizing compliance with legal trade frameworks, in exchanging electronic permit data, in monitoring the legality and sustainability of trade, including with regard to producing CITES annual trade reports, and in combatting illegal trade;

- C. The Secretariat understands that one of the proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates* aims to ensure that the requirement to include a place for the signature of the applicant on the national permit form be made optional. The Secretariat proposes to clarify this in the instructions and explanations of the standard permit form and of the model travelling-exhibition certificate. The proposed changes are in bold and underlined as follows:

ANNEX 2 STANDARD CITES FORM

Page 2, paragraph 4:

4. Complete name and address of the exporter/re-exporter. The name of the country must be stated. **The inclusion of a place for signature of the applicant on a permit is optional.** The absence of the signature of the applicant renders the permit or certificate invalid, if a place for the signature of the applicant is included.

- ANNEX 3 MODEL TRAVELLING-EXHIBITION CERTIFICATE

Page 2, paragraph 3:

3. Complete the full name, permanent address and country of the owner of the specimen covered by the certificate. **The inclusion of a place for signature of the owner on a certificate is optional.** Absence of the signature of the owner renders the certificate invalid, if a place for the signature of the owner is included.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 12.3 (REV.COP18) ON
PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES

New text is shown underlined; deleted text is shown as ~~struck through~~.

PREAMBLE

After the sixth preambular paragraph, insert the following new paragraph:

RECOGNIZING that electronic permitting systems can support Parties in regulating trade, in incentivizing compliance with legal trade frameworks, in monitoring the legality and sustainability of trade, including with regard to producing CITES annual trade reports, and in combatting illegal trade;

Amend the tenth, eleventh and twelfth preambular paragraphs as follows:

NOTING that the [eCITES Implementation Framework](#), [CITES electronic permitting toolkit](#), [Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange \(EPIX\) of CITES permits and certificates](#), and the [Guidance on CITES electronic signatures](#) provides guidance to Parties on common internationally recognized information exchange formats, protocols and standards, and electronic signatures;

RECOGNIZING the need to adopt the principles outlined in the ~~*CITES electronic permitting toolkit*~~ above-mentioned guidance to facilitate the exchange of information among national Management Authorities;

RECOGNIZING that ~~the *CITES electronic permitting toolkit*~~ this guidance will require updates and revisions to reflect the evolution of technologies and ongoing development of international standards;

OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS

2. [...]

e) if a permit or certificate form, whether issued in an electronic or paper format, includes a place for the signature of the applicant, the absence of the handwritten signature or, in case of electronic forms, any electronic equivalent, should render the permit or certificate invalid, taking into account the *Guidance on CITES electronic signatures*; and

[...]

3. [...]

c) all Parties consider the development and use of electronic permit management systems such as those outlined in the *eCITES Implementation Framework* that, *inter alia*, support the production of annual reports required under the provisions of Article VIII, paragraph 7 (a); where relevant and appropriate, Parties consider the implementation of electronic processes for permit issuance and the development and use of the electronic equivalent of paper-based permits and certificates;

ed) Parties using or developing electronic permits and certificates, adopt the standards recommended in the *CITES electronic permitting toolkit*, [Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange \(EPIX\) of CITES permits and certificates](#) and the [Guidance on CITES electronic signatures](#);

e) Parties that issue electronic permits and certificates submit information to the Secretariat documenting that when their system issues electronic permits and certificates, these are the electronic equivalent of original paper permits and certificates and information on how to verify the validity of permits and certificates issued electronically;

f) the Secretariat, via Notification, provide the information from Parties submitted under subparagraph e) on their electronic systems;

[...]

- Ⓜ) Parties that do not already do so affix a security stamp to each permit and certificate, or add a two-dimensional barcode, or both, or use any other relevant manner to secure each permit and certificate;
- Ⓞ) when a security stamp is affixed to a permit or certificate, it be cancelled by a signature and a stamp or seal, preferably embossed and the number of the stamp also be recorded on the document;
- t) Parties that issue electronic permits and certificates ensure that their systems issue electronic equivalent of original paper permits and certificates, and that their systems have adequate security measures, including mechanisms that:
 - i) in the case of a single-use document, prevent more than one movement under the same document; and in the case of a multiple-use document, prevent its unauthorized use;
 - ii) receive information from the importing Party when a document has been used;
 - iii) enable the authorities of any Party to verify whether the document is valid or has been used; and
 - iv) contain security protocols that maintain integrity of all communications and data transfer, including use of two-dimensional barcodes;
- Ⓟ) when issuing permits and certificates, the Parties follow the standard nomenclatures adopted by the Conference of the Parties to indicate the names of species [see Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18)];
- Ⓠ) Parties that have not yet done so communicate to the Secretariat the names of the persons empowered to sign permits and certificates, as well as three specimens of their signatures, or in case of electronic permits and certificates, the names of the empowered persons and methodologies used to authenticate them, and that all the Parties communicate, within one month of any change thereto, the names of persons who have been added to the list of those already empowered to sign, the names of persons whose signatures are no longer valid and the dates the changes took effect;

ANNEX 1 INFORMATION THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN CITES PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES

- l) The name of the signatory and his/her handwritten signature for paper permits and certificates or its electronic equivalent for electronic permits and certificates taking into account the *Guidance on CITES electronic signatures*;

ANNEX 2 STANDARD CITES FORM

Page 2, paragraph 4:

- 4. **Complete** name and address of the exporter/re-exporter. The name of the country must be stated. The absence of the signature of the applicant renders the permit or certificate invalid, if a place for the signature of the applicant is included.

ANNEX 3 MODEL TRAVELLING-EXHIBITION CERTIFICATE

Page 2, paragraph 3:

- 3. Complete the full name, permanent address and country of the owner of the specimen covered by the certificate. Absence of the signature of the owner renders the certificate invalid, if a place for the signature of the owner is included.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF. 11.3 (REV. COP18)
ON COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Based on the proposed revised version of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18) contained in Annex 2 to document CoP19 Doc. 32, insert the following new paragraph under the proposed section V. *Regarding coordination at national level* as a new paragraph 12.

XX. RECOMMENDS that Parties, where possible and appropriate:

- a) institutionalize regular formalized meetings between customs and CITES authorities;
- b) exchange information on seizures between customs and the CITES authorities;
- c) allow customs systems access to information in permitting databases of Management Authorities and allow Management Authorities access to information in customs systems;
- d) institute automated verification schemes between customs application systems and CITES permitting databases;
- e) ensure collaboration between CITES authorities and customs to use information contained in the respective electronic data systems, available intelligence and the HS code to implement risk-based control procedures;
- f) ensure to the extent possible that professionals involved in wildlife trade and management, such as veterinarians receive training on CITES and their role in implementing the Convention and compliance with relevant national laws as part of their professional practice and ongoing accreditation.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
ON RISK ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

Directed to the Parties

19.AA Where this has not yet been done, Parties are encouraged to undertake risk assessments to develop risk profiles specific to CITES-listed specimens frequently exported and imported by the Party, and to reach out to the World Customs Organization for support in this regard, where needed.

Directed to the Secretariat

19.BB The Secretariat shall, subject to available resources, work with the World Customs Organization and other partners to develop guidance, including a specific guidance for a risk-based analysis related to the process of analysis and inspection under CITES permit issuing systems, and elements for a national policy on physical inspections and present its report and recommendations to the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.CC The Standing Committee shall consider the report of the Secretariat and endorse any guidance, as appropriate.

DRAFT DECISIONS ON
ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Directed to the Parties

19.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) use the eCITES Implementation Framework, the latest edition of the CITES electronic permitting toolkit, Guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) of CITES permits and certificates, and the Guidance on CITES electronic signatures in planning and implementing electronic CITES systems;
- b) consider the implementation of electronic CITES systems in a manner designed to meet CITES requirements, including those provided in Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates* to increase transparency and efficiency of the permit issuance and control process, to prevent use of fraudulent permits, and to provide quality data for reporting and improved sustainability assessment;
- c) work with the customs, National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) and other relevant agencies to ensure that trade in CITES-listed specimens is in compliance with CITES requirements and, where appropriate, in line with, or integrated into, other relevant national cross-border trade systems and procedures;
- d) share experience, challenges and know-how with other Parties on the development and implementation of electronic CITES permit management systems and use of the electronic equivalent of paper-based permits and certificates, and provide inputs to the Secretariat for continuous improvement of eCITES reference materials;
- e) take note of the [eCITES BaseSolution](#) as an automated permit management system option that is now available to Parties for implementation;
- f) call upon donor countries and agencies to provide financial support towards the implementation of electronic CITES permit management systems in developing countries; and
- g) submit to the Secretariat information on the use of HS codes for risk-based control procedures.

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.BB The Standing Committee shall, in consultation with the Secretariat, undertake the following tasks:

- a) work with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), and other relevant partners, to continue the exchange of information and the development and implementation of joint projects that would facilitate Parties' access to electronic permitting systems that comply with CITES requirements and where appropriate are aligned with international trade standards and norms;
- b) work with relevant partners on the further development of standards and solutions for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permit and certificate data and the improvement of the validation of CITES permit data by CITES Management Authorities and customs officials;
- c) recognizing the importance of the requirement for endorsement of permits and certificates at export, explore possible alternatives to the physical endorsement;

- d) monitor and advise on Parties' work related to the development of traceability systems for specimens of CITES-listed species to facilitate their harmonization with CITES permits and certificates;
- e) monitor the use of HS codes in implementing risk-based control procedures in different countries;
- f) support the development of the capacity of Management Authorities, especially those with the greatest needs, to electronically collect, secure, maintain, and transmit data using systems compatible with those of the Secretariat and other Management Authorities; and
- g) submit reports on activities undertaken under Decision 19.BB, paragraphs a) to f) and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

Directed to the Secretariat

19.CC The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funding:

- a) undertake a study on the information used by different Parties in a risk-based approach for CITES trade controls;
- b) collect information from Parties on any issues encountered with regard to the application of national data protection laws that affect implementation of Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) for the exchange of CITES permits and certificates;
- c) support the work of the Standing Committee under Decision 19.BB through the organization of workshops, consultations, preparation of studies and guidance materials on relevant topics as identified by the Standing Committee; and
- d) provide capacity-building and advisory services to support Parties interested in implementing electronic solutions for the management and control of CITES permits and certificates and support Parties in establishing electronic permit systems and information exchanges.

**TENTATIVE BUDGET AND SOURCE OF FUNDING
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS OR DECISIONS**

According to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Submission of draft resolutions, draft decisions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties*, the Conference of the Parties decided that any draft resolutions or decisions submitted for consideration at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties that have budgetary and workload implications for the Secretariat or permanent committees must contain or be accompanied by a budget for the work involved and an indication of the source of funding. The Secretariat proposes the following tentative budget and source of funding.

The Secretariat estimates that a total budget of USD 425,200 will be required for the implementation of the draft decisions as follows:

Decision	Activity	Indicative costs (USD)	Source of funding
Draft decision on risk assessment and analysis Decision 19.BB	Develop guidance on risk-based analysis related to the process of analysis and inspection under CITES permit issuing systems (including one travel)	40,000	Extrabudgetary
Draft decisions on electronic systems and information technology Decision 19.CC a)	Study on risk-based approach for CITES trade control (including one travel)	30,000	Extrabudgetary
Draft decisions on electronic systems and information technology Decision 19.CC c) and d)	Organization of two regional workshops/consultations (including support for eligible participants)	120,000 (60,000 x 2)	Extrabudgetary
	Organization of two national workshops/consultations (including support for eligible participants)	50,000 (25,000 x 2)	
	Secretariat staff travel for the five workshops /consultations and advisory services (if requested)	67,200 (22,400 per year)	
	Interpretation In 3 languages in the workshops/consultations (depending on needs)	48,000 (approx. 12 days)	
	Develop training modules for workshops and advisory services (need-basis)	30,000 (approx. 40-50 days)	
	Travel for consultants and contractors for workshops/consultations/advisory services	40,000 (13,330 per year)	