

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

Summary record of the first session for Committee II

15 November 2022: 09h10 - 12h00

Chair: R. Ollerenshaw (Australia)

Secretariat: I. Higuero
S. Bengtsson
T. Carroll
H. Gandois

Rapporteurs: A. Caromel
L. Oliveira
R. Mackenzie
J. Robinson

Administrative and financial matters

7. Administration, finance and budget of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

7.1 Administration of the Secretariat

The Secretariat introduced document CoP19 Doc. 7.1, containing a summary of the host country arrangements, staffing situation of the Secretariat, administrative changes introduced by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

Document CoP19 Doc. 7.1 was noted.

7.2 Report of the Executive Director of UNEP on administrative matters

The representative of UNEP introduced document CoP19 Doc. 7.2, highlighting activities in support of the Convention, continued dialogue between UNEP and UN-administered multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and a new delegation of authority framework implemented by the Secretary-General. It drew attention to information document CoP19 Inf. 11, a report of the Second Consultation Workshop of Biodiversity-related Conventions on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (Bern II).

Document CoP19 Doc. 7.2 was noted.

7.3 Financial reports for 2020-2022

The Secretariat introduced document CoP19 Doc. 7.3, noting lower expenditure of the Trust Fund for 2020 due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It also expressed concern about the delay by Parties in paying their annual contribution, emphasizing the negative impact this had on the Secretariat's daily operations and reminding Parties of paragraphs 19 and 20 of Resolution Conf. 18.1

on *Financing and the costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2020-2022* concerning timely payment of contributions.

The report of expenditures incurred was accepted, and the reports of implementation of the costed programmes of work for 2020, 2021 and 2022 (up to 30 September 2022) were approved.

7.4 Budget and work programme for 2023 to 2025

The Secretariat introduced document CoP19 Doc. 7.4. It explained the three budget scenarios contained in the document: zero real growth; zero nominal growth; and incremental growth. Zero real growth would maintain the current number of staff and include an increase in operational costs; zero nominal growth would maintain the current number of staff and operating costs; and the budget with incremental growth would include two posts as agreed at CoP18 and additional proposed activities relating to the implementation of the programme of work. The Secretary General stressed that the objectives set out in the programme of work would not be achieved if commensurate financing was not allocated.

The Russian Federation expressed support for either the zero nominal or zero real growth scenarios and advocated for reducing costs in all categories. Brazil and Chile supported the zero nominal growth scenario. Japan, echoed by the United States of America, observed that the proposed zero nominal growth scenario did not represent true zero nominal growth. Australia supported the incremental growth scenario, believing that increased funding was needed to address the environmental crises faced globally.

The United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre drew attention to information document CoP19 Inf. 20 and highlighted the increasing costs of maintaining the CITES Trade Database. Species Survival Network called for innovative financing to overcome budget shortages.

The Chair established a Budget Working Group, comprising Argentina, Australia, Cambodia, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Japan, Kuwait, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, with the following mandate: consider documents CoP19 Doc. 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4, including the three budget scenarios in document CoP19 Doc. 7.4, and recommend to the Committee the budget for 2022 to 2025.

7.5 Access to funding

The Secretariat introduced document CoP19 Doc. 7.5, providing an update on the implementation of Decisions 18.4 to 18.11, including on financial or technical assistance provided by Parties, access to Global Environment Facility funding, and the convening of a wildlife roundtable on sustainable use. It reported on the roundtable on sustainable wildlife financing on African elephant conservation summarised in information document CoP19 Inf. 14 (Rev. 1). Since the roundtable already took place, the Secretariat considered that draft decision 19.EE in Annex 1 to the document had been implemented and should not be adopted. The Secretariat also suggested that draft decisions 19.BB and 19.CC be deleted as they had been incorporated into the draft resolution on financing for the triennium 2023-2025. It drew attention to a set of draft decisions relating to sustainable financing under paragraph E of the Secretariat's comments to the document and noted that these would be revisited under agenda item 66.2.2.

The United States of America and Peru supported the adoption of the draft decisions in Annex 1 to document CoP19 Doc. 7.5, with the United States agreeing that draft decision 19.EE should not be adopted. They supported the adoption of draft decisions 19.CC and 19.DD and proposed amendments to paragraph b) of draft decision 19.AA by inserting “, in line with existing GEF procedures and guidelines,” after “implementation of GEF projects” and to paragraph c) by deleting “resources for” after “under the eighth replenishment of”. The United States supported the deletion of Decisions 18.5 to 18.11, as these were replaced by new draft decisions.

With the exception of draft decision 19.EE, the draft decisions in Annex 1, with the amendments proposed by the United States of America to draft decision 19.AA, were accepted. It was agreed to delete Decisions 18.5 to 18.11.

7.6 Sponsored delegates project

The Secretariat introduced document CoP19 Doc. 7.6, providing an update on the implementation of the Sponsored Delegates Project (SDP) to attend CoP19, noting that information on the exact number of delegates would be given during the meeting and encouraging any delegates who had received funds to attend CoP19 not under the SDP to report this to the Secretariat for inclusion in an upcoming information document as requested in Resolution Conf. 17.3 on *Sponsored Delegates Project*. The Secretariat drew attention to proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.3 in Annex 1 to document CoP19 Doc. 7.6, to encourage gender balance in delegations and to clarify that the costs of administering the SDP would be charged against the 13% programme support costs applied to contributions made to the project. It also proposed the deletion of Decision 18.12 as it was implemented, as well as the adoption of a draft decision in Annex 2 to the document to provide funding for participation in Standing Committee meetings by delegates from Parties subject to an Article XIII process.

Colombia supported the draft decision and echoed by Cuba, expressed disappointment at the lack of funding to allow more delegates from developing countries to participate. The European Union and its Member States expressed support for the Sponsored Delegates Project, the amendments to the Resolution and the draft decision. The United States also expressed support for the SDP, the draft decision and the amendments with respect to gender balance and suggested that UNEP should consider waiving administrative costs for the SDP. The European Union and its Member States urged Parties that had been granted funding to attend with valid credentials and asked the Secretariat to track cases where this had not happened. The United States proposed the retention of Decision 18.12 and noted that it saw merit in encompassing paragraph a) of Decision 18.12 into Resolution Conf. 17.3 on *Sponsored Delegates Project*.

The amendments to Resolution Conf. 17.3 on *Sponsored Delegates Project* contained in Annex 1 to document CoP19 Doc. 7.6 and the draft decision in Annex 2 were accepted. The Committee agreed to retain Decision 18.12.

8. Language strategy of the Convention

The Secretariat introduced document CoP19 Doc. 8 and presented four options for a language strategy for the Convention, with different budgetary implications. Regardless of the option chosen by the Parties, the Secretariat noted that increased multilingualism would improve awareness and implementation of the Convention.

Kuwait supported the inclusion of additional working languages, noting the importance of this issue for the 24 Arabic speaking Parties. It proposed that this agenda item be discussed in the Budget Working Group. This was supported by Algeria, Bahrain, China, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates who also voiced support for options to increase the working languages of the Convention to promote participation in and implementation of the Convention. The European Union and its Member States and Japan expressed support for option 2 in document CoP19 Doc. 8 observing that the other options set out in the document had significant budgetary implications. The European Union and its Member States stated they could not support the other options in light of the budgetary constraints, burden on the Secretariat and implications for enforcement of the Convention but were happy to engage in further discussion. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States indicated that they could potentially support option 2 on the basis of voluntary funding only, with the United States noting that it should not be considered as an incremental strategy. India highlighted the possible implications of additional official languages for enforcement and processing times for CITES permits and certificates.

It was agreed that this agenda item would be referred to the Budget Working Group for further consideration based on the four options in document CoP19 Doc. 8, noting that there had been some support for option 2 in the Committee's discussion. The Chair announced that the Budget Working Group would have two dedicated sessions on the language strategy that would be open to Parties speaking Arabic, Chinese and Russian. It was agreed to delete Decision 18.30.

10. CITES Strategic Vision

The Chair of the Standing Committee introduced document CoP19 Doc. 10 and referred the Committee to the draft decisions in Annex 1 and the draft indicators for the *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030* in Annex 2. She noted that the Standing Committee had considered reports of the Secretariat presenting a comparative analysis in order to illustrate the linkages between the *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030* and the goals

within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Secretariat presented addendum CoP19 Doc. 10 Add, proposing further revisions to the draft indicators that the Standing Committee considered would warrant further discussion. The Secretariat further proposed a draft decision in Annex 2 to the addendum in order to continue work on indicators for objective 1.4.

Japan supported the recommendations in document CoP19 Doc. 10 adding that the indicators should be concise and measurable. China, Mexico, Norway, and the United States of America supported the adoption of the draft decisions in Annex 1 to document CoP19 Doc. 10 and the draft decision in Annex 2 to document CoP19 Doc. 10 Add, with China noting that the Animals and Plants Committees should solicit inputs and feedback from Parties. The European Union and its Member States, suggested some amendments to the draft decisions in Annex 1 of document CoP19 Doc. 10. Argentina, China, the European Union and its Member States, Norway and the United States supported deletion of Decision 18.24.

The United States stated that the indicators would benefit from further refinement and suggested some amendments to the proposed indicators. China noted that non-Western media should also be included in the indicators. Argentina and Mexico considered that the draft indicators could benefit from further refinement and proposed the establishment of an in-session working group. Humane Society International also proposed further changes to the indicators.

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognized the importance of effective implementation of the *CITES Strategic Vision* to the success of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

The draft decisions in Annex 1 to document CoP19 Doc. 10 and Annex 2 to addendum CoP19 Doc. 10 Add. were accepted. It was agreed to delete Decision 18.24.

The Chair established an in-session working group on agenda item 10 to review the *Strategic Vision indicators* in Annex 2 to document CoP19 Doc. 10 Add with the exception of the indicators for objective 1.4 and the indicators considered as finalized by the Standing Committee (indicated in blue in the document). The working group is composed of the following Parties and observers: Argentina, Cambodia, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Ghana, India, Japan, Mexico, United States of America (Chair), Zimbabwe; and Association of Zoos and Aquariums, European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation (FACE), Humane Society International, Natural Resources Defense Council, Safari Club International Foundation, Sustainable Use Coalition South Africa, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund.

The meeting was adjourned at 12h00.