

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



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

SUGGESTED TEXT CHANGES – DRAFT RESOLUTION AND DRAFT DECISIONS ON
ONE HEALTH & CITES (DOCUMENT CoP19 DOC. 23.2)

1. This document has been submitted by the United States of America* in relation to Document CoP19 Doc. 23.2.
2. We recommend several changes to the draft Resolution and draft decisions on One Health, as described in detail below. The suggested changes aim to strengthen the proposal's clarity (e.g., for action plans and public campaigns) and feasibility (e.g., reminding Parties of the scope of CITES and funding considerations); to replace the definition for "zoonoses;" and to further emphasize data collection, among other more minor changes.
3. If the proposed efforts in Doc. 23.2 are adopted and implemented (with revisions), we believe these measures could reduce the chance that CITES trade facilitates the spread of future zoonotic pathogens.
4. Further, we believe that the work of the proposed Expert Panel in Doc. 23.2 (which we alternatively suggest as a "Task Force") could help secure a place for CITES in international dialogues on zoonoses. The concept of One Health has gained attention in international fora. It is critical that CITES authorities contribute meaningfully to these international dialogues and increase the focus on not just pandemic preparedness or response but prevention of zoonotic pathogen emergence and spread by protecting wildlife and reducing opportunities for spillover.
5. We note that the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on CITES and zoonoses contemplated the idea of a One Health Resolution (draft decision 19.HH, Document CoP19 Doc. 23.1). The present proposal moves up the timeline for this idea. While the development of such a One Health resolution is faster than the usual pace of CITES, it is entirely appropriate for the CITES Parties to urge action – considering that COVID-19 is a zoonotic disease that has not only caused the loss of over 6.5 million people globally but has deeply affected ecosystems and economies, led to the mass culling of wild mammals in captivity, incentivized illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade, and disrupted routine CITES procedures and meetings.
6. We see that the One Health resolution could complement the draft decisions from the working group. The One Health Resolution and Expert Panel (which we suggest could be a Task Force) in Doc. 23.2

* *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.*

could support Parties in taking action, while the draft decisions from the working group in Doc. 23.1 will encourage stronger partnerships between CITES and the Quadripartite, among other steps.

Recommendations

7. We provide ideas and considerations for potential tasks of the Expert Panel/Task Force, if this team is formed. These may be helpful to consider as the Terms of Reference for this group are developed:
 - a) Plan how the team members would regularly engage with and become valued participants in discussions with the Quadripartite partners (WHO, FAO, UNEP, and WOA) regarding the prevention of zoonoses through a healthier international wildlife trade.
 - b) Consider the merits of developing a global risk assessment for zoonotic potential of CITES-listed species, using responses from the Notification to the Parties (if Doc. 23.1 draft decisions are adopted), any national assessments, and other scientific information to identify high-risk species in CITES trade and to develop optional guidance on handling, housing, processing, rearing, and trading such species. This may avoid duplication of efforts and the complexities that could arise from numerous national assessments that differ or conflict. A global risk assessment framework could define how to prioritize high-risk wildlife products. This would include factors related to the taxa, transport, product conditions, and other considerations and would need to synthesize and be informed by the numerous frameworks that have been produced in the last few years.
 - c) Consider the merits of working with WOA) to develop international standards for preventing zoonotic transmission among wildlife in CITES trade.

8. We recommend the following changes to the draft Resolution in Document CoP19 Doc. 23.2, with modified text provided in Annex 1. We suggest:
 1. Adding reference to Article VIII. Like the other CITES Articles mentioned in the preamble, Article VIII includes text requiring that “all living specimens...shall be properly cared for” (preamble paragraph 7; paragraph 1b(i)).
 2. Adding a paragraph about ensuring actions are feasible and within CITES’ mandate (new paragraph in the preamble).
 3. Modifying the definition of “zoonoses” to be consistent with that of the Quadripartite. The definition of “zoonoses” used in the Zoonoses Guide from the WHO, FAO, and WOA) (formerly OIE) acknowledges the risk of zoonotic pathogens being transmitted *between* humans and animals (not just one direction) and also includes “animals” rather than just “vertebrates” (paragraph 1(a)).¹
 4. Acknowledging the need for better record-keeping (adding text to paragraph 1d). Much information remains to be gathered and analyzed to understand zoonoses risks via the wildlife trade. As a priority for risk analyses, there is a need to identify which zoonotic pathogens are associated with which species in trade. Parties could be encouraged to take stock of risks pertaining to CITES-listed wildlife imports and exports, as well as pertaining to other species in trade where feasible.
 5. Adding more detail about the CITES One Health action plans and public awareness campaigns (paragraphs 1(d)i; 1(f)).
 6. Adding clarifying text from the UNEP/WOA) /FAO guidance (preamble paragraph 10);
 7. Specifying that these efforts pertain to CITES trade, CITES permitting, and CITES species (small changes throughout);
 8. Edit language in the preamble stating that CITES “can play a helpful role to reduce” zoonoses (preamble paragraph 14). This is more in line with the scope of CITES – i.e., international trade in listed specimens.

¹ <https://www.who.int/initiatives/tripartite-zoonosis-guide>

9. We recommend the following changes to the draft decisions in Document CoP19 Doc. 23.2, with modified text provided in Annex 2. We suggest:
1. Forming a Task Force rather than an Expert Panel. Task Forces have precedence in CITES (draft decisions 19.AA and 19.BB).
 2. Asking the Secretariat to seek information on funding options (draft decision 19.AA). New funding sources will be necessary. For example, it may be useful for CITES to explore the possibility of getting funding from the WHO's financial intermediary fund for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (designed for "long-term financing to strengthen capabilities in low- and middle-income countries and address critical gaps").²
 3. Adding text to avoid duplication of work (draft decision 19.AA old paragraph c).
 4. Removing draft decision 19.CC, which may not be necessary and will have consequential budget implications (draft decision 19.CC).

² <https://www.who.int/news/item/09-09-2022-new-fund-for-pandemic-prevention--preparedness-and-response-formally-established>

Suggested comments and edits

Draft Resolution Conf. 19.XX on *One Health and CITES*, CoP19 Doc. 23.2 Annex 1

***U.S. edits/changes are in underlined and in highlighted, bold text below**

RESOLUTION CONF. 19.XX ON *ONE HEALTH AND CITES: REDUCING HUMAN AND ANIMAL HEALTH RISKS FROM INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE*

RECOGNIZING that emerging diseases of zoonotic origin pose a threat to human and animal health and to global, national and local economies;

RECALLING that an estimated 75% of new and emerging infectious diseases in humans can be transmitted from animals to people;

FURTHER RECALLING estimates from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES) that 1.7 million currently undiscovered viruses are thought to exist in mammalian and avian hosts, of which between 631,000 and 827,000 could have the ability to infect humans;

RECALLING the devastating and ongoing economic, social and environmental consequences of COVID-19, which is likely to have emerged from pathogens from wild animals, and previous pandemics which have their origins in wild animal pathogens;

RECOGNIZING that trade in live wild animals presents opportunities and pathways for pathogens to spread between animals and to spill over to humans, creating the potential for the emergence and transmission of diseases of zoonotic origin;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that the conditions under which live animals are collected, bred, prepared, ~~and~~ shipped, **housed, and cared for** can contribute to their conveyance of pathogens, exposure to pathogens, pathogen mutation, and expression of disease, and reduce their ability to resist infection as a result of stress-induced diminished immune response;

RECALLING that the CITES treaty (Articles III, IV, V, **and VII**, ~~and VIII~~) requires that “**any** living specimens are so prepared **and shipped**” and “**transported and cared for** as to minimise the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment;”, **and the treaty further requires (Article VIII) that “all living specimens, during any period of transit, holding or shipment, are properly cared for so as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment;”**

ACKNOWLEDGING the strategic alignment among the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (~~OIE~~ **WOAH, formerly OIE**), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), known as the Quadripartite Alliance on One Health, aimed at sharing responsibilities and coordinating global activities to address health risks at the animal-human-ecosystem interface;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the operational definition of One Health developed by the One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP) and endorsed in December 2021 by the FAO, ~~OIE~~ **WOAH**, UNEP, and FAO;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the Guidance issued in April 2021 by the WHO, ~~OIE~~ **WOAH**, and UNEP, which *inter alia* calls on national competent authorities to suspend the trade in live caught wild animals of mammalian species for food or breeding purposes and close sections of food markets selling live caught wild animals of mammalian species as an emergency measure **unless demonstrable effective regulations and adequate risk assessment(s) are in place**, and which, although focussed on the trade in mammals for consumption as food, emphasises the relevance of its Guidance to other utilizations of wild animals;

AWARE of the Global Early Warning System For Health Threats and Emerging Risks at the Human-Animal-Ecosystems Interface (GLEWS+), which aims to inform prevention and control measures, through the rapid detection and risk assessment of health threats and events of potential concern at the human-animal-ecosystems interface.

NOTING the existing Cooperation Agreements between the CITES Secretariat and the OIE, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD);

RECALLING the cooperation between CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions, as recognised in Resolution Conf. 10.4 (Rev. CoP14) on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity*, Resolution Conf. 13.3 on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)*, Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions*, Resolution Conf. 18.4 on *Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, and Resolution Conf. 18.5 on *Cooperation and Synergy with the World Heritage Convention*”;

CONVINCED that CITES ~~should~~ **can** play a **helpful central** role to ~~significantly~~ reduce the risk of future human and animal infectious disease epidemics and pandemics of zoonotic origin, derived from trade in wild animals;

MINDFUL that actions taken under CITES to reduce this risk should be able to demonstrate success on the ground; fall within the CITES mandate and align with the aim of the Convention; aim to avoid duplication of existing efforts or initiatives; and be practical and feasible.

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. RECOMMENDS that:

- a) Parties, when implementing this Resolution, endorse the **Quadripartite's World Health Organization's** definition of the term "zoonoses" as "**infectious diseases that can be spread between animals and humans; can be spread by food, water, fomites, or vectors.**" "*any disease or infection that is naturally transmissible from vertebrate animals to humans*".
- b) Parties take into consideration the One Health approach in implementation of the Convention:
 - i. to ensure live animals are being traded in accordance with Articles III, IV, V and VII which require that living specimens are so prepared and shipped as to minimise the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment, **and Article VIII which further requires that all living specimens, during any period of transit, holding or shipment, are properly cared for so as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment.**
 - ii. in regulating, registering, or otherwise administering captive-breeding, farming, and ranching facilities in accordance with CITES Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, CITES Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev.), *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*, and CITES Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15), *Ranching and trade in ranches specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II*;
- c) Parties develop and strengthen synergies with appropriate national and international animal and public health authorities, taking account of relevant definitions, standards and guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organization for Animal Health (~~OE~~ **WOAH**), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other international bodies as appropriate;
- d) building on such synergies, Management Authorities, in consultation with Scientific Authorities, **on-the-ground wildlife managers**, and other bodies concerned:
 - i. develop a *One Health CITES Action Plan* to reduce the risk of zoonotic disease transmission **in CITES trade. Action Plans could: (a) Examine current trends and CITES import/export data for their country to identify the Party's riskiest activities involved in CITES trade for zoonotic pathogen spread. This could focus initially on high risk trade involving wild mammals and birds, and should consider opportunities for zoonotic pathogen transmission along the entire supply chain, with steps including: taking; breeding; ranching; farming; local transport; sale (including at markets); inspection; and shipment and transshipment of CITES listed species and specimens; and (b) Outline goals and objectives for**

- reducing risk in those specific activities**, using Guidance and references found in the One Health section of the CITES website;
- ii. **acknowledge that additional data collection would advance scientific understanding of zoonotic risk in the wildlife trade. Risk analyses are needed to know which zoonotic pathogens have been detected in species in trade. This knowledge is a priority for CITES-listed species, and is additionally useful (optionally) or non-CITES species, as zoonotic pathogens can spread between species traded together regardless of CITES status, and this can affect levels of overall risk among CITES trade.**
 - iii. ~~ii.~~ undertake appropriate risk analyses with respect to animal, human and environmental health, **to identify high-risk species in trade**, when considering applications for ~~CITES trade~~ permits and certificates; and
 - iv. ~~iii.~~ ensure that all individuals tasked with compliance and enforcement of CITES are regularly trained in safe animal handling and use of personal protective equipment (PPE);
- e) Parties take into consideration the risk of pathogen emergence and zoonotic disease transmission when implementing Resolution Conf. 9.7 (Rev. CoP15) on *Transit and transshipment*, Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Compliance and enforcement*, Resolution Conf. 10.21 (Rev. CoP16) on *Transport of live specimens* and other Resolutions as appropriate;
- f) Parties undertake broad public awareness and **behavior change** campaigns **that are informed by evidence-based social science approaches (especially the newly developed *Guidance for CITES Parties to Develop and Implement Demand Reduction Strategies to Combat Illegal Trade in CITES-listed Species*)**, with the goal of **reducing demand and improper handling of high-risk taxa in CITES trade** ~~ensure widespread understanding of the risks of pathogen emergence and zoonotic disease transmission~~; and the Chair of the Animals Committee and the CITES Secretariat work **with the Quadripartite Alliance on One Health**, the Convention on Migratory Species, and other biodiversity-related conventions to ensure the risk of pathogen emergence and disease transmission from wild animal capture, breeding, ~~farming, ranching~~, transit, shipment, and transshipment are addressed in international deliberations; and
2. ENCOURAGES all Parties, donors, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, as a matter of urgency, to support the implementation of this Resolution through the provision of financial and technical support to Parties where necessary.

Suggested comments and edits

Draft decisions, CoP19 Doc. 23.2 Annex 1

U.S. edits/changes are in underlined and bold, highlighted text below**DRAFT DECISIONS ON *ONE HEALTH AND CITES: REDUCING HUMAN AND ANIMAL HEALTH RISKS FROM INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE*Directed to the Secretariat and Animals Committee***

19.AA The Secretariat shall, in collaboration with the Animals Committee:

- a. seek expert guidance from the World Organization for Animal Health (~~OIE~~ **WOAH**), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and other relevant international health organizations with regard to the establishment of a CITES ~~One Health Expert Panel~~ **Task Force**, to support Parties with the implementation of Resolution Conf 19.XX;
- b. make recommendations to the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee regarding:
 - i. Terms of Reference for a CITES One Health ~~Expert Panel~~ **Task Force** ~~and;~~
 - ii. ~~Expert Panel~~ **Task Force** nominations for membership of the ~~Expert Panel~~ **Task Force**.
- c. **suggest by the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee mechanism(s) through which CITES could seek funding for this work, including from global public health organizations such as WHO, and how much funding could be administered to Parties to implement Resolution 19.XX on One Health;**
- d. create a dedicated One Health CITES website, containing references and guidance for Parties, sourced from relevant organizations including ~~OIE~~ **WOAH**, FAO, UNEP and WHO, to support the creation of *One Health CITES Action Plans* and risk assessments (in accordance with Resolution Conf 19.XX), **being cautious not to duplicate efforts of these other bodies.**

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.BB The Standing Committee shall:

- a. no later than its 78th meeting, adopt Terms of Reference for and, appoint a CITES One Health ~~Expert Panel~~ **Task Force**, to provide guidance to Parties in the development of their One Health Action Plans and risk assessments (in accordance with Resolution Conf 19.XX); and

- b. make recommendations to the 20th Conference of the Parties on the development of further resources to support Parties with the implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.XX as necessary.

Directed to the Secretariat

19.CC—The Secretariat shall support the Standing Committee in the implementation of Decision 19.BB including through the provision of technical expertise, translation and interpretation as appropriate.