

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



Seventy-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6–10 November 2023

Administrative and financial matters

Agenda

ANNOTATED AGENDA
(provisional)

Opening remarks of the Chair *No document*

The Chair of the Standing Committee will open its seventy-seventh session.

Opening remarks of the Secretary-General *No document*

The Secretary-General will provide an update on the Secretariat's activities.

Administrative and financial matters

1. Agenda..... SC77 Doc. 1

The Committee will be invited to adopt its agenda as set out in document SC77 Doc. 1.

2. Adoption of the working programme..... SC77 Doc. 2

The Committee will be invited to adopt its working programme as set out in document SC77 Doc. 2.

3. Rules of Procedure..... SC77 Doc. 3

The Committee will be invited to note that its Rules of Procedure as amended at its 70th meeting (Sochi, October 2018) and set out in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 3 remain valid for each of its meetings.

4. Credentials..... *No document*

The Secretariat will provide an update on the number of credentials received, in particular from Members of the Standing Committee, noting that only Members having submitted credentials can vote.

The Committee will be invited to note the oral report of the Secretariat.

5. Admission of observers..... SC77 Doc. 5

The Committee will be invited to note the list of observer organizations attending the meeting as set out in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 5.

6. Report of the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees..... SC77 Doc. 6

The Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees present the outcomes of the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee (AC32; Geneva, June 2023) and of the 26th meeting of the Plants Committee (PC26;

Geneva, June 2023). The issues discussed at AC32 and PC26 that are relevant to the Standing Committee and subject of a separate agenda item for its current meeting are indicated in the tables below.

AC32 agenda item	SC77 document
Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species: implementation of the recommendations of the Animals Committee	SC77 Doc. 35.2 (Rev. 1)
Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity [Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19)]	SC77 Doc. 36
Saiga antelopes (<i>Saiga</i> spp.)	SC77 Doc. 65
Eels (<i>Anguilla</i> spp.)	SC77 Doc. 66
Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.)	SC77 Doc. 67.2
West African vultures (Accipitridae spp.)	SC77 Doc. 62
Queen conch (<i>Strombus gigas</i>)	SC77 Doc. 68

PC26 agenda item	SC77 document
CITES and forests	SC77 Doc. 21
CITES Tree Species Programme	SC77 Doc. 25
Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species: implementation of the recommendations of the Plants Committee	SC77 Doc. 35.3, SC77 Doc. 33.2.3 (Rev. 1)
Products containing specimens of Appendix II orchids (Orchidaceae spp.)	SC77 Doc. 69
Annotations	SC77 Doc. 70
Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species	SC77 Doc. 72

PC26/AC32 agenda item	SC77 document
Emerging operational matters of the committees	SC77 Doc. 12
<i>CITES Strategic Vision</i>	SC77 Doc. 16
Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, including policy aspects of IPBES Assessment report on the sustainable use of wild species	SC77 Doc. 19
Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade	SC77 Doc. 17.2
Transport of live specimens	SC77 Doc. 52
Specimens produced through biotechnology	SC77 Doc. 54
Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source	SC77 Doc. 58
Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade	SC77 Doc. 60
Annotations	SC77 Doc. 70

Beyond this set of documents, the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees provide an update on their progress on the following issues: Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; Identification of timber and other wood products; Agarwood-producing taxa (*Aquilaria* spp. and *Gyrinops* spp.); Rosewood tree species [Leguminosae (Fabaceae)]; Boswellia trees (*Boswellia* spp.); Brazil wood (*Paubrasilia echinata*); African tree species; Neotropical tree species; Annotation #15; Orchid specimens exempted through annotation #4 g); African lions (*Panthera leo*); Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa; Seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.); Pangolins (*Manis* spp.); Trade in stony corals (Scleractinia spp.); Use of

coded-microchip implants for marking live animals in trade; Definition of the term ‘appropriate and acceptable destinations’; Conservation of amphibians (Amphibia spp.); Songbird trade and conservation management (Passeriformes spp.); Non-detriment findings for specimens of Appendix-II species taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction; Aquatic species listed in the Appendices; Zoological nomenclature; Country-wide Review of Significant Trade; Trade in medicinal and aromatic plant species; Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II; Botanical and zoological nomenclature (Nomenclature of Appendix-III listings; and Higher taxon listings in the Appendices).

The Standing Committee is invited to note the information in document SC77 Doc. 6.

7. Standard disclosure form for Members of the Animals and Plants Committee SC77 Doc. 7

The document presents an amendment to the *Standard disclosure form* for Members of the Animals and Plants Committee proposed by Israel at SC75 as follows (new text shown as underlined):

2. *Do you have, or have you had during the past four years, an employment or other professional relationship with any company, organization or institution directly involved in the commercial harvesting, breeding, propagation, domestic or international trade of specimens of CITES-listed species or directly representing the interests of any such entity?*

The Standing Committee is invited to consider the proposed amendment to the *Standard disclosure form for CITES declarations of interest*.

8. Financial matters..... SC77 Doc. 8

The document highlights the financial performance of the Secretariat since the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19, Panama City, 2022) and provides information on income and expenditure from 1 January 2022 to 30 September 2023 for both Convention trust funds. The report should be read in conjunction with the document on administrative matters.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) approve the reports on the costed programme of work for the full year of 2022 and for the period up to 30 September 2023 for the year 2023; and
- b) take note of other information provided in the report including the proposal by the Secretariat of not charging registration fees for observer organizations for online meetings.

9. Terms of reference of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee SC77 Doc. 9

In implementation of Decision 18.2, the Secretariat proposes that the terms of reference of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee be amended to refer to the Chair (and not Chairman) of the Subcommittee and be annexed to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees* as a way to increase transparency. The Secretariat notes that there have been very limited changes to those terms of reference over the last 15 years.

The Standing Committee is invited to propose to the Conference of the Parties that:

- a) the terms of reference of the Standing Committee Finance and Budget Subcommittee as amended by the Secretariat in the Annex to the present document be annexed to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of committees*; and
- b) paragraph 2 of the text of the Resolution Conf. 18.2 be amended to include a reference to the new Annex as follows:
 2. DIRECTS the Standing Committee to establish a Finance and Budget Subcommittee ~~and specify its with the terms of reference as found in Annex 3 to this Resolution;~~

10. Administrative matters

10.1 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 10.1

The Secretariat provides an update on the administrative performance of the Secretariat since the last meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19; Panama City, 2022), specifically on its staffing situation; administrative changes introduced by the United Nations Environment Programme; the implementation of the recommendations of the audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services; and the host country arrangements for the Secretariat.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 10.1 on administrative matters.

10.2 Report of the United Nations Environment Programme on administrative matters SC77 Doc. 10.3

The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reports on the administrative and financial management support provided to the Convention. Document SC77 Doc. 10.3 provides information on the UNEP policy guidelines and procedures; human resources support; budget and finance management support with an update on the Enterprise Resource Planning tool, Umoja, the income provided by Programme Support Costs and the settlement of contributions. UNEP also provides support to the Secretariat through its Legal Unit, its Programme Advisory Unit and its Operations and Risk Management Unit. The Executive Director also draws attention to the extra administrative coordination provided by the Multilateral Environmental Agreement Advisory Unit.

The Executive Director recommends that fixed long-term costs, such as administrative staff salaries, not be funded from Programme Support Costs (PSC) income. The Standing Committee may wish to consider increasing its staff budget over 2026-2030 to allow for a transition of a select number of administrative posts to the programme budget so as to reduce risks related to over reliance on PSC for core administrative functions. Parties are encouraged to settle their assessed contributions in full early in each year to guarantee continuity of operations under CITES. Those Parties that are in arrears are invited to engage with the Secretariat on settlement modalities. Finally, the Standing committee is invited to consider increasing its 2026-2028 staff budget in order to cover the increased costs associated with the After Service Health Insurance (ASHI) programme.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 10.2.

11. Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties SC77 Doc. 11

The Standing Committee Chair, as Chair of the intersessional working group on Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties, presents an update on the deliberations of the working group on Rule 25.6 on Procedure for deciding on proposals for amendment of Appendices I and II that relate to the same taxon but are different in substance. The Chair notes that Parties in the working group agree to maintaining the current order in the Rule, of proceeding from least restrictive to most restrictive, but with support for all proposals to be introduced, discussed, and decided upon – i.e., no automatic rejection of a proposal. The Conference would therefore decide in a stepwise approach on the appropriate level of restrictions. The document provides concrete examples and scenarios for the order of consideration of overlapping amendment proposals and a stepwise approach.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the progress made in implementation of Decision 18.1;
- b) provide any advice or comments on document SC77 Doc. 11 or process at this point; and
- c) agree that the working group continue its deliberations to reach consensus on a proposed text to amend Rule 25.6 with the view to ensuring the effective conduct of the meetings; and submit a report, including its recommendations, to the Standing Committee for consideration at its 78th meeting.

12. Emerging operational matters of the committees SC77 Doc. 12

The Secretariat proposes two guiding principles to determine the best course of action if intersessional work and meetings are affected by exceptional circumstances: (1) in-person meetings are the default

options for all meetings of the CITES permanent committees; and (2) online or hybrid options would be considered only when quorum as defined in the Rules of Procedure of each Committee might not be reached. The Secretariat proposes that, should a meeting of a Committee be postponed because of circumstances that are either global or at the location of the meeting preventing the organization of the meeting for a variety of reasons that could *inter alia* be political, or health- or security-related, the postponed meeting should take place no later than six months after its original date in order to ensure that progress is made in the implementation of the Decisions directed to the Committee concerned by the Conference of the Parties. If no viable in-person option is identified within two months of the original date of the meeting, the meeting would be rescheduled as an online meeting with participation of Members, observer Parties and observer organizations. The Secretariat also proposes that, should circumstances arise that prevent representatives from several regions from being present in-person at the meeting and thus affect quorum, the preferred solution would be a hybrid option for the Animals and Plants Committees, but unlikely to be needed for the Standing Committee.

The Secretariat presents a risk matrix for convening CITES meetings and guidance on how to conduct online and hybrid meetings and on how to apply the Rules of Procedure in an online or hybrid meeting. The Secretariat raises two additional considerations: options for expanding online intersessional work and for the participation of Parties directly concerned by an agenda item. The document also contains in Annex 1 tentative dates for CITES Committee meetings from 2024 to 2027.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider the guiding principles outlined in paragraph 3 of document SC77 Doc. 12 and the exceptional circumstances described in paragraph 5 and suggest other possible guiding principles or exceptional circumstances;
- b) request the Secretariat to continue using the risk matrix for convening CITES meetings contained in the present document;
- c) agree to use the *Guidance on the application of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee in an online or hybrid meeting* in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 12 when exceptional circumstances warrant the organization of an online or hybrid meeting and request the Secretariat to publish it on the CITES website;
- d) submit to the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Resolution Conf. 18.2 on *Establishment of Committees* as described in paragraphs 21, 23 and 25 of document SC77 Doc. 12 and as collated in Annex 3 to the document; and
- e) consider the proposal for an intersessional decision-making procedure for the organization of intersessional work as outlined in paragraphs 18 and 19, and request the Secretariat to develop a proposal for amending Rule 20 of its Rules of procedure taking into account the comments made at the present meeting for its consideration at its 78th meeting.

13. Access to funding SC77 Doc. 13 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat reports on the implementation of Decisions 18.4 and 19.4 to 19.9 noting that there had been no loan of personnel services (“secondments”) supported by Parties, but that it had benefited from Switzerland for three professionals through the Syni programme of the City of Lausanne. The Secretariat has published Notification to the Parties No. 2023/024 on *Status of funding for the implementation of valid Decisions after CoP19*, so that interested Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities are better informed of the existing funding gaps. The Secretariat has continued to participate in the Program Steering Committee of the GEF Global Wildlife Program with the aim to align GEF funded projects with CITES objectives. In implementation of Decision 19.6, The European Union and the United States of America have allowed for staff costs to be included in their project budgets in recognition of the need for project management support as the portfolio of activities implemented by the Secretariat have been increasing over time.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 13 (Rev. 1).

14. Sponsored Delegates Project..... SC77 Doc. 14

The Secretariat presents an overview of the Sponsored Delegates Project (SDP) process, starting with fundraising approximately 15 months before the meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP), followed by the nomination and selection of the sponsored delegates by Parties, the organization of the travel arrangements for the confirmed sponsored delegates and coordination at the CoP venue. The Secretariat explains the application of the selection criteria and presents the challenges and lessons learned from the last CoP. The Secretariat also explores the practical arrangements for the provision of support under the Sponsored Delegates Project for delegates attending the meetings of the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees and notes that no offer of funding has been received to allow the participation of delegates from developing country Parties subject to an Article-XIII process at the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) agree that the general provision of support under the Sponsored Delegates Project for non-Member delegates attending the meetings of the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees would not be possible at this time;
- b) recommend to the Conference of the Parties to expand the SDP to the Standing Committee only in support of the participation of developing country Parties subject to an Article-XIII process possibly by maintaining Decision 19.10;
- c) encourage Parties to make their financial contributions to the Sponsored Delegates Project as early as possible for maximum use and preferably no later than five months before the meeting of the CoP and with flexibility regarding the use; and
- d) confirm that Decision 18.12 has been implemented fully and agree to propose its deletion at the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

15. Arrangements for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20) *No document*

The Secretariat will provide an oral update on the ongoing preparations for CoP20.

Strategic matters

16. CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030 SC77 Doc. 16

The Secretariat presents in Annex 1 to document SC77 Doc. 16 a mapping of the *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030* objectives against the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and against the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The Secretariat highlights the most relevant goals and targets of the GBF for CITES and presents the recommendations adopted by the Animals and Plants Committees. Based on the mapping, the Secretariat proposes amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions* in order ensure the long-term contribution of CITES to the GBF. The Secretariat also proposes in paragraph 16 possible indicators for objective 1.4 of the *CITES Strategic Vision*: “The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation status and needs of species.”

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) review and possibly amend the areas of alignment between the *CITES Strategic Vision* and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework as contained in Annex 1 to document SC77 Doc. 16 and request the Secretariat to publish this mapping on the CITES website;
- b) in order to ensure the long-term contribution of CITES to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework, consider and submit to the Conference of the Parties amendments to Resolution Conf. 16.4 on *Cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions* contained in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 16 as follows (deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; new text is underlined):

RECOGNIZING the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, developed and adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its 10th ~~15th~~ meeting in ~~Nagoya, Japan~~ Montreal, Canada;

STRESSING that effective implementation of CITES is needed to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to achieve the Aichi targets;

UNDERLINING the commitment of the Convention to demonstrate how the effective implementation of CITES contributes to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its monitoring framework Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant Aichi targets;

RECOGNIZING the already existing significant cooperation of CITES with other biodiversity-related conventions;

COMMENDING the ongoing and important cooperation among the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions, such as through the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the Environmental Management Group, and in particular through its Issue Management Group on Biodiversity;

RECALLING Resolution Conf. 10.4 (Rev. CoP14) on Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Resolution Conf. 13.3 on Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), and Resolution Conf. 18.5 on Cooperation and synergy with the World Heritage Convention, as well as ~~Decision 15.19 and~~ Resolution Conf. 18.3 on CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-21-20430;

WELCOMING the decisions taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals on cooperation, coordination and synergies with CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions;

RECOGNIZING the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *The Future We Want*, that recognizes the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and encouraging the Parties to MEAs to consider further measures to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance cooperation and coordination amongst MEAs;

CONVINCED of the significant potential of increasing cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions to enhance coherent national level implementation of each of the conventions;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ENCOURAGES Parties to consider further opportunities to strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions at all relevant levels; ~~and~~
2. RECOMMENDS that Parties further strengthen the cooperation, coordination and synergies among the focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and other partners at the national level to enhance coherent national-level implementation of the Convention;
3. INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to contribute to the monitoring framework of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by providing to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) any relevant data it has collected on the indicators for the CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030, if so requested by the CBD Secretariat; and
4. ENCOURAGES Parties, through their CITES and CBD focal points, to take into account the information gathered for the development of non-detriment findings when reporting to CBD.
 - c) submit to the Conference of the Parties the indicator below for objective 1.4 of the *CITES Strategic Vision*:

Indicator 1.4.1 The number and proportion of species listed in Appendices that have been found to meet the criteria for each Appendix contained in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) or its successors as part of the Periodic Review process or of amendment proposals;

- d) consider the merit of refining an additional indicator for objective 1.4 based on the draft indicators below:

Indicator 1.4.2 The number and proportion of species listed in the Appendices identified as likely to be threatened by international trade on the basis of information in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (i.e., Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild and Extinct)

Indicator 1.4.3 The number and proportion of species listed in the Appendices identified as unlikely to be threatened by international trade on the basis of information in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (i.e., Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild and Extinct).

17. Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade

17.1 Report of the working group..... SC77 Doc. 17.1

Israel and Singapore as co-Chairs of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on the *Role of CITES in reducing risk of future zoonotic disease emergence associated with international wildlife trade* present progress in the deliberations of the working group and summarize the inputs received relating to the establishment of a CITES advisory body to provide guidance to Parties. The Chairs note that the majority of working group members did not agree to its value, while others did. Alternatives to an advisory body were proposed and will be discussed further by the working group.

The Standing Committee is invited to note the interim report of the working group in document SC77 Doc. 17.1.

17.2 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 17.2

The Secretariat summarizes the responses received from Parties about any measures they have in place to prevent and mitigate the risk of pathogen spillover and transmission from wildlife trade and associated wildlife supply chains, including markets, as well as the information relating to the activities implemented by the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and Parties to CMS relating to this area of work and inputs from other organizations and the United Nations Environment Programme. The Secretariat also presents its draft Memorandum of Understanding with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in Annex 2A to document SC77 Doc. 17.2 and its draft working programme in Annex 2B.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) review the report of the Secretariat and provide inputs to the Secretariat on the draft Memorandum of Understanding and draft joint programme of work with the World Organisation for Animal Health contained in Annex 2A and 2B so that the Secretariat may proceed with their finalization with WOAH; and
- b) request the Standing Committee's intersessional working group to consider the information provided by the Parties, the CMS Secretariat, organizations and the United Nations Environment Programme referred to in document SC77 Doc. 17.2 and its Annexes in implementing its mandate.

18. Cooperation with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other international organizations..... SC77 Doc. 18

The Secretariat presents how it intends to develop a draft partnership strategy that would give the rationale for why and how CITES cooperates with others. In this context, 'CITES' would include its Parties, Permanent Committees and the Secretariat. The starting point of the CITES partnership strategy would be the CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030 as set out in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 18.3 and in particular Goal 5. The Secretariat further draws the Parties' attention to the following meetings: the 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC CoP28), Dubai, UAE, 30 November – 12 December 2023; the Bern III Conference on synergies, Bern, week of 20-

26 January 2024 (to be confirmed); and the Sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA6), Nairobi 21 February – 1 March 2024. It also highlights several strategically important partnerships of CITES.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider the process outlined for the development of the draft CITES partnership strategy and provide any inputs;
- b) coordinate the participation of its Members at the Bern III Conference on synergies (January 2024) to ensure that the Convention and its interests are adequately represented at the conference; and
- c) encourage Parties participating in the UNEA-6 high-level dialogues to represent the achievements, needs and interests of CITES and its Parties.

19. Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, including policy aspects of the IPBES Assessment report on the sustainable use of wild species SC77 Doc. 19

The Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee, presents the *IPBES Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species* that is composed of a Summary for Policymakers approved at the 9th session of the IPBES Plenary (IPBES-9, Bonn, 2022) and a set of six Chapters accepted by IPBES-9. The document contains the key findings in the Summary for Policymakers along with a listing of CITES Resolutions, Decisions and processes that the Standing Committee may wish to consider in the context of the IPBES Assessment in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 19.

The Standing Committee is invited to

- a) consider establishing an intersessional working group to facilitate the review of the IPBES Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species; and
- b) consider and agree the following draft terms of reference for the working group:

The intersessional working group on the IPBES Thematic Assessment Report on the Sustainable Use of Wild Species will work through electronic means to:

- a) review the summary for policymakers of the thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES);
- b) consider the recommendations related to Decision 19.29 of the joint session of the 33rd meeting of Animals Committee and the 27th meeting of the Plants Committee;
- c) using the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 19 as the starting point, identify aspects relevant to CITES implementation that are not adequately covered in existing Resolutions and Decisions, and may require further consideration by the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) prepare a draft report of the results of the review and possible recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

20. World Wildlife Trade Report..... SC77 Doc. 20

The Secretariat draws the Parties' attention to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/019 of 8 September 2023 seeking feedback on the draft World Wildlife Trade Report and the potential utility and drawbacks of producing such a report on a regular basis.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of document SC77 Doc. 20 and the progress made in implementing Decision 19.30;

- b) invite Parties and observers to provide by 30 November 2023 feedback and views on the pilot *World Wildlife Trade Report* and the potential utility and drawbacks of producing such a report periodically; and
- c) request the Secretariat to compile responses from Parties to the report and to present its findings and make recommendations to its 78th meeting.

21. CITES and forests..... SC77 Doc. 21

The Secretariat summarizes the discussions about the possibility of developing a draft resolution on CITES and forests during the previous intersessional period. The Secretariat further presents progress in the implementation of Decisions 19.32 and 19.33, namely with the preparation of a 'CITES and forests compendium: CoP19-CoP20' as contained in Annex 1 to document SC77 Doc. 21 and soon to be published on the CITES website and the preparation of draft terms of reference for the multidisciplinary study on CITES and forests called for in paragraph b) of Decision 19.32 and revised by the Plants Committee as contained in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 21. The Secretariat conveys the recommendations of the Plants Committee to continue focusing on CITES-listed tree species for this intersessional period recalling that it was agreed during CoP19 that the initial focus should be on tree species, although eventually the scope could include all forest species of fauna and flora. The Secretariat further reports on its efforts enhance and raise awareness on CITES contributions to global forest-relevant mandates and forest policies and initiatives.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) in accordance with Decision 19.34 paragraph a), consider progress made in the implementation of Decisions 19.32 and 19.33 as reported in document SC77 Doc. 21;
- b) based on the above, explore options for the implementation of Decision 19.34 paragraph b); and
- c) delay implementation of Decision 19.34, paragraphs c) and d), until the outcomes of the interdisciplinary study on CITES and forests are available.

22. Language strategy for the Convention SC77 Doc. 22

The Secretariat informs the Committee that it has received funding from Switzerland to translate the CITES website in Arabic, Chinese and Russian by using automated translation and to translate in those same languages all valid Resolutions and Decisions. The contractual process for these translations is under way. The Secretariat further notes that it has not received funding for the interpretation of the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties into Arabic, Chinese and Russian.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the Secretariat's update on the implementation of Decision 19.38; and
- b) consider the future approach to the language strategy of the Convention in order to provide interpretation in all six languages at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties, with emphasis on the interpretation at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, subject to extrabudgetary contributions.

Capacity-building matters

23. Capacity-building

23.1 Implementation of Resolution Conf. 19.2 on Capacity-building..... SC77 Doc. 23.1 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat presents an update on its capacity-building activities in a number of Parties, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Cameroon, China, Ecuador, Guinea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mexico, Nigeria, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Togo, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. In addition, regional capacity-building support was provided in Africa, Asia, Central and South America and the Caribbean, and West and Central Africa. The Secretariat draws the Parties' attention to Notification to Parties [No. 2023/059](#) of 10 May 2023 on the *Master's course on Management and Conservation of Species in Trade: The International Framework* and on

Notification to Parties [No. 2023/038](#) of 27 March 2023 that calls for financial support towards offering scholarships to participants from CITES Management Authorities Scientific Authorities, or CITES enforcement focal points from developing country Parties, and for nominations of course participants interested in receiving the scholarships.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 23.1 (Rev. 1).

23.2 Report by the Sudan..... SC77 Doc. 23.2

The Sudan presents an overview of a workshop organized by the International Fund for Animal Welfare on combatting wildlife crime on the implementation of CITES from 13 to 16 March 2023 in Khartoum.

The Sudan highlights its needs for technical, logistical and financial support, in particular for regular animal surveys to determine the trend of populations to apply better non-detriment findings and develop proposals of amendments of the Appendices if needed.

23.3 Capacity-building framework..... SC77 Doc. 23.3

The Secretariat summarizes the conclusions reached during the past intersessional period on the need for a CITES capacity-building conceptual framework or strategy and draws the Parties' attention to the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development to support nationally determined priorities for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The Secretariat notes that this framework can provide guidance on how the CITES capacity-building framework could be shaped to ensure alignment and synergy. The Secretariat intends to organize, in consultation with the Chairs of the Standing Committee and the Animals and Plants Committees, as well as the Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, one or more regional technical consultations that would facilitate the development of an integrated capacity-building framework.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 23.3.

24. Compliance Assistance Programme..... SC77 Doc. 24

The Secretariat provides an update on the implementation of the Compliance Assistance Programme with financial or technical support provided by the European Union, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Secretariat presents an overview of the in-country compliance assistance provided to Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nigeria, Solomon Islands, Suriname and Togo.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) acknowledge Guinea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nigeria, Solomon Islands, Suriname and Togo for their commitment to participate in the Compliance Assistance Programme in recognition of their own compliance needs, and their engagement towards addressing those needs; and
- b) welcome the progress made so far in the implementation of the Compliance Assistance Programme.

25. CITES Tree Species Programme SC77 Doc. 25

The Secretariat presents the results of the external evaluation of the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP) that includes recommendations with respect to the sustainability, replication and up-scaling of the CTSP. The Secretariat notes that the CTSP has now completed its work and informs the Committee of a pledge by the European Union towards 'bridging activities', while it continues to search for additional sources of funds in support of a continuation of the CTSP. The Secretariat proposes that the CTSP and any future bridging projects be considered as one of the funding mechanisms in support of a *CITES and forests* programmatic approach, referred to in Section 3 of the 'CITES forest Compendium: CoP19-CoP20'.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider progress on the implementation of Decisions 19.49 and 19.50 contained in this document, together with document SC77 Doc. 21 on *CITES and forests*; and
- b) recommend that the Secretariat fully align and integrate CTSP as a dedicated funding mechanism of a *CITES and forests* programmatic approach as described in paragraph 12 of document SC77 Doc. 25 and described above.

CITES and people

26. CITES gender action plan SC77 Doc. 26

The Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee provide an update on the development of draft *CITES Gender Action Plan* with an outline available in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 26. They draw the Parties' attention to Notification to Parties No. 2023/104 inviting Parties and relevant stakeholders to share knowledge, case studies and other relevant experiences with the Secretariat and requesting funding in support of the preparation of the *CITES Gender Action Plan*.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) provide comments on the draft outline of the *CITES Gender Action Plan* contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 26;
- b) welcome the financial support from the European Union towards the implementation of Decision 19.51;
- c) encourage other Parties and relevant stakeholders to provide further financial support to facilitate the efforts towards the development and implementation of the *Gender Action Plan* and to share knowledge, case studies and other relevant experiences with the Secretariat in support of the preparation of the Action Plan; and
- d) request the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee, to submit a draft *CITES Gender Action Plan* for its consideration at its 78th meeting.

27. Establishment of the CITES Global Youth Network SC77 Doc. 27

Singapore and the Secretariat propose to establish a CITES Global Youth Network to build a platform for youths to be equipped with the capacity to objectively understand and manage the intricacies of sustainable wildlife trade. Singapore highlights its various initiatives to engage a broader community of youths and plans to invite 40 youth representatives from different geographical regions to Singapore in March 2024 to be part of the founding members of the CITES Global Youth Network (CGYN).

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) support Singapore's efforts in establishing the CITES Global Youth Network (CGYN);
- b) invite interested Parties to join Singapore's effort in the establishment of the CGYN;
- c) encourage Parties and observers to nominate youths affiliated with their organization to attend the CITES Youth Leadership Programme in March 2024 and Global Youth Summit from 2025 onwards; and
- d) request the Secretariat to support the efforts of Singapore and relevant Parties on the establishment of the CITES Global Youth Network.

28. Engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities

28.1 Report of the working group SC77 Doc. 28.1

Canada, as Chair of the Standing Committee working group on engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities, provides an update on the progress achieved by the working group following an in-person joint meeting of the intersessional working group on engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) and the intersessional working group on

CITES and livelihoods, which took place in Peru in August 2023. The working group agreed on the need to develop a general framework outlining key elements of a potential non-binding guidance for meaningful consultations with IPLCs in the development of proposals to amend the CITES Appendices. The working group also reviewed a list of ideas for engagement at the national and international level and noted pertinent linkages with other intersessional processes.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the progress and next steps for the working group on engagement on indigenous peoples and local communities.

28.2 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 28.2

The Secretariat presents a consolidated summary of the responses from Parties and observers on their experiences and lessons learned in engaging indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in CITES processes, particularly on the status of IPLCs and their relationship with CITES-listed species; the scale and form of engagement in CITES; successful experiences in IPLC engagement in relation to CITES; and challenges and solutions. The Secretariat also notes that the choice of terminology between “indigenous peoples”, “local communities” or “rural communities” implies complex political, legal and practical considerations depending on the national and local context.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of document SC77 Doc. 28.2, in particular of the consolidated summary of the responses from Parties on their experiences and lessons learned in engaging indigenous peoples and local communities in the CITES processes in both 2020 and 2023, contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 28.2; and
- b) consider including the task in Decision 17.57 (Rev. CoP19) concerning the examination of the terminology used in the CITES context when referring to “indigenous peoples”, “local communities” or “rural communities” in the mandate of the intersessional working group on IPLC engagement.

29. Livelihoods SC77 Doc. 29

Peru and Zambia, as co-Chairs of the Standing Committee working group on livelihoods, provides an update on the progress achieved by the working group, in particular following an in-person joint meeting of the intersessional working group on engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) and the intersessional working group on CITES and livelihoods, which took place in Peru in August 2023. The working group agreed that the draft *Guidance on maximizing benefits to Indigenous peoples and local communities from trade in CITES-listed species* will be a valuable tool for maximizing the benefits of the regulated trade in CITES-listed species to the livelihoods of IPLCs and the conservation and sustainable use of those species and agreed a set of amendments. The working group also reviewed new case presented by invited communities from Peru, as well as the different options regarding the use of registered marks of certification for products of CITES-listed species produced by IPLCs.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the progress and next steps for the working group on livelihoods.

30. Demand reduction to combat illegal trade SC77 Doc. 30

The Secretariat informs the Committee of an Asian regional training seminar on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species scheduled to take place in Singapore on 10–11 October 2023. Similar training seminars are also envisaged for other regions, including Africa and Central, South America and the Caribbean. The Secretariat encourages the use of the *Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*, following the 5-step approach to achieve behaviour change of targeted consumers of specimens of selected species.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the present document and the progress made in implementing Decision 19.55.

31. National laws for implementation of the Convention SC77 Doc. 31 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat presents an update on the number of Parties with legislation in Categories 1 (legislation that is believed generally to meet the requirements for implementation of CITES), 2 (legislation that is believed generally not to meet all of the requirements for the implementation of CITES) and 3 (legislation that is believed generally not to meet the requirements for the implementation of CITES) under the National Legislation Project (NLP) as indicated below:

National Legislation Project Sep-23		
Category	Parties	Percent
Cat. 1	111	60.3%
Cat. 2	45	24,5%
Cat. 3	25	13.6%
Recent Parties	3	1.6%
Total	184	100.0%

The Secretariat provides an update on progress (or lack thereof) of Parties with legislation in Category 2 or 3 and on targeted technical and legislative assistance it has provided to Parties since CoP19.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) commend India, Maldives, Pakistan, Bermuda and the British Virgin Islands for the efforts leading to their legislation being placed in Category 1 and other Parties or territories that have made substantial progress in adopting measures for the effective implementation of the Convention;
- b) agree on a recommendation to all Parties to suspend trade in all CITES-listed species for commercial purposes with Comoros, Congo, Dominica, Ecuador, Libya, Mongolia and Sierra Leone. The Secretariat shall inform the Parties concerned of this measure immediately after the present meeting. The recommendation shall take effect 60 days after it is agreed unless the Party concerned adopts appropriate measures before the expiry of the 60 days or takes significant and substantive steps to do so. Upon the expiry of the 60 days after the recommendation is agreed, the Secretariat shall issue a Notification to the Parties informing them of the recommendations to suspend commercial trade taking effect from that date;
- c) request the Secretariat to issue a formal warning or a second formal warning to the Parties that have not reported any legislative progress for more than three years, requesting them to immediately take steps to ensure progress be made before SC78 and to report such progress to the Secretariat 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee, hence by 31 October 2024. At the time of writing, this includes:
 - Azerbaijan: second formal warning (first formal warning issued at SC74);
 - Belarus: second formal warning (first formal warning issued at SC74);
 - Bosnia and Herzegovina: second formal warning (first formal warning issued at SC74);
 - Kenya: first formal warning;
 - Kyrgyzstan: second formal warning (first formal warning issued at SC74);
 - Lebanon: second formal warning (first formal warning issued at SC74); and
 - North Macedonia: second formal warning (first formal warning issued at SC70).
- d) agree to add Uganda to the list of Parties designated by the Standing Committee as requiring its attention as a priority; and

- e) agree with the Secretariat's proposed way forward concerning the handling of exceptional circumstances impeding the proper functioning of CITES at the national level.

The Standing Committee may further wish to recognize and welcome the support provided by Parties, development partners as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in support of the development and adoption of national measures to effectively implement and enforce the Convention.

32. National reports

32.1 Submission of annual reports..... SC77 Doc. 32.1

The Secretariat provides the list of Parties that had failed to provide annual reports for three consecutive years, without having provided adequate justification: Comoros, Eritrea, Nigeria and Somalia. As of 7 September 2023, the Secretariat's table of annual report submissions also shows that the following Parties have not yet submitted their annual reports for the past two years (2020 and 2021): Angola, Antigua, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, the Gambia, Georgia, Guinea, Maldives, Myanmar, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands and Togo. If the above-mentioned Parties fail to submit their 2022 CITES annual report, due on 31 October 2023 without adequate justification, they could also be subject to a Standing Committee recommendation to suspend trade.

The Standing Committee is invited to instruct the Secretariat to determine whether the Parties mentioned above have failed to provide annual reports for three consecutive years, without having provided adequate justification. If so determined, the Secretariat will issue a Notification (60 days after the closure of this 77th meeting of the Standing Committee) recommending that Parties not authorize any commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with those Parties until they have provided the missing reports.

32.2 Revised *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* and *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports* SC77 Doc. 32.2

The Secretariat proposes the inclusion of a new trade term code for "thread" and the addition of further examples for animal hair in the explanation for the trade term code "hair" in both sets of *Guidelines*. The Secretariat also proposes amendments to the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports* as shown in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 32.2 in order to reflect amendments adopted at CoP19 to Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19) on *National reports*, to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, and to Annex 1 to Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*. The proposed amendments to the *Guidelines* in the Annex also reflect suggestions made by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) that manages the annual illegal trade report database on behalf of the Secretariat. The changes suggested by UNODC focus on improving reporting and on facilitating the upload of the data in the database. This also entails changes to the report template.

In accordance with paragraphs 1 and 3 of Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP19), the Standing Committee is invited to approve the amendments to the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* in paragraph 4 of document SC77 Doc. 32.2 related to the trade term codes and the amendments to the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports* and the reporting template as outlined in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 32.2.

32.3 Revised *Report format* for implementation reports SC77 Doc. 32.3

The Secretariat presents a revised *Report format* for implementation reports in order to reflect in the report the new indicators for the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030*. The implementation report format contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 32.3 is restructured to follow the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030* and mapped against the Sustainable Development Goals and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. Where needed, the Secretariat proposes additional questions in order to collect data against the indicators.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) review and agree on the amendments to the report format of the implementation reports in the Annex to the present document; and
- b) encourage Parties to submit their next implementation report by 31 October 2024 (covering 2021, 2022 and 2023) so that the Secretariat can gather the necessary data for reporting on progress towards achievement of the goals of the *CITES Strategic Vision* to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20) scheduled to take place in 2025.

33. Compliance matters

33.1 Implementation of Article XIII and Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on CITES compliance procedures SC77 Doc. 33.1

The Secretariat provides an update on potential compliance matters identified in document SC74 Doc. 28.1, i.e., for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, a potential compliance matter regarding the registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes; and for Viet Nam, a potential compliance matter regarding trade in timber and other species that have been illegally harvested or trade. The Secretariat also identifies other potential compliance matters, namely, trade in live animals from Mexico to India and trade in live birds from Suriname. The Secretariat further suggests developing guidance on the scope and application of recommendations to suspend trade and developing a compliance action plan template.

In accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee is invited to:

Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes –United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

- a) determine that Article III and Article VII, paragraph 4, of the Convention are not being effectively implemented by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with regard to the registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes, in particular concerning two main elements:
 - i) the evidence that the parental stock has been obtained in accordance with relevant national laws and the provisions of the Convention (e.g. dated capture permits or receipts, CITES documents, markings, etc.); and
 - ii) the primarily commercial nature of the operations breeding Appendix-I animal species in captivity.
- b) urge the CITES Management Authority of the United Kingdom to ensure that facilities that are breeding specimens of Appendix-I listed species for commercial purposes be registered with the CITES Secretariat in accordance with the procedures established in Resolution Conf 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*. Further, in accordance with Article VII, paragraph 4, and Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15), the Standing Committee may wish to recommend that the CITES Management Authority of the United Kingdom do not issue CITES export permits or re-export certificates authorizing export for primarily commercial purposes of specimens of Appendix-I listed species that have been bred in unregistered facilities.
- c) recall paragraph 8 a) of Resolution 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) and invite Parties to restrict imports for primarily commercial purposes, as defined in Resolution Conf. 5.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Definition of 'primarily commercial purposes'*, of captive-bred specimens of Appendix-I species to those produced by operations included in the CITES Register and to reject any permit or certificate granted under Article VII, paragraph 4, if the specimens concerned do not originate from a registered facility and if the permit or certificate does not describe the specific identifying mark applied to each specimen.

Regarding timber trade from or to Viet Nam

- d) renew the mandate of the Secretariat to continue to keep close communication and strengthen the cooperation with Viet Nam to understand how the CITES authorities ensure that timber species are imported and re-exported in full compliance with CITES. The Secretariat shall seek an invitation from Viet Nam to provide in-country assistance, conduct a second technical assessment and a verification mission to further investigate allegations related to Viet Nam's possible engagement in trade in timber that has been illegally harvested or traded, including timber that has been traded contrary to CITES provisions. Subject to the availability of external funds and human resources to conduct that work, the Secretariat shall present its findings and recommendations to the forthcoming Standing Committee meetings.

Regarding trade in live animals to India

- e) request the Secretariat to investigate this case further and make recommendations to the Standing Committee. The Secretariat shall continue to keep close communication and strengthen the cooperation with Mexico and India on this potential case and seek an invitation from India to provide in-country assistance, conduct a technical assessment and a verification mission to understand how the CITES authorities ensure that live animal specimens are legally acquired and imported in full compliance with CITES. Subject to the availability of external funds and human resources to conduct that work, the Secretariat shall present its findings and recommendations to the forthcoming Standing Committee meetings.

Regarding trade in live birds from Suriname

- f) request the Secretariat to investigate this case further and make recommendations to the Standing Committee. The Secretariat shall continue to keep close communication and strengthen the cooperation with Suriname on this potential case and seek an invitation from Suriname to provide in-country assistance, conduct a technical assessment and a verification mission to understand how the CITES authorities ensure that live bird specimens are legally acquired and traded in full compliance with CITES. Subject to the availability of external funds and human resources to conduct that work, the Secretariat shall present its findings and recommendations to the forthcoming Standing Committee meetings.

Regarding guidance on the scope and application of recommendations to suspend trade

- g) instruct the Secretariat to prepare guidance on the scope and application of recommendations to suspend trade agreed by the Standing Committee to help Parties in their implementation of the Standing Committee's recommendations, in compliance with the Convention and taking into consideration the guidance and processes adopted in Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*. Subject to the availability of external funds and human resources to conduct that work, the Secretariat shall present its findings and recommendations to the forthcoming Standing Committee meetings.

Regarding the development and adoption of a compliance action plan template

- h) instruct the Secretariat to develop a standard template to assist the Parties in the preparation of compliance action plans requested in accordance with paragraph 29 h) of Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, building upon the plan developed by Mexico with the assistance of the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall submit a draft template for consideration at SC78 for possible adoption by the Conference of the Parties as Annex 2 to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19).

33.2 Expedited application of Article XIII for West African rosewood
Pterocarpus erinaceus for all range States

33.2.1 Report by Senegal..... SC77 Doc. 33.2.1

Senegal highlights that unsustainable and illegal trade in *P. erinaceus* is a regional problem, with the 'boom and bust' cycle of overexploitation of *P. erinaceus* to the point of commercial extinction in country after country in West Africa, indicating that consistent policies applicable to the entire region are needed. Senegal would like to see a strategy of capacity-building for range States, with direct support for field visits, in order to make

decisions based on an integrated assessment of the challenges to legal and sustainable harvest and trade.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) create an in-session working group on *P. erinaceus*, to refine recommendations contained in this document and document 33.2.3 on *Expedited application of Article XIII for West African rosewood (Pterocarpus erinaceus) for all range States*;
- b) note that any current or future harvest of *P. erinaceus* must occur in accordance with approved NDFs, and LAFs made by the Management Authority. If harvest is occurring without NDF and LAF, then this timber will only increase stockpiles of timber that cannot be exported in compliance with CITES sustainability and legality requirements;
- c) request range States included in the Article XIII proceedings and with voluntary zero export quotas to inventory and secure stockpiles, prior to resuming trade, to ensure that any exports of *P. erinaceus* only occur for timber that was harvested under approved NDFs and with LAFs made by the Management Authority following the provisions and Guidelines in Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19);
- d) take note of any capacity-building and training specific to the making of Non-Detriment Findings and Legal Acquisition Findings provided by the Secretariat or others, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention to Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo;
- e) invite Parties to exercise due diligence [see Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18)] and to not authorize the transit or import of any specimen if there is reason to believe that it is traded in contravention of the laws of any country involved in the transaction, or if there is reason to believe that the specimen accompanied by a CITES document may not have been traded in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;
- f) re-issue the SC75 recommendation instructing the Secretariat to provide, subject to external funding and upon request, capacity-building and training specific to the making of Non-Detriment Findings and Legal Acquisition Findings in accordance with the provisions of the Convention to Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. This recommendation should also note the need for the Secretariat to undertake missions to range States before SC78 and/or CoP20, subject to range State requests.
- g) invite Parties, in coordination with the Secretariat, to support range State efforts to develop and make Non-Detriment Findings and Legal Acquisition Findings in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;
- h) remind all Parties that Notification No. 2022/045 of 8 June 2022, recommending that the Parties maintain the suspension of commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Togo according to the expedited compliance procedure pursuant to Article XIII, remains valid and in effect until the following conditions are met:
 - i) The Party concerned makes scientifically based non-detriment findings for trade in the species in their countries to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Plants Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) and based on the outcomes of the Review of Significant Trade process for this species; and

- ii) The Party provides evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19);
- i) request range States to submit a report to the Secretariat on the implementation of these recommendations at least 90 days before SC78 so that the Secretariat can in turn submit its report and recommendations to the Standing Committee at that meeting;
- j) request the Secretariat to provide its report and recommendations to the 78th Meeting of the Standing Committee.

33.2.2 Updated Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) and Legal Acquisition Finding (LAF) report for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* in Sierra Leone and a request for special authorization to export the pre-zero export quota harvested stocks of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*..... SC77 Doc. 33.2.2

Sierra Leone presents its updated Non-Detriment Finding (NDF) and Legal Acquisition Finding (LAF) report for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and requests a special authorization to export logs harvested pre-Notification to the Parties N° 2022/021, referred to as pre-zero export quota harvested stocks of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* which are privately owned and were legally harvested. Sierra Leone's goal is to provide a total number, volume and LAF for these pre-zero export quota harvested stocks based on using the newly minted NDF traceability systems to demonstrate their eligibility for export. Sierra Leone is requesting the lifting of the zero export quota because the factors determining the NDF and LAF for Sierra Leone has been met.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider the request from Sierra Leone for the lifting of the zero export quota;
- b) review the Updated NDF and LAF Report for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* in Sierra Leone and make any additional recommendations for Sierra Leone to consider.

33.2.3 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 33.2.3 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat recalls that all sixteen known range States of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* are concerned by the application of Article XIII processes. Eight countries have established voluntarily zero export quotas and eight countries are submitted to a recommendation to suspend trade: seven under this process of expedited application of Article XIII, and Nigeria that is subject to its own Article XIII process. There are two conditions to withdraw the recommendation to suspend trade for these eight countries, which also apply to countries that established voluntary zero export quotas should they wish to resume international trade, namely:

- a) The Party concerned makes scientifically based non-detriment findings for trade in the species in their countries to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Plants Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and based on the outcomes of the Review of Significant Trade process for this species ('NDF-related recommendation').
- b) The Party provides evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings* ('LAF-related recommendation').

Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger and Senegal have indicated that they do not wish to resume international trade at this time. The Secretariat provides an update on progress towards meeting the NDF-related recommendation and LAF-related recommendation for each of the remaining 12 Parties. The Secretariat notes that a region-wide approach for range States could contribute to the implementation of recommendations under the expedited

Article XIII procedure and the Review of Significant Trade process for *Pterocarpus erinaceus*.

The Standing Committee is invited to note that no further recommendations with regard to Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Niger and Senegal are required under the present agenda item. The Standing Committee is further invited to consider the following recommendations:

Gambia (The)*:

- a) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) maintain the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from the Gambia under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are met;
 - ii) with regards to RST, note that no progress has been made by the Gambia in the implementation of the RST recommendations contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 33.2.3 (Rev. 1); and
 - iii) agree the recommendations (short-term and long-term) have not been implemented; and,

Guinea-Bissau*:

- b) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) maintain the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Guinea-Bissau under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are met;
 - ii) with regards to RST, note that no progress has been made by Guinea-Bissau in the implementation of the RST recommendations contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 33.2.3 (Rev. 1); and
 - iii) agree that the recommendations (short-term and long-term) have not been implemented; and

Mali*:

- c) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) acknowledge the significant progress made by Mali in implementing recommendations under the expedited application of Article XIII and long-term RST recommendations;
 - ii) accept that the NDF presented by Mali supports the quota of 55,384.8 m³ requested by Mali;
 - iii) recommend that the Secretariat publish any potential future quota proposed by Mali in round wood equivalent;
 - iv) note the incremental progress made by Mali in the preparation of the legal acquisition findings for *Pterocarpus erinaceus*; and
 - v) maintain the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Mali under the expedited application of Article XIII until Mali finishes providing the evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP18) as required in paragraph 10 (b) of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045;

Nigeria*:

- d) The Standing Committee is invited to:

- i) maintain the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Nigeria under Article XIII until the following conditions are met:
 - A. The Party concerned makes a scientifically based non-detriment finding for trade in the species to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Plants Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and based on the outcomes of the Review of Significant Trade process for this species; and
 - B. The Party provides evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*.
- ii) acknowledge the progress made by Nigeria in implementing the short-term RST recommendation (paragraph a); and
- iii) recommend the retention of the long-term recommendations;

Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Togo

- e) The Standing Committee is invited to maintain the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Togo under the expedited application of Article XIII until the conditions of paragraph 10 of Notification to the Parties No. 2022/045 are fully met;

Benin*

- f) Provided that this Party maintains its voluntary zero export quota, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) acknowledge the progress made by Benin in implementing the RST short-term recommendation (paragraph a);
 - ii) recommend that the remaining RST recommendations be addressed as a case study at the NDF workshop; and
 - iii) recommend the retention of the long-term recommendations;

Burkina Faso*

- g) Provided that this Party maintains its voluntary zero export quota, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) acknowledge the progress made by Burkina Faso in implementing the RST short-term recommendation (paragraph a); and
 - ii) recommend the retention of the long-term RST recommendations;

Ghana*

- h) Provided that this Party maintains its voluntary zero export quota, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) acknowledge the progress made by Ghana in implementing the short-term RST recommendation (paragraph a);
 - ii) recommend the retention of the long-term RST recommendations; and
 - iii) request the Secretariat to initiate an intersessional consultation process with the Plants Committee through its Chair to review the NDF submitted by Ghana, and inform the Chair of the Standing Committee about the outcomes;

Sierra Leone*

- i) Provided that this Party maintains its voluntary zero export quota, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) acknowledge the progress made by Sierra Leone in implementing the short-term RST recommendation (paragraph a);
 - ii) further acknowledge the significant progress made in delivering the long-term recommendations; and
 - iii) request the Secretariat to initiate an intersessional consultation process with the Plants Committee through its Chair to review the NDF submitted by Sierra Leone, and inform the Chair of the Standing Committee about the outcomes;
- j) The Standing Committee is invited to consider the way forward proposed by the Secretariat in paragraph 66 of document SC77 Doc. 33.2.3 (Rev. 1) for an integrated range-State approach in addressing NDFs and LAFs recommendations under the expedited Article XIII procedure and the RST process, and the organization of a regional workshop on NDFs and LAFs for *Pterocarpus erinaceus* range States.

33.3 Application of Article XIII in Bangladesh SC77 Doc. 33.3

The Secretariat reports on its mission to Bangladesh from 27 May to 1 June 2023 with field visits to the Customs House at Dhaka International Airport, National Botanical Garden (Mirpur, Dhaka), Bhawal National Park, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Safari Park (Gazipur), and two bird facilities importing birds, i.e., Kashvi Enterprise and S. A. International. The Secretariat also visited the fish processing area around the fishery ghat in Chattogram. The Secretariat undertook the mission to seek further information about the trade controls put in place by the CITES authorities of Bangladesh to ensure that specimens of bird species are imported and re-exported in full compliance with CITES requirements.

Based on the information provided by Bangladesh and gathered during the technical mission, Bangladesh appears to have taken initial steps towards a more effective regulation of trade in CITES-listed birds. However, many challenges remain regarding the management and regulation of international, transboundary and local trade in CITES-listed birds. Bangladesh is also facing significant challenges with respect to the effective enforcement of CITES and the fight against wildlife crime. The key gap is the lack of appropriate legislative measures to penalize trade in specimens in violation of the Convention.

In light of the above, the Standing Committee is invited to consider the following recommendations:

1. *Regarding management of trade in specimens of CITES-listed birds*

- a) Parties shall suspend commercial trade in specimens of CITES-listed birds from or to Bangladesh until the Party is in a position to adequately regulate and monitor trade in CITES-listed birds, notably through the following:
 - i) establishment of a reliable and efficient information system, preferably an electronic system, resources permitting, to facilitate the issuance of permits and certificates and the verification of the legal acquisition of specimens in trade;
 - ii) up-to-date records of traders, which should facilitate controls, communications, and collaboration;
 - iii) liaison and integration with other permitting/certification systems relating to the breeding of and trade in CITES-listed birds, including veterinary documentation, or customs declarations;

2. *Regarding legislation and law enforcement*

- b) Bangladesh shall strengthen the regulatory framework in relation to management of and trade in birds, including “Pet Bird rearing rules, 2020” enacted under the provision of the

Bangladesh Wildlife (Conservation & Security) Act, 2012, notably to bridge the gaps and close the loopholes that may be generated by the distribution of competences between different divisions, lack of adequate enforcement powers, the No Objection Certificates (NOC) system, lack of adequate penalties for offences related to wildlife crime and the final disposal of confiscated live specimens.

- c) Bangladesh shall strengthen the regulatory framework in relation to CITES-listed marine species and the implementation of the shark listings, notably to strengthen institutional cooperation between the Department of Fisheries, the CITES Management Authority and Customs. Bangladesh shall develop protocols and guidelines for exchange of information, division of tasks, harmonized interpretation of applicable provisions in relevant laws, including the planning of regular meetings and guidance on the final disposal of seized specimens.
- d) Bangladesh shall assess relevant authorities' law enforcement capacity, their mandates and needs to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species and the fight against transnational organized wildlife crime. Based on the assessment, Bangladesh shall build capacity among law enforcement agencies to strengthen CITES controls, using risk-based management approaches, in particular container controls at airports and seaports, as well as control of mailed parcels and of air cargo; combat transnational organized wildlife crime by strengthening criminal intelligence, exchange of intelligence, controlled delivery, wildlife crime investigation and prosecution, and financial investigations linked to wildlife crime.
- e) Bangladesh shall establish a national platform for enforcement cooperation and coordination between relevant authorities with the aim to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species and to combat transnational organized wildlife crime, in line with paragraphs 9 a) and b) and Annex 3 to Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*.
- f) Bangladesh shall scale up efforts to conduct analyses of available information to map out organized crime groups active in the country and convene multidisciplinary investigative teams involving all relevant authorities to work in close collaboration with local authorities in key identified areas, and initiate intelligence-driven operations and investigations, with a particular focus on birds and sharks.

3. *Handling and disposal of seized live specimens*

- g) Bangladesh shall take measures to ensure strict implementation of Article VIII of the Convention, taking into account recommendations contained in Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*, notably by maintaining an inventory of all seized live specimens of CITES-listed birds and by ensuring that confiscated live specimens are returned to the State of export or placed in a designated rescue centre, including the management measures of the specimens in the immediate short term (an initial period that may last between several hours to several weeks) and the longer term (which may often be a 'permanent' situation).
- h) Bangladesh shall ensure that adequate control measures are put in place for seized live specimens of CITES-listed birds, and reduce the risk of injury, mortality or theft from the rescue centre. In order to ensure strict application of these measures, Bangladesh shall develop a uniform protocol for the marking, recording, handling and disposal of seized and confiscated live specimens.

4. *Scientific Authority and surveys*

- i) Bangladesh shall strengthen its Scientific Authority by building capacity on wildlife issues, and allocating sufficient resources to undertake population surveys that can be used in the making of the non-detriment findings and in the setting of annual export quotas prior to authorizing trade in specimens of CITES-listed species of fauna and flora, with a particular focus on commercially exploited aquatic species.

The Standing Committee is invited to request Bangladesh to report to the Secretariat on progress made on the implementation of the recommendations agreed, 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee, in order for the Secretariat to convey this report and its comments to the Standing Committee.

The Secretariat reports on its mission to Cameroon from 12 to 18 March 2023. Field visits were made to a forest management unit (FMU) owned by PALLISCO logging company, specifically an active logging unit and its timber processing plant in the sites of Mindourou and Lomié, respectively. SEPBC, the Société d'Exploitation des Parcs à Bois du Cameroon (Port of Douala) and its various log yards were also visited. Next, the Secretariat visited the timber processing plant of the SEFECAM company in Douala. The Secretariat met and interviewed representatives of local and national sectoral authorities and administrations as well as the main private companies involved, unions representing the private sector, civil society stakeholders and the technical and financial partners operating in Cameroon.

Based on the information provided by Cameroon and gathered during the technical mission, the Secretariat identified certain strengths in the existing framework, which could serve as a model for other States that have to develop a system to manage forests and monitor the entire chain of custody from standing trees to the port of shipment. There are however also significant challenges in the management and regulation of international and cross-border trade of CITES-listed timber species. For example, the Secretariat noted with concern the institutional conditions under which the Management Authority operates: lack of staff, material and spaces to receive the public. The Secretariat considers that the traceability system (i.e., chain of custody) should be strengthened to ensure the traceability of timber and guarantee its legal origin for all types of forests. The Secretariat also believes that the legality of trade should be closely linked to the issuance of non-detriment findings (NDFs). At present, controls may be weak in certain checkpoints and gaps in the current legislation are loopholes exploited by national and foreign players involved in timber trade to export timber produced in accordance with national legislation but in violation of the Convention.

The Standing Committee is invited to agree the following recommendations:

*Regarding management of trade in specimens of *Pericopsis elata**

- a) Cameroon shall strengthen the CITES Management Authority and Scientific Authorities by building their capacity in the area of forestry and providing them with enough modern means to do their work, including issuing permits, controlling traceability, surveying populations of *Pericopsis elata* and other CITES-listed tree species to make non-detriment findings, setting annual export quotas before authorizing trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, and building administrative and scientific capacity at the national level.

Regarding legislation and law enforcement

- b) Cameroon shall strengthen the regulatory framework on forest management, in particular, to address any gaps and loopholes that could result from the multiplicity of logging titles and modes of allocation. Cameroon shall also adapt the relevant regulatory provisions to ensure that all CITES-listed timber species are considered as “managed” species in management plans of forest titles within the permanent domain so that a recovery rate of at least 50% can be applied to them.
- c) Cameroon shall consider developing and implementing an enforcement strategy and related policies regarding illegal trade in tree species and strengthening its efforts to ensure full compliance with the Convention.
- d) Cameroon shall assess relevant authorities’ law enforcement capacity, mandates and needs to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species and the fight against transnational organized forest crime. Based on this assessment, Cameroon shall build the capacity of enforcement bodies to increase CITES controls on the basis of risk-based management strategies, particularly the control of the parcs commerciaux in the ports of Douala and Kribi, and to combat transnational organized forest crime.
- e) Cameroon shall establish a national platform for cooperation and coordination between competent enforcement authorities to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species and to combat transnational organized forest crime, in accordance with paragraphs 9 a) and b) and Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*.

- f) Cameroon is invited to encourage companies to use innovative technologies to monitor timber and apply best practices to prevent illegally sourced or illegally traded timber from entering their supply chain.

Regarding issuance of export permits and SIGIF2 information systems

- g) Cameroon shall finalize the development of the SIGIF2 as an effective information system (subject to the availability of resources) to facilitate the issuance of CITES permits and certificates and the verification of legal acquisition of specimens in trade for all the modes of allocation of logging titles, while making it more difficult to tamper with CITES permits and certificates after their issuance.
- h) Cameroon shall facilitate liaison and integration with other permitting/certification systems relating to the harvest of and trade in CITES-listed species, for example, concession authorizations, phytosanitary documentation, or customs declarations.
- i) Cameroon shall ensure that export permits and re-export certificates are endorsed, with quantity, signature and stamp, by an inspecting official such as a customs official and not by the Management Authority, in the export endorsement block of the document.

The Secretariat also suggests that the Standing Committee recommend to the Secretariat and the importing countries to keep close communication and strengthen cooperation with Cameroon to better understand the different requirements and expectations regarding the implementation of forest regulations and to fully support the actions undertaken by Cameroon to implement these recommendations. The Secretariat also requests Cameroon to invite it to provide in-country assistance and conduct a second technical assessment and a verification mission with a representative of the Plants Committee and representatives of importing countries, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), to review progress in implementing the recommendations contained in paragraph 62. Subject to the availability of external funds and human resources to implement this work, the Secretariat will present its conclusions and recommendations at the next meetings of the Standing Committee.

Cameroon shall report to the Secretariat on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78), in order for the Secretariat to convey its report and its comments to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall review progress made by Cameroon and decide if sufficient progress has been made or if compliance measures should be recommended, in accordance with paragraphs 29 or 30 of Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*.

33.5 Application of Article XIII in China SC77 Doc. 33.5

The Secretariat reports on its mission to China from 23 to 29 July 2023 with field visits to the Wild Elephant Valley at Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve and Shanghai Wild Animal Park in order to understand the type of trade controls that are put in place to ensure compliance with Article III with respect to the import of live Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*) under source code C (animals bred in captivity). The technical assessment of the facilities hosting the live elephants focused on clarifying the purpose of the transaction and the specific characteristics and objectives of the reported trade from the Lao People's Democratic Republic to China.

Based on the information provided, the mating of elephants in the Lao People's Democratic Republic occurs in the wild (i.e., not under controlled conditions) between a wild male and a captive female (i.e., not between two captive-bred parents). The offspring therefore does not fulfil the definition of 'captive-bred' in Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on *Specimens controlled of animal species bred in captivity* and cannot be exported with source code C. The analysis of the Secretariat then focused on the whether the reported trade of live Asian elephants from the Lao People's Democratic Republic to China can be considered for "primarily commercial purposes" in accordance with Resolution Conf. 5.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Definition of 'primarily commercial purposes'*.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) determine that Article III and Article VII, paragraph 5, of the Convention are not being effectively implemented by China with regard to the import of live Asian elephants from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, in particular concerning two main elements:
 - i) the evidence that the specimens do not meet the definition of 'bred in captivity' in accordance with the criteria set out in Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev. CoP19) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*, and therefore the exemptions under Article VII of the Convention do not apply;
 - ii) the primarily commercial nature of the facilities housing, displaying, showing and breeding Appendix-I live Asian elephants.
- b) take one or more of the measures referred in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*. This may include a recommendation that China suspend with immediate effect the authorization of imports of wild Asian elephants from the Lao People's Democratic Republic that are to be used for primarily commercial purposes using the source code C. Similarly, in document SC77 Doc. 33.10, the Secretariat recommends that the Lao People's Democratic Republic "take measures to ensure that no live Asian elephants are exported from the Lao People's Democratic Republic until the Lao People's Democratic Republic is able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretariat that specimens to be traded with source code C comply with the definition of captive-bred specimens set out in Resolution Conf. 10.16 (Rev.) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*."
- c) encourage China to develop an action plan with cooperative measures that would support in situ conservation of Asian elephants in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The action plan could take the form of an in situ joint conservation programme consisting of, *inter alia*, conservation transboundary measures, information and marking systems, technical support, enforcement assistance, contribution of funds, strategies for the prevention of human-elephant conflict, exchange of specimens for reintroduction into the wild, capacity-building and training, technology transfer, investment, infrastructure and other measures.
- d) commend the Yunnan Provincial Forest Grassland Administration (FGA) for the compensation scheme for the losses caused by Asian elephants through an insurance company which can serve as an inspiring model to address human-wildlife conflict incidents in other parts of the world. The Standing Committee is also invited to commend the Shanghai branch of the CITES Management Authority of China for its efficient organization of the CITES documentation, the training facilities and the outreach material produced. They should also serve as an inspiring model for the issuing, handling and recording of CITES permits and related information for other CITES offices in the world.

33.6 Application of Article XIII in the Democratic Republic of the Congo SC77 Doc. 33.6

The Secretariat reports on the implementation of the Standing Committee's recommendations by the Democratic Republic of the Congo based on its report submitted to the Secretariat on 30 January 2023. These recommendations focus on quota setting and management; the management of trade in *Psittacus erithacus*; compliance assistance; illegal trade; as well as additional considerations related to the designation of the Management Authority in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Secretariat proposes that the Standing Committee update and replace the recommendations adopted at its 75th meeting as follows:

Regarding the management of trade in Psittacus erithacus

- a) The Parties maintain the suspension of trade in specimens of the species *Psittacus erithacus* from the Democratic Republic of the Congo pending compliance with the following recommendations:
 - i) on the basis of the reservation entered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the species *Psittacus erithacus*, this State is considered as a non-Party with respect to trade in this species. However, Resolution Conf. 4.25 (Rev. CoP14) states that a State not a

Party to the Convention for *Psittacus erithacus* should treat that species as if it were included in Appendix II for all purposes, including obligatory documents and controls, and suspend the issuance of export permits for commercial and non-commercial trade in specimens of *Psittacus erithacus* of wild origin until it is in a position to make scientifically based non-detriment findings;

- ii) the Standing Committee notes again the moratorium announced by the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the 69th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC69; Geneva, November 2017) to suspend trade in *Psittacus erithacus* and its announcement that it will not implement its reservation on the listing of the species in Appendix I, and it invites the Democratic Republic of the Congo to adopt a regulatory act to implement the moratorium;
- iii) the Democratic Republic of the Congo take steps to implement Decision 17.256 (Rev. CoP19) on *African grey parrots* (*Psittacus erithacus*);
- iv) the Democratic Republic of the Congo not establish experimental export quotas as part of scientific surveys of the species in the country;
- v) the Standing Committee also notes the commitment by the Democratic Republic of the Congo to undertake population surveys and develop a management plan for *Psittacus erithacus*.

Regarding illegal trade

- b) The Democratic Republic of the Congo shall continue its efforts to conduct analyses of available information to map organized crime groups active in the country and convene multi-disciplinary teams involving all relevant authorities, to work in close collaboration with local authorities in key identified areas, and initiate intelligence-driven operations and investigations, with a particular focus on illegal trade in *Psittacus erithacus* (African grey parrots), *Manis* spp. (pangolins) and elephant ivory.

Regarding legislation and law enforcement

- c) The Democratic Republic of the Congo shall strengthen the regulatory framework for the implementation of CITES in the country, aiming at institutional consolidation and the clear division of responsibilities between CITES authorities, so as to build their capacity and avoid any gaps that might result from a duplication of competences between the different institutions concerned.
- d) The Democratic Republic of the Congo shall implement a strategy and policies to fight corruption associated with illegal wildlife trade at all levels and strengthen its efforts to ensure the full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention*. The strategy should protect officials responsible for the implementation and enforcement of CITES from undue pressure, obstruction and threats.

Regarding reporting to the Secretariat

- e) The Democratic Republic of the Congo shall report to the Secretariat on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78), in order for the Secretariat to convey its report and its comments to the Standing Committee.

33.7 Application of Article XIII in Ecuador SC77 Doc. 33.7

The Secretariat reports on its technical mission to Ecuador from 12 to 15 May 2023 to support the CITES authorities in strengthening CITES implementation for sharks. The Secretariat met with representatives of the CITES authorities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Migration (MREMH) and the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE), as well as with representatives of the Vice-Ministry of Aquaculture and Fisheries within the Ministry of Production, Foreign Trade, Investment and Fisheries in Manta, port authorities, local authorities and the major

private stakeholders in the harvesting of CITES-listed species. Field visits were made in Manta and Quito, including the port of Manta, the cape of San Lorenzo, a company exporting shark fins and the company Transmarina. In Quito, the Secretariat visited the amphibian exhibition and the Wikiri frog-breeding facility. The Secretariat also presents a brief analysis of the shark fin trade between Ecuador and Peru from 2017 to 2022.

Based on the information provided by Ecuador and gathered during the technical mission, the Secretariat commends the Ecuadorian and Peruvian authorities for all their efforts to establish regulatory frameworks that could serve as models for other States in the process of developing management and monitoring systems for the whole chain of control for marine species from vessel departure, catch, landing controls, till mobilization of the fishery product.

The Secretariat highlights significant challenges relating to the management and regulation of international and cross-border trade of sharks and other marine species such as CITES-listed sea cucumbers. The Secretariat expressed its concern about the institutional conditions in which the Scientific Authority of Ecuador is working, lacking the staff, equipment and funding to make NDFs. The Secretariat believes that the traceability system (chain of control) should be strengthened in order to guarantee the traceability and legality of shark specimens, from point of departure to point of landing. The Secretariat believes that the legality of trade should be closely linked to the issuing of NDFs. Currently, controls might be lax at some cross-border inspection posts, and the shortcomings of current legislation mean loopholes that national and foreign agents in the shark trade take advantage of to export shark fins and specimens, as well as other marine species.

In light of the above, the Standing Committee may wish to consider the following recommendations:

Regarding management of trade in shark specimens

- a) Parties shall suspend trade in specimens of shark species until such time as Ecuador has set down requirements for bycatch, determined exact fishing capacity and bycatch limits, and established catch and trade quotas for sharks based on available scientific data.
- b) The Standing Committee encourages all importing Parties to inform the Secretariat of the volumes of CITES-listed shark specimens imported from Ecuador since the listings in Appendix II came into force.
- c) Ecuador shall strengthen CITES Scientific Authorities by developing their capacities and providing them with sufficient resources to carry out their work, including a population survey of internationally traded sharks and other CITES-listed aquatic species for the purpose of making NDFs and establishing annual export quotas before authorizing any trade of specimens of CITES-listed shark species.

Regarding legislation and the fight against fraud

- d) Ecuador and Peru shall strengthen their regulatory frameworks for the management and trade of aquatic species in order to address the gaps and shortcomings described in this document.
- e) Ecuador and Peru shall undertake an assessment of the capacities, mandates and needs of the competent authorities in the fight against illegal trade, in order to strengthen the control of illegal trade in CITES-listed aquatic species and the fight against transnational organized crime related to the illegal trade in sharks and other aquatic species. Based on this assessment, Ecuador and Peru shall strengthen the capacities of crime-fighting services in order to increase CITES controls, based on risk management strategies, including controls at border-crossing points, and to combat transnational organized crime involving fisheries.
- f) Ecuador and Peru shall create a binational platform for cooperation and coordination among the competent authorities involved in the fight against crime, in order to strengthen the monitoring of trade in CITES-listed species and combat transnational organized crime related to fishing activities, in accordance with paragraphs 9 a) and b), and Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*.

- g) Ecuador and Peru shall encourage companies to use innovative technologies to track and monitor vessels, and shall adopt best practices to avoid fishery obtained from illegal fishing or illegal exploitation or illegally traded catch entering their supply chains.

Regarding trade between Ecuador and Peru

- h) The Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat to continue monitoring this case and to make recommendations to the Standing Committee. The Secretariat shall continue to maintain close contact with Ecuador and Peru and to strengthen cooperation on this case, and shall seek an invitation from Peru to provide in-country assistance, conduct a technical assessment and a factfinding mission to understand how CITES authorities are ensuring that shark specimens and specimens of other aquatic species are legally acquired, imported and re-exported, in compliance with CITES. Subject to the availability of external funds and human resources to conduct that work, the Secretariat shall present its findings and recommendations to the forthcoming Standing Committee meetings.

Regarding reporting

- i) Ecuador and Peru shall report to the Secretariat on progress made in the implementation of these recommendations 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78), to enable the Secretariat to submit its report and input to the Standing Committee.

33.8 Application of Article XIII in the European Union..... SC77 Doc. 33.8

The Secretariat reports on its exchanges with the European Union following the discussions at SC74 as well as on its missions to Germany and to Spain where it visited non-registered captive-breeding facilities in order to establish whether these facilities traded in Appendix-I taxa for commercial purposes. The Secretariat's mission to Germany (4 to 6 October 2022) was facilitated by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (the German CITES Management Authority). The mission included visits to the CITES Authority of the federal state of Brandenburg, as well as to two captive-breeding facilities, one for parrots (Association for the Conservation of Threatened Parrots, Schöneiche) and one for reptiles (Reptilia24, Mundershausen). The Secretariat's mission to Spain (19 to 21 October 2022) was facilitated by the Spanish Management Authority and included visits to three captive-breeding facilities, one for parrots (Parrot Grys, Cubelles) and two for tortoises (Tortuland, Masquefa; and Radiatas Paradise, Denia).

The analysis by the Secretariat focuses on the legal origin of the parental stock of the captive-breeding facilities in the European Union and whether trade from these non-registered facilities can be considered as trade for commercial purposes, noting that the legal considerations to determine whether Article III, paragraph 5 (c) of the Convention is being effectively implemented are a) whether the intended use of the specimens in the country of import is commercial; b) whether the trade is authorized in exceptional circumstances; c) whether the purpose of the activity is to obtain economic benefit; and d) whether non-commercial aspects of the use clearly predominate.

The Standing Committee is invited to determine that Article III and Article VII para. 4 of the Convention are not being effectively implemented by the European Union with regard to the registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes, in particular concerning two main elements:

- a) the evidence that the parental stock has been obtained in accordance with relevant national laws and the provisions of the Convention (e.g. dated capture permits or receipts, CITES documents, markings, etc.); and
- b) the primarily commercial nature of the operations breeding Appendix-I animal species in captivity.

In accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee may decide to take one or more of the measures referred in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19). The Standing Committee may wish to urge the CITES Management Authorities of the EU to ensure that facilities that are breeding specimens of Appendix-I listed species for commercial purposes be registered with the CITES

Secretariat in accordance with the procedures established in Resolution Conf 12.10 (Rev. CoP15). Further, in accordance with Article VII, paragraph 4 and Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15), the Standing Committee may wish to recommend that the CITES Management Authorities of the EU do not issue CITES export permits or re-export certificates authorizing export for primarily commercial purposes of specimens of Appendix-I listed species that have been bred in unregistered facilities.

The Standing Committee may wish to recall paragraph 8 a) of Resolution 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) and invite Parties to restrict imports for primarily commercial purposes, as defined in Resolution Conf. 5.10 (Rev. CoP19), of captive-bred specimens of Appendix-I species to those produced by operations included in the CITES Register and to reject any permit or certificate granted under Article VII, paragraph 4, if the specimens concerned do not originate from a registered facility and if the permit or certificate does not describe the specific identifying mark applied to each specimen.

The Standing Committee may consider developing additional guidance with the assistance of the Secretariat for fulfilling the two requirements described in subparagraph a) and b) below and submit its recommendations to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties:

- a) specific guidance on the chain of custody required for demonstrating the legal acquisition of the parental stock, i.e., the chronological documentation, to the extent practicable and in accordance with applicable laws and records, of the transactions pertaining to the removal from the wild of a specimen and the subsequent ownership of that specimen;
- b) standardized and objective criteria to implement the requirement stated in paragraph 5 j) of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) to assist Management Authorities in making the findings about the continuing meaningful contribution that the captive-breeding operation will make to the conservation needs of the species concerned.

On the specific case of the import of two specimens of *Amazona imperialis* and the ten specimens of *A. arausiaca* from Dominica to Germany in 2018, the Standing Committee is invited to consider the explanation provided by Germany and determine whether a *force majeure* event (a hurricane/natural disaster) is an acceptable justification to authorize the transaction in question. Depending on its conclusion, the Standing Committee may further wish to determine whether it deviated from the requirements of the Convention or not.

33.9 Application of Article XIII in Guinea.....SC77 Doc. 33.9 and Add.

The Secretariat provides an update on the export of a volume of 13,991 m³ of pre-Convention specimens of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* authorized by the Standing Committee in April 2021, as well as on the implementation of the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) in Guinea with a focus on the implementation of domestic legislation, the management and issuance of CITES permits and certificates, and compliance and law enforcement. The Secretariat provides a further update in its addendum after a mission to Guinea from 9 to 13 October 2023. The Secretariat is pleased to note significant progress with the implementation of the CAP but highlights that the mismanagement of the export of the stockpile of pre-Convention *Pterocarpus erinaceus* and the significant excess in the volumes exported are disappointing setbacks. Based on the findings of the recent technical mission to Guinea that has confirmed that Guinea had exported more than the volume of inventoried stockpile authorized by the Standing Committee, the Secretariat proposed to update and replace the recommendations contained in document SC77 Doc. 33.9 with the following.

The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to consider the following recommendations:

Regarding the recommendation to suspend trade

- a) The Standing Committee recommends that Parties continue to suspend all trade in CITES-listed species with Guinea for commercial purposes until the following recommendations have been met to the satisfaction of the Standing Committee:

Regarding the proceeds from the export of the stockpile of Pterocarpus erinaceus

Guinea should:

- b) provide to the Secretariat evidence from the Public Treasury of the deposit in the State account of the proceeds obtained from the sale of the *Pterocarpus erinaceus* stockpile (4 billion Guinean francs, equivalent to USD 478,650) as well as of the transfer of the 40% (equivalent to USD 190,386) to a separate subaccount of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, and the establishment of a budget for the use of the funds taking into account the Compliance Assistance Project and in close consultation with the Management Authority;

Regarding national legislation

Guinea should:

- c) adopt legislative measures that meet the minimum requirements of CITES set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for implementation of the Convention* and in accordance with the guidance provided under the National Legislation Project; this should include the issuance of a legally binding instrument on the functions and responsibilities of the CITES Management and Scientific Authorities;

Regarding management and issuance of CITES permits and certificates

Guinea should:

- d) implement an electronic system for the receipt and management of applications for CITES documents, and for the issuance, filing and monitoring of CITES documents, as well as for the timely submission of an annual report; Guinea must ensure a quick setting up of the new Management Authority and submit a new sample signature without delay to the CITES Secretariat and continue to use security paper and security stamps;
- e) develop a protocol for the making of non-detriment findings by the CITES Scientific Authority prior to the issuance of export permits;
- f) assess the capacity of the CITES Management and Scientific Authority on CITES implementation, including the capacity to make non-detriment and legal acquisition findings, and address any gaps and needs for training and capacity-building, with the relevant technical assistance, including from the CITES Secretariat, if requested and subject to available resources;
- g) in order to prepare for the consideration of a future partial withdrawal of the recommendation to suspend trade, Guinea should submit for approval by the CITES Secretariat a list of species included in CITES Appendix II for which export for commercial purposes could be considered; and initiate the process of collecting data and information related to the approved species in order to develop precautionary voluntary export quotas for consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees, respectively, and the Standing Committee, taking into account Article IV of the Convention, Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings*, Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings* and Resolution Conf. 14.7 (Rev. CoP15) on *Management of nationally established export quotas*;
- h) every six months, submit copies of CITES permits and certificates issued to the CITES Secretariat for information and monitoring;

Regarding compliance and law enforcement

Guinea should:

- i) under the aegis of the Advocate General of the Conakry Court of Appeal (Focal Point for Wildlife Crime of the Ministry of Justice), and in accordance with national law, conduct criminal and financial investigations, through specialized agencies such as INTERPOL's National Central Bureau, the National Financial Information Processing Unit (*Cellule Nationale de traitement des Informations Financières - CENTIF*), the National Anti-corruption and good governance promotion agency, and the National Wildlife and Forest Crime

Brigade; and undertake judicial prosecutions against all individuals and entities involved in alleged offences associated with the recent illicit trafficking of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, including the members of the National Commission, irrespective of their position;

- j) make efforts to also investigate and collect information on the transnational organized syndicates operating in the country so that they can be brought to justice and avoid that only small perpetrators are targeted;
- k) continue to investigate and prosecute other cases of illegal trade in specimens of CITES-listed species and inform the Secretariat of the results of any legal proceedings by submitting the annual illegal trade report in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report*;
- l) consider developing and implementing a strategy to counter corruption linked to wildlife crime at all levels, including anti-bribery policies, and intensify efforts to ensure full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting and countering corruption, which facilitates activities conducted in violation of the Convention*. The strategy should include recommendations to protect officials responsible for the implementation and enforcement of CITES from undue pressure, obstruction and threats;
- m) establish a formal agreement between the CITES Management Authority and the Customs Service on collaboration, coordination and exchange of information;
- n) develop a protocol for the management and disposal of seized and confiscated specimens (live and dead), taking into account the provisions of the Convention and the recommendations of Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*;
- o) take action to address the gaps identified through the implementation of the Indicator Framework of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC);

Regarding reporting on the implementation of these recommendations

- p) Guinea shall prepare a report on the implementation of these recommendations, including the budget and the use of the funds mentioned in recommendation b) and any progress in the criminal investigations mentioned in recommendation i) and any other pertinent information. Guinea shall submit the report to the Secretariat 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee so that the Secretariat can in turn submit its report and recommendations to the Standing Committee at that meeting.

The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee invite Parties, ICCWC partners and donors to provide financial, technical and logistical support to Guinea to support the implementation of the above recommendations.

The Standing Committee is further invited to recommend that China seize and confiscate any illegal timber from Guinea. Should China reject the import of the illegal shipment and the timber be returned to Guinea, the Committee is invited to recommend that Guinea seize the shipments and ensure that these are disposed of in a manner that discourages further illegal logging and timber trafficking in accordance with Resolution Conf. 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*, preferably by complete destruction.

Finally, the Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee request the Secretariat to publish a Notification to the Parties to replace Notification to the Parties No. 2022/082, recommending that Parties maintain the suspension of trade for commercial purposes with Guinea.

33.10 Application of Article XIII in the Lao People's Democratic Republic SC77 Doc. 33.10

The Secretariat presents an update on the progress made by the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) with the implementation of the Standing Committee's recommendations regarding the management of exports of *Dalbergia* spp.; the national legislation for the implementation of CITES; the Lao CITES Authorities; law enforcement; the monitoring of wildlife

farms and related trade; trade in live Asian elephants; and awareness-raising. The Secretariat considers that, while some progress has been made, *inter alia*, with the preparation of a non-detriment finding for *Dalbergia* spp., the results are not satisfactory with limited progress on recommendations that were agreed in 2016. Of the fourteen recommendations addressed to Lao PDR (many since 2016), two have been implemented and four have been partially implemented. This leaves eight recommendations where no progress has been reported.

The Standing Committee is invited to recommend that Parties suspend trade (import and export) in specimens of all CITES-listed species for commercial purposes until Lao PDR has substantially achieved the following recommendations:

Regarding national legislation for the implementation of CITES

Lao PDR shall:

- a) revise and enact the Decree for the implementation of CITES;
- b) finalize the ongoing revision of the Wildlife and Aquatic Law to close the gaps in the CITES national legislation for the implementation of the Convention and to ensure that it meets the CITES minimum requirements as set out in Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for implementation of the Convention* and can be placed in Category 1 under the CITES National Legislation Project;

Regarding CITES Authorities

- c) Lao PDR shall continue to address the need for strengthening capacity and training of staff of the CITES Management and Scientific Authority of Lao PDR with the support of the CITES Secretariat and take measures to improve the collaboration between national CITES authorities *inter alia* by developing a standard operating procedure for the two authorities; finalizing the development of the national CITES permit database; and organizing regular training for the staff of the CITES Scientific Authority;

Regarding law enforcement

Lao PDR shall:

- d) investigate and prosecute cases involving organized or transboundary illegal trade activities, such as those identified by various international partners; and provide to the Secretariat the results (including arrests) of any investigations conducted by competent national authorities and the results of any legal proceedings against alleged perpetrators, in the [annual illegal trade report format](#);
- e) continue to work with the law enforcement agencies from China, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, including the context of the Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and other relevant networks to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices with the objective of improving the mechanisms for justice and police cooperation on the issues of trade and transiting of illegally acquired wildlife and illegal wildlife tourism; and
- f) report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Wildlife and Forest Crime Toolkit of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), and request support from ICWC to conduct a follow-up implementation of the ICWC indicator framework for wildlife and forest crime, to monitor performance over time and to identify areas for improvement.

Regarding monitoring of wildlife farms and related trade

Based on reporting from Lao PDR and the findings and observations contained in document SC77 Doc. 41.2 on *Asian big cats in captivity*, Lao PDR shall:

- g) complete the full audit of the tigers kept in captivity, including the analyses of the collection of DNA samples and photos to assist with identification of individual specimens;

- h) identify any pure specimens of the sub-species *Panthera tigris corbetti* and encourage facilities to engage in coordinated conservation breeding of such animals, if identified;
- i) take measures to limit the number of tigers to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers by:
 - i) restricting the breeding of tigers in captivity (sterilizing, separating male and female specimens), except for specimens of *Panthera tigris corbetti*;
 - ii) not authorizing any further import of tiger live specimens, except for *Panthera tigris corbetti* for conservation breeding purposes; and
 - iii) prohibiting the establishment of any new tiger facilities;
- j) implement stringent regulations for tiger husbandry standards to improve care and discourage expansion of captive-breeding facilities;
- k) develop standard operating procedures for inspections and disposal of dead tiger specimens (including destruction of carcasses after verification of the dead individual) and train officials to undertake inspections and monitor the disposal of carcasses;
- l) consider and implement relevant [outcomes of the Big Cat Task Force](#) Meeting with specific reference to section 2: *Strengthen regulation of facilities breeding big cats in captivity to prevent and detect any illegal trade from such facilities and deploy strengthened enforcement measures*;
- m) take measures to reduce the demand for tiger parts and derivatives through the implementation of campaigns and strategies taking into consideration the guidance in [Resolution Conf. 17.4 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* and the outcomes in section 3 of the [Big Cat Task Force outcomes document](#) (see document SC77 Doc. 41.2);
- n) establish an appropriate advisory committee or mechanism with involvement of the CITES Secretariat and other relevant organizations and partners to provide advice on the transformation of commercial tiger farms.

Regarding trade in live Asian elephants

Lao PDR shall

- o) take measures to ensure that no live Asian elephants are exported from Lao PDR until Lao PDR is able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretariat that specimens to be traded with source code C comply with the definition of captive-bred specimens set out in [Resolution Conf. 10.16 \(Rev.\)](#) on *Specimens of animal species bred in captivity*; and
- p) take substantive steps to implement Decision 18.226, in particular by developing strategies to manage captive Asian elephant populations, by ensuring that trade is conducted in compliance with Article III for Asian elephants of wild origin and by strengthening its system for registration and marking of Asian elephants held in captivity in Lao PDR.

The Secretariat is of the view that Lao PDR has implemented the recommendation on *Dalbergia* spp. and invites the Standing Committee to commend Lao PDR for the completion of the precautionary NDF for *Dalbergia* spp. In view of this progress, the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the genus *Dalbergia* spp., including finished products, such as carvings and furniture from Lao PDR could be withdrawn. The Secretariat also invites the Standing Committee to request Lao PDR not to issue export permits for *Dalbergia* spp. until it develops an NDF indicating that it would be sustainable to resume trade and submits a corresponding export quota.

The Secretariat finally recommends that the Standing Committee request Lao PDR to submit a report on the implementation of the above recommendations to the Secretariat 90 days before the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (5 November 2024) for the Secretariat to take into

account in its report on the application of Article XIII in Lao PDR to the Standing Committee and its report under paragraph 2 a) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties.

33.11 Application of Article XIII in NigeriaSC77 Doc. 33.11

The Secretariat reports on progress made by Nigeria since the 75th meeting of the Standing Committee in the implementation of the recommendations of the Standing Committee regarding management of trade in specimens of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*; legislation and law enforcement, the issuance of permits and information systems; the handling and disposal of seized stockpiles of CITES-listed species and monitoring progress.

The Secretariat acknowledges Nigeria's progress with the implementation of some of the Standing Committee's recommendations, in particular those related to the making of the non-detriment finding for *P. erinaceus* and certain legislation and law enforcement-related recommendations. The Secretariat looks forward to further support the new Management Authority with the implementation of the Compliance Assistance Project and encourages Nigeria to develop an integral approach covering law-enforcement related aspects and all CITES implementation legislation.

The Secretariat proposes that the Standing Committee revise and update its recommendations adopted at SC75 as follows:

Regarding trade in specimens of Pterocarpus erinaceus

- a) maintain the recommendation to suspend commercial trade in specimens of the species *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Nigeria under Article XIII until the following conditions are met:
 - i) The Party concerned makes a scientifically based non-detriment finding for trade in the species to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Plants Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* and based on the outcomes of the Review of Significant Trade process for this species; and
 - ii) The Party provides evidence of adequate legal acquisition findings to the satisfaction of the Secretariat and the Chair of the Standing Committee, having regard to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings*.
- b) The Committee encourages all potential transit and destination countries of shipments of illegal specimens of *Pterocarpus erinaceus* from Nigeria to take appropriate measures to ensure that such timber is not illegally transported or traded, including prohibiting entry, seizing such specimens upon arrival and applying appropriate sanctions against traffickers in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.
- c) The Committee invites the importing Parties to share with the Secretariat the administrative, legislative and enforcement arrangements put in place to sanction illegal trade in specimens of *Pterocarpus erinaceus*, including any relevant due diligence measure to verify legality and ensure sustainability; and encourages those Parties to consider inviting the Secretariat to conduct technical missions in order to strengthen cooperation between range States, transit and importing countries and identify further recommendations to ensure that timber trade is conducted in accordance with the Convention.

Regarding legislation and law enforcement

- d) Nigeria shall strengthen the regulatory framework in relation to forestry management, including forestry legislation at the State level, to avoid any loopholes that may be generated by the distribution of competences between Federal and State levels.
- e) Nigeria shall continue implementing a strategy to counter corruption linked to illegal wildlife trade at all levels, including anti-bribery policies, and intensify efforts to ensure full implementation of Resolution Conf. 17.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Prohibiting, preventing, detecting*

and countering corruption. The strategy should protect officials responsible for the implementation and enforcement of CITES from undue pressure, obstruction and threats.

- f) Nigeria shall establish a national platform for enforcement cooperation and coordination between relevant authorities to strengthen the control of trade in CITES-listed species and to combat transnational organized wildlife crime, in line with relevant paragraphs of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*.
- g) Nigeria shall scale up efforts to map out organized crime groups involved in illegal wildlife trade and operating in the country. Nigeria shall convene multidisciplinary investigative teams involving all relevant authorities. These teams will work in close collaboration with local authorities in key identified areas, and initiate intelligence-driven operations and investigations, with a particular focus on pangolins and ivory.

Regarding issuance of export permits and information systems

- h) Nigeria shall establish an efficient and secure information system, preferably an electronic system (resources permitting), to facilitate the issuance of permits and certificates, and the verification of all CITES provisions applicable to the specimens to be exported.
- i) Nigeria shall facilitate liaison and integration with other permitting/certification systems relating to the harvest of and trade in CITES-listed resources, e.g., timber concession authorizations, phytosanitary/veterinary documentation, or customs declarations.

Handling and disposal of seized stockpiles CITES-listed species

- j) Nigeria shall clearly define the competences of, and the division of labour between, relevant institutions to ensure that adequate control measures are put in place to secure storage facilities for seized stocks of CITES-listed species, including for pangolins and ivory.

Collaboration with Nigeria

- k) The Committee thanks Parties, partners of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), members of the civil society and cooperation agencies that are providing financial, technical and logistical support to Nigeria and invites them to coordinate further with the CITES Secretariat to avoid duplication and align activities to the extent possible with the implementation of the recommendations of the Standing Committee.

Monitoring progress

- l) The Secretariat shall remain in close contact with Nigeria, monitor the Party's progress in the implementation of recommendations of the Standing Committee, and bring any matters of concern to the attention of the Committee.
- m) The Committee requests Nigeria to report on progress made in the implementation of recommendations d) to j) by the document deadline of its 78th meeting, in order for the Secretariat to convey this report and its comments, as well as recommended follow-up measures in case of continued non-compliance, to the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee.

33.12 Malagasy palisanders and rosewoods (*Dalbergia* spp.) and ebonies (*Diospyros* spp.): Report of Madagascar..... SC77 Doc. 33.12

Madagascar reports on progress made in the implementation of Decision 19.71 directed to Madagascar. It provides a report on the prosecutions undertaken between 2017 and 2022 and their outcome, and on the seizures, arrests and prosecutions conducted during this period concerning CITES-listed species. Madagascar reports on the measures taken on a national level to fight trafficking; the operationalization of the laboratories for identification of precious woods; the report on the statistics of seizures, arrests and prosecutions; cooperation with partners, management of stockpiles of seized wood and prospects of the fight against wildlife trafficking.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 33.12 and the progress reported by Madagascar.

33.13 Totoabas (*Totoaba macdonaldi*)

33.13.1 Report presented by Mexico as Chairman of the Trilateral Contact Group on law enforcement to combat the illegal trade of totoaba..... SC77 Doc. 33.13.1

Mexico provides an update on the operationalization of the Trilateral Contact Group on Law Enforcement. The Permanent Missions of China, Mexico and the United States of America in Geneva held meetings on 19 and 20 July 2023 with the objective of advancing and adopting the terms of reference of the Contact Group. On 31 August, Mexico accepted to chair the Contact Group. China, Mexico and the United States of America will agree on a date for the signature of the terms of reference and, should it occur before the present meeting, Mexico will provide an oral update to the Standing Committee.

33.13.2 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 33.13.2

The Secretariat summarizes information provided by Parties affected by totoaba trafficking (Canada, China including Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR, Mexico, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America) and presents the implementation status of the targets and associated milestones in Mexico's compliance action plan as assessed by the Secretariat in Annex 5 to document SC77 Doc. 33.13.2.

The Secretariat welcomes the rapid progress made by Mexico with implementation of its compliance action plan and notes that room for improvement continues to exist regarding applying a zero-tolerance policy and appropriate penalties for unauthorized activities in the Zero Tolerance Area and the Refuge Area for the Protection of the Vaquita. The Secretariat further highlights that the Trilateral Enforcement Contact Group composed of China, Mexico and the United States of America has not finalized its terms of reference. The Secretariat presents revised terms of reference of the study on vaquita and totoaba in Annex 6 to document SC77 Doc. 33.13.2; the study will be available for review by the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/069 and the associated information provided in document SC77 Doc. 33.13.2;
- b) welcome the rapid progress made by Mexico with implementation of its compliance action plan;
- c) request Mexico to:
 - i) take into consideration the observations of the Secretariat as presented in Annex 5 to document SC77 Doc. 33.13.2;
 - ii) prepare a report for the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78) on progress with the implementation of targets and associated milestones in its compliance action plan not yet completed and ongoing, as highlighted in Annex 5 to document SC77 Doc. 33.13.2; and
 - iii) submit the report to the Secretariat 90 days in advance of SC78, for it to be made available to the Committee for consideration;
- d) request the Secretariat to continue to monitor Mexico's implementation of its compliance action plan and make the report submitted by Mexico to SC78 in accordance with recommendation c) available to the Committee together with any recommendations the Secretariat may have;

- e) agree to review Mexico's progress with the implementation of its compliance action plan at SC78 and consider if any further compliance actions or measures are needed;
- f) request China and the United States of America to invite the Secretariat for a technical mission to have a better understanding of the measures and activities being implemented by these Parties in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs a) to c) of Decision 18.292 (Rev. CoP19);
- g) request China, Mexico and the United States of America to report to SC78 in accordance with Decision 19.74, and to decide at SC78 if sufficient progress has been made or if further measures are needed regarding any of these three Parties;
- h) subject to the availability of funds and resources, request the Secretariat to work with INTERPOL and UNODC to convene a Wildlife Inter Regional Enforcement (WIRE) meeting and a Regional Investigative and Analytical Case Meeting (RIACM) on totoaba, as anticipated in the [agreed outcome document](#) of the online *Meeting of Range, Transit and Consumer States of Totoaba*; and
- i) note the progress regarding the study on vaquita and totoaba.

34. National ivory action plan process SC77 Doc. 34

The Secretariat provides an update on the implementation of the National Ivory Action Plans (NIAPs) by the 13 Parties participating in the NIAP process. Four Parties are in Category A (most affected by the illegal trade in ivory): the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Togo and Viet Nam. These Parties require priority attention. Four are in category B (markedly affected by the illegal trade in ivory): Cambodia, Gabon, Malaysia and Mozambique. Finally, five Parties are in Category C (affected by the illegal trade in ivory): Angola, Cameroon, Congo, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Qatar. For those Parties that reported prior to SC77, i.e., Angola, Cambodia, Cameroon, Mozambique, Nigeria and Qatar, the Secretariat provides its assessment of their progress reports on their NIAPs.

The Standing Committee is invited to agree on the following recommendations with respect to the following Parties grouped by category:

Category A Parties

Democratic Republic of the Congo

- a) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not submit a report on progress with NIAP implementation;
 - ii) consider any progress report submitted by the Democratic Republic of the Congo ahead of SC77, and any oral update at the present meeting and make any further recommendations as appropriate; and
 - iii) recall that, unless satisfied with timely progress in the implementation of NIAP actions by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Committee had agreed at SC75 to make recommendations as appropriate at the present meeting, which might include recommendations in accordance with Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *CITES compliance procedures*.
- b) The Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee and in accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process* and Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *CITES compliance procedures*, to issue a Notification to the Parties recommending all Parties to suspend commercial trade in all CITES-listed species with the Democratic Republic of the Congo, until the Democratic Republic of the Congo complies with the provisions of Step 4, paragraphs a) and b), of the *Guidelines*.

Nigeria

- c) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note the limited progress made by Nigeria in implementing its NIAP and encourage the Party to step up efforts to progress implementation of its NIAP;
 - ii) agree an overall rating of 'partial progress' for Nigeria, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines* in accordance with Step 4 paragraph e) of the *Guidelines*.

Togo and Viet Nam

- d) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that Togo and Viet Nam did not submit reports on progress with NIAP/NIRAP implementation; and
 - ii) consider any progress reports submitted by these Parties ahead of SC77, and any oral update provided by these Parties at the present meeting and make any further recommendations as appropriate.
- e) The Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process*, to issue a warning on behalf of the Committee, requesting the Parties concerned to submit their NIAP/NIRAP progress report to the Secretariat within 60 days of the conclusion of SC77.
- f) if there is no satisfactory response by Togo or Viet Nam, the Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat to issue a Notification to Parties recommending all Parties to suspend commercial trade in CITES-listed species with Togo and/or Viet Nam until the Party concerned submits a progress report to the Secretariat confirming that progress has been made towards NIAP implementation.

Category B Parties

Cambodia

- f) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note the progress made by Cambodia in implementing its NIAP;
 - ii) agree an overall rating of 'achieved' for Cambodia, in accordance with Step 4 paragraph e) of the *Guidelines* and invite the Secretariat to engage with relevant experts to further evaluate progress made by Cambodia so that the Secretariat can make a recommendation on whether Cambodia can exist the NIAP process.

Gabon

- g) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that Gabon did not submit reports on progress with NIAP implementation; and
 - ii) consider any progress reports submitted by Gabon ahead of SC77, and any oral update at the present meeting and make any further recommendations as appropriate; and
 - iii) urge Gabon to submit reports to the Elephant Trade Information System as a matter of urgency.
- h) In accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process* and with paragraph 29 c) of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee, to issue a written caution, requesting Gabon to submit its NIAP progress report to the Secretariat and to offer assistance to Gabon.

Malaysia

- i) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that Malaysia did not submit reports on progress with NIAP implementation; and
 - ii) consider any progress reports submitted by Malaysia ahead of SC77, and any oral update at the present meeting and make any further recommendations as appropriate.
- j) In accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process* and with paragraph 29 c) of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee, to issue a written caution, requesting Malaysia to submit its NIAP progress report to the Secretariat and to offer assistance to Malaysia.

Mozambique

- k) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note the limited progress made by Mozambique in implementing its NIAP and encourage the Party to step up efforts to progress implementation of its NIAP;
 - ii) agree an overall rating of 'partial progress' for Mozambique, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines* in accordance with Step 4 paragraph e) of the *Guidelines*.

Category C Parties

Angola

- l) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that the report submitted by Angola does not include new progress made, and therefore express serious concern about the stagnation of NIAP implementation in Angola in the past two years;
 - ii) consider any progress reports submitted by Angola ahead of SC77, and any oral update provided at the present meeting and make any further recommendations as appropriate.
- m) In accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process* and with paragraph 29 c) of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee, to issue a written caution, requesting Angola to submit its NIAP progress report to the Secretariat and to offer assistance to Angola.
- n) The Standing Committee is invited to note the request of Angola for technical assistance in training, and encourage Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others to provide, where possible, financial and technical assistance to Angola to support the implementation of its NIAP.

Cameroon

- o) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note the limited progress made by Cameroon in implementing its NIAP and encourage the Party to step up efforts to progress implementation of its NIAP;
 - ii) agree an overall rating of 'limited progress' for Cameroon, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process*; and
 - iii) encourage Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others to provide, where possible, financial and technical assistance to Cameroon to support the implementation of its NIAP.

Congo

- p) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that the Congo did not submit reports on progress with NIAP implementation;
 - ii) consider any progress report submitted by the Congo ahead of SC77, and any oral update provided at the present meeting, and make any further recommendations as appropriate;
 - iii) urge the Congo to submit reports to the Elephant Trade Information System as a matter of urgency.
- q) In accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process* and with paragraph 29 c) of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee, to issue a written caution, requesting the Congo to submit its NIAP progress report to the Secretariat and to offer assistance to the Congo.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

- r) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note that the Lao People's Democratic Republic did not submit reports on progress with NIAP implementation; and
 - ii) consider any progress reports submitted by the Lao People's Democratic Republic ahead of SC77, and any oral update provided at the present meeting, and make any further recommendations as appropriate.
- s) In accordance with Step 4, paragraph f), of the *Guidelines to the NIAP process* and with paragraph 29 c) of the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, the Standing Committee is invited to request the Secretariat, on behalf of the Committee, to issue a written caution, requesting the Lao People's Democratic Republic to submit its NIAP progress report to the Secretariat and to offer assistance to the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Qatar

- t) The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) note the progress made by Qatar in implementing its NIAP and encourage the Party to step up efforts to progress implementation of its NIAP;
 - ii) agree an overall rating of 'partial progress' for Qatar, in accordance with Step 4, paragraph e), of the *Guidelines of the NIAP process*.

35. Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species

35.1 Overview of the Review of Significant Trade SC77 Doc. 35.1 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat provides details on the 119 cases (species or taxa/country or range State combinations) that are currently in the Review of Significant Trade in a table in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 35.1 (Rev. 1). Of these cases, 80 relate to fauna and 39 relate to flora. This table includes the 21 species/country combinations that were selected by the Animals Committee and the 20 species/country combinations selected by the Plants Committee for inclusion in Stage 2 of RST at their 32nd and 26th meetings respectively (AC32 and PC26; Geneva, June 2023).

The Secretariat reports on the deployment of the Review of Significant Trade Tracking and Management database and a draft user-friendly guide to the Review of Significant Trade, inviting comments from Parties on both the database and the guide.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 35.1 (Rev. 1).

35.2 Implementation of recommendations of the Animals Committee SC77 Doc. 35.2 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat reports on actions taken by Parties to implement recommendations made by the Animals and Standing Committees under the Review of Significant Trade to ensure compliance with the obligations of Article IV, paragraph 2 (a), 3 or 6 (a) of the Convention. The Secretariat informs the Standing Committee of its determination as to whether the recommendations formulated by the Animals Committee have been implemented by the range State concerned. The document provides an update on long-standing cases and on species/country combinations selected following CoP17.

- a) Concerning *Chelonoidis denticulatus* from Suriname, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) retain trade in *Chelonoidis denticulatus* from Suriname within the review;
 - ii) encourage Suriname to continue to work with the Secretariat through the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) to develop a non-detriment finding for this species; and
 - iii) encourage Suriname to provide an update on the implementation of the recommendations to the Secretariat by 1 March 2024 for consideration and inclusion in its report to the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee.
- b) Concerning *Malayemys subtrijuga* from Indonesia, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) congratulate Indonesia for the significant progress it has made towards implementing the recommendations of the Animals Committee;
 - ii) remove *Malayemys subtrijuga* from Indonesia from the review;
 - iii) encourage Indonesia to publish an export quota of 125 for live individuals of *Malayemys subtrijuga*, including a maximum straight carapace length (SCL) of 10 cm; and
 - iv) invite Indonesia to share its new management plan for *Malayemys subtrijuga* with the Animals Committee when it becomes available.
- c) Concerning *Notochelys platynota* from Indonesia, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) congratulate Indonesia for the significant progress it has made towards implementing the recommendations of the Animals Committee;
 - ii) invite Indonesia to publish an annual export quota from 2024 of 250 specimens of *Notochelys platynota* with a maximum straight carapace length (SCL) of 15 cm;
 - iii) remind Indonesia that any change to this quota should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee along with a justification, for their agreement;
 - iv) agree that recommendations d) to g) of the Animals Committee remain outstanding; and
 - v) encourage Indonesia to provide an update on the implementation of the outstanding recommendations d) to g) to the Secretariat by 1 March 2024 for consideration and inclusion in its report to the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee.
- d) Concerning *Strombus gigas* from Grenada, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) congratulate Grenada for the significant progress it has made towards implementing the recommendations of the Animals Committee; and
 - ii) encourage Grenada to continue working closely with the Secretariat and the CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM/CITES working group on queen conch (QCWG) to implement the recommendations and provide an update to the Secretariat by 1 March 2024 for consideration and inclusion in its report to the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee, as appropriate.
- e) Concerning *Triceros feae* from Equatorial Guinea, the Standing Committee is invited to:

- i) remove *Trioceros feae* from Equatorial Guinea from the RST subject to the publication of a zero export quota; and
 - ii) remind Equatorial Guinea that any change to this quota should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee along with a non-detriment finding, including a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, for their agreement in advance of any trade taking place.
- f) Concerning *Trioceros montium* from Cameroon, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) remove *Trioceros montium* from Cameroon from the RST subject to the publication of a zero annual export quota;
 - ii) note that, with the establishment of a zero quota, Cameroon will have implemented the recommendations of the Animals Committee; and
 - iii) remind Cameroon that any change to this quota should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee along with a non-detriment finding, including a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, for their agreement in advance of any trade taking place.
- g) Concerning *Trioceros quadricornis* from Cameroon, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) remove *Trioceros quadricornis* from Cameroon from the RST subject to the publication of a zero annual export quota;
 - ii) note that, with the establishment of a zero quota, Cameroon will have implemented the recommendations of the Animals Committee; and
 - iii) remind Cameroon that any change to this quota should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee, along with a non-detriment finding, including a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, for their agreement in advance of any trade taking place; and an update on the implementation of Animals Committee recommendations a) to c).
- h) Concerning *Amazona farinosa* from Guyana, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) request Guyana to share the results of its population study of psittacines; and
 - ii) urge Guyana to provide information on the implementation of recommendations c) to l) by 1 March 2024 so that it can be considered by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- i) Concerning *Amazona farinosa* from Suriname, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) congratulate Suriname on the significant progress it has made in implementing the recommendations of the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee;
 - ii) establish an export quota of 200 specimens, reminding Suriname that any increases to the interim quota, the planned changes should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee along with a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, for their agreement;
 - iii) agree that recommendation l) has been implemented; and
 - iv) encourage Suriname to continue working closely with the Secretariat to implement the outstanding recommendations and provide an update to the Secretariat by 1 March 2024 to be included in its report to the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee.

- j) Concerning *Ara ararauna* from Guyana, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) request the Secretariat to publish an annual export quota of 660 birds for *Ara ararauna* from Guyana;
 - ii) urge Guyana to clarify how the data from the survey was used to determine the sustainable level of off-take and the proposed export quota; and address the concerns by the Animals Committee in its review of the study (see Annex 2 to document SC75 Doc. 8); and
 - iii) invite Guyana to submit a new non-detriment finding, based on survey data by 1 March 2024 for review by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- k) Concerning *Ara ararauna* from Suriname, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) congratulate Suriname on the significant progress it has made in implementing the recommendations of the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee;
 - ii) establish a conservative quota of 500 specimens on *Ara ararauna* for Suriname;
 - iii) remind Suriname that any increases to the interim quota should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee along with a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, for their agreement;
 - iv) agree that recommendation m) has been implemented; and
 - v) encourage Suriname to continue working closely with the Secretariat to implement the outstanding recommendations and provide an update to the Secretariat by 1 March 2024 to be included in its report to the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee.
- l) Concerning *Ara chloropterus* from Guyana, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) request Guyana to share the results of its population study of psittacines; and
 - ii) urge Guyana to provide information on the implementation of recommendations c) to k) before 1 March 2024 for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- m) Concerning *Ara chloropterus* from Suriname, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) acknowledge the progress that has been made by Suriname;
 - ii) welcome the fact that the process of establishing quotas in Suriname is now being done by the Scientific Authority;
 - iii) encourage the Management Authority to follow the advice of the Scientific Authority and maintain the zero quota until further studies can justify a sustainable quota to be agreed with the Chair of the Animals Committee;
 - iv) agree that recommendation l) has been implemented; and
 - v) urge Suriname to provide an update on the implementation of recommendations outstanding by 1 March 2024 so it can be considered by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- n) Concerning *Poicephalus gulielmi* from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Standing Committee is invited to urge the Democratic Republic of the Congo to provide an update on the implementation of the outstanding recommendations c) to g) by 1 March 2024 for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- o) Concerning *Uromastix geyri* from Mali, the Standing Committee is invited to recommend that all Parties continue to suspend trade in specimens of *Uromastix geyri* from Mali until it

demonstrates compliance with Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a) and 3, for trade in this species, and provides full information to the Secretariat regarding compliance with the recommendations of the Animals and Standing Committees.

- p) Concerning *Cuora amboinensis* from Indonesia, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) congratulate Indonesia for the significant progress it has made in implementing the recommendations of the Animals Committee
 - ii) remove *Cuora amboinensis* from Indonesia from RST subject to the publication of a revised export quota of 7,200 specimens from the wild, including a minimum straight carapace length (SCL) of 18 cm; and
 - iii) remind Indonesia that any change to this quota should be communicated to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee along with a non-detriment finding, including a justification of how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, for their agreement.
- q) Concerning *Anguilla anguilla* from Algeria, the Standing Committee is invited to ask Algeria to provide an update on the implementation of the outstanding recommendations by 1 March 2024 for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- r) Concerning *Anguilla anguilla* from Morocco, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) instruct Morocco to maintain its current quotas of 500,000 kg of live adult eels (raised in aquaculture based on a harvest of 2 tonnes of glass eels), 5,500 kg of wild-taken adult eels and 0 live glass eel (fingerlings) of *A. anguilla* until it provides a justification for any increased quota, demonstrating how the change is conservative, based on estimates of sustainable off-take that make use of best available scientific information, to the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee, for their agreement. In this regard, Morocco should clarify how the proposed increase in the harvest quota for glass eels of 2 tonnes to 4 tonnes will only yield an additional 100 tonnes of adult eels from the farms;
 - ii) share the results of its stock assessment studies when they become available; and
 - iii) invite Morocco to provide an update by 1 March 2024 for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.
- s) Concerning *Anguilla anguilla* from Tunisia, the Standing Committee is invited to:
 - i) commend Tunisia for its ongoing progress in implementing the remaining recommendations d) to l);
 - ii) invite the anguillid specialist group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to assist Tunisia in the development of its non-detriment finding; and
 - iii) invite Tunisia to provide an update on the implementation of the outstanding recommendations by 1 March 2024 for consideration by the Animals Committee at its 33rd meeting.

35.3 Implementation of recommendations of the Plants Committee SC77 Doc. 35.3

The Secretariat reports on actions taken by Parties to implement recommendations made by the Plants and Standing Committees under the Review of Significant Trade to ensure compliance with the obligations of Article IV, paragraph 2 (a), 3 or 6 (a) of the Convention. The Secretariat informs the Standing Committee of its determination as to whether the recommendations formulated by the Plants Committee have been implemented by the range State concerned.

The Secretariat also reports in paragraphs 16 and 17 of the document on specific matters identified by the Plants Committee at PC26 not related to the implementation of Article IV. These concern *Echinocactus grusonii* (endemic to Mexico); *Mammillaria laui* (endemic to Mexico) and

Mammillaria spp. The Secretariat informs the Committee that it is working with the United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre to identifying reporting at an earlier stage in the RST process in future analyses.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) *Dalbergia retusa*/Nicaragua:
 - i) note that the Secretariat is exploring avenues to support Nicaragua's request for financial support, as part of the field-testing phase of the NDF-project (as per Decision 19.132);
 - ii) request the Secretariat to issue a Notification inviting Parties and relevant stakeholders to contribute financial resources in support of Nicaragua's implementation of outstanding RST recommendations; and,
 - iii) urge Nicaragua to make significant progress in the implementation of outstanding recommendations c) and d) of the Plants Committee in time for the matter to be considered at SC78.
- b) *Dalbergia retusa*/Panama: in accordance with recommendation h) of the Plants Committee for this case, agree that Panama has complied with all recommendations in the framework of the RST process for *Dalbergia retusa* and can be removed from the process.
- c) *Pericopsis elata*/Congo: urge Congo to continue to make progress on outstanding recommendations, in close collaboration with the Secretariat, and request Congo to provide an update in time for the matter to be considered at SC78.
- d) *Pericopsis elata*/Democratic Republic of the Congo: in accordance with recommendation l) of the Plants Committee for this case, agree that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has complied with all recommendations in the framework of the RST process for *Pericopsis elata* and can be removed from the process.
- e) *Prunus africana*/Cameroon: agree that Cameroon has complied with all recommendations for *Prunus africana* and can be removed from the RST process.
- f) *Prunus africana*/Democratic Republic of the Congo: in accordance with recommendations m) and n) of the Plants Committee for this case, agree that the Democratic Republic of the Congo has complied with all recommendations in the framework of the RST process for *Prunus africana* and can be removed from the process.
- g) *Pterocarpus santalinus*/India:
 - i) agree that India has complied with all recommendations for *Pterocarpus santalinus* and can be removed from the RST process;
 - ii) invite India to confirm the publication of a voluntary zero-export quotas for wild specimens of *P. santalinus* for the period 2023-2026; and
 - iii) request the Secretariat to, in collaboration with India, continue to monitor and publish the remaining unused credit of the one-time export for confiscated specimens of *P. santalinus*, until it has been expended.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the Secretariat's report as contained in paragraphs 16 and 17 of document SC77 Doc. 35.3.

36. Review of trade in specimens reported as produced in captivity..... SC77 Doc. 36

The Secretariat reports on actions taken by Parties to implement recommendations made by the Animals Committee and Standing Committee in order to ensure compliance with the obligations of Article IV, paragraph 4 and 5 of the Convention, for the 11 cases that were retained in the review of trade in animals specimens reported as produced in captivity following SC74 and SC75. Additionally, at its 32nd meeting

(AC32; Geneva, June 2023), the Animals Committee identified 21 species-country combinations for review, using the criteria specified in paragraph 2 a) of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity*.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) in accordance with paragraph 2 q) of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP19) and based on document SC77 Doc. 36 and the table in Annex 1 to that document, decide on necessary action and make recommendations to the Parties concerned;
 - i) *Centrochelys sulcata* / Benin: The Standing Committee is invited to retain *Centrochelys sulcata* from Benin in the review until such time as it addresses the concerns of the Animals and Standing Committees.
 - ii) *Centrochelys sulcata* / Ghana: The Standing Committee is invited to remove *Centrochelys sulcata* from Ghana from the review.
 - iii) *Varanus exanthematicus* / Ghana: The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - A. remove *Varanus exanthematicus* from Ghana from the review; and
 - B. invite Ghana to share its rapid assessment with the Chair of Animals Committee for review.
 - iv) *Cacatua alba* / Indonesia: The Standing Committee is invited to remove *Cacatua alba* from Indonesia from the review.
 - v) *Centrochelys sulcata* / Mali: The Standing Committee is invited to retain *Centrochelys sulcata* from Mali in the review until such time as it addresses the concerns of the Animals and Standing Committees.
 - vi) *Centrochelys sulcata* / Togo: The Standing Committee is invited to retain *Centrochelys sulcata* from Togo in the review.
 - vii) *Hippocampus comes* / Viet Nam: The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - A. remove *Hippocampus comes* from Viet Nam from the review;
 - B. remind Viet Nam that, should it wish to resume trade from these or similar facilities with source code W or F, it should make legal acquisition findings (LAFs) and non-detriment findings (NDFs) prior to authorising trade; and
 - C. invite Viet Nam to share its NDF with the Chair of Animals Committee for review prior to resuming trade.
 - viii) *Vulpes zerda* / Sudan: The Standing Committee is invited to remove *Vulpes zerda* from Sudan from the review.
 - ix) *Centrochelys sulcata* / Sudan: The Standing Committee is invited to remove *Centrochelys sulcata* from Sudan from the review.
 - x) *Geochelone elegans* / Jordan: The Standing Committee is invited to remove *Geochelone elegans* from Jordan from the review, as it no longer exports this species for commercial purposes.
 - xi) *Testudo hermanni* / North Macedonia: The Standing Committee is invited to remove *Testudo hermanni* from North Macedonia from the review. The Secretariat is invited to work with North Macedonia to improve its capacity needs concerning captive breeding.
- b) request the Secretariat to develop guidance for situations where the founding stock was acquired before the species was listed on CITES or before the Party concerned joined the Convention and report to SC78;
- c) note the new species-country combinations selected for review at AC32 as indicated below:

	Species	Country	Criterion/criteria met	Source code
1	<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>	Indonesia	Significant numbers	F
2	<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>	Cambodia	Significant numbers; Legal acquisition	C, F, D
3	<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>	Philippines	Significant numbers	C
4	<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>	Viet Nam	Significant numbers	C
5	<i>Chlamydotis macqueenii</i>	Kazakhstan	Significant increase	C
6	<i>Chlamydotis undulata</i>	Morocco	Significant numbers	C
7	<i>Kinyongia boehmei</i>	Kenya	Significant numbers	C
8	<i>Gecko gecko</i>	Indonesia	Significant numbers	F
9	<i>Ctenosaura quinquecarinata</i>	Nicaragua	Significant increase	C
10	<i>Ctenosaura similis</i>	Nicaragua	Significant increase	C
11	<i>Testudo graeca</i>	Jordan	Shift in source code	C
12	<i>Testudo horsfieldii</i>	Uzbekistan	Significant numbers; Shift in source code	F, R, C
13	<i>Testudo kleinmanni</i>	Syrian Arab Republic	Significant increase; Legal acquisition; Breeding biology	C
14	<i>Testudo kleinmanni</i>	Egypt	Legal acquisition; Breeding biology	C
15	<i>Nectophrynoides asperginis</i>	United States of America	Significant numbers	F, C
16	<i>Dendrobatus auratus</i>	Nicaragua	Significant numbers	C
17	<i>Oophaga pumilio</i>	Nicaragua	Significant numbers	F, C
18	<i>Agalychnis callidryas</i>	Nicaragua	Significant numbers	C
19	<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>	Indonesia	Significant numbers	R
20	<i>Hirudo medicinalis</i>	Azerbaijan	Significant increase; Significant numbers; Legal acquisition	C
21	<i>Batagur borneoensis</i>	United States of America	Breeding biology	C

d) considering paragraphs 21 and 22 above, review the contents of the table in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 36 and consider if any species/country combinations should be selected for review under Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP18) and request the Secretariat to address general or specific questions to the Parties concerned; and

e) note the progress made and the proposed way forward towards the implementation of Decisions 19.63 to 19.65.

37. Possession of specimens of species included in Appendix I SC77 Doc. 37

The Secretariat recalls that, pursuant to Article VIII and Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for the implementation of the Convention*, national legislation of the Parties to the Convention should allow for the regulation and penalization of possession of specimens of species included in the Convention Appendices – including Appendix I. In the context of the review of national legislation under the National Legislation Project, the Secretariat notes that a recurrent gap in national legislation is the absence of prohibition of the possession of illegally traded specimens of CITES-species.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- remind Parties to the Convention that the regulation and penalization of possession of specimens of species included in the Appendices – including Appendix I – is a requirement under Article VIII of the Convention;
- consider recommending to the Conference of the Parties amending Resolution Conf. 8.4 (Rev. CoP15) on *National laws for implementation of the Convention* to require more clearly that domestic measures prohibit possession of specimens obtained in violation of the Convention, to facilitate enforcement of the prohibition of trade in violation of the Convention;

- c) remind Parties whose legislation is in Category 2 and Category 3 under the National Legislation Project that possession is one of the areas being analysed by the Secretariat in the context of the review of national legislation; and
- c) invite Parties whose legislation is in Category 1 under the National Legislation Project to identify potential loopholes in their national CITES-implementing legislation, in particular with regard to the possession of illegally traded specimens of CITES-listed species, and to adopt any necessary amendments.

Illegal trade and enforcement

38. Review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement* SC77 Doc. 38

Kenya and New Zealand, as co-Chairs of the Standing Committee's working group on the review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*, present an update on the progress of the working group that responded to a questionnaire (see the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 38) on the topics identified in Decision 19.66 with a view to determining if there are "gaps" that should be addressed in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19). Working group members discussed the already identified gaps and whether these should be addressed in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) or in other Resolutions and identified additional gaps.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of document SC77 Doc. 38 and the progress made in implementation of Decision 19.66 on review of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*;
- b) provide any advice or comment on the document or process at this point;
- c) agree that the working group continue its deliberations to better understand the scope of the issues, reporting to SC78 with recommendations on whether the topics in Decision 19.66 are gaps to be addressed in Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19) and corresponding amendments to address them; as well as any further gaps to be addressed in the content of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19); and
- d) consider whether to request the Secretariat in liaison with the co-Chairs of the working group to issue a Notification to Parties seeking responses to the Questionnaire from a broader range of Parties to gain better understanding of the scope of issues outlined in Decision 19.66 to inform any revision of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19).

39. Enforcement

39.1 Enforcement matters SC77 Doc. 39.1

The Secretariat provides information on anti-corruption activities implemented by Parties and the International Consortium for Combating on Wildlife Crime. The Secretariat further notes that there is still significant room for improvement regarding the integration of financial crime investigations into the investigation of crimes involving wildlife. Regarding the implementation of Decision 19.79 calling for guidance on the measures Parties can take to combat money laundering associated with wildlife crime, the Secretariat notes that it has not secured any external funding for the implementation of this Decision. The Secretariat provides an update on the Directory of laboratories conducting wildlife forensic testing and the CITES Illegal Trade Database and its data dissemination platform. The Secretariat further notes that, with the funding secured at the time of writing the present document the database, can be maintained only up to 31 August 2024.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) encourage Parties to actively pursue the implementation of Decision 19.78 and to implement the provisions in paragraph 6 c) to g) of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP19), where not yet done;
- b) encourage Parties to draw upon the [CITES directory of laboratories that conduct wildlife forensic testing](#), to facilitate forensic applications being used to the fullest extent possible to combat wildlife crime, where needed; and

- c) request the Secretariat to convey the budgetary implications and importance of securing sustainable funding to maintain the CITES Illegal Trade Database, during the budget and work programme discussions for 2026 to 2028 at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

39.2 International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime SC77 Doc. 39.2

The Secretariat presents an update on the activities implemented under the Strategic Programme of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), the collaborative effort between the CITES Secretariat, INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank and the World Customs Organization (WCO). The report highlights the launch of the Biannual Report 2021-2022, the implementation of the *ICWC Toolkit* and *Indicator Framework*, and activities implemented at the national, regional and global levels.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the efforts of Parties to combat wildlife crime and welcome the support provided by ICWC;
- b) note that the *ICWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit* and the *ICWC Indicator Framework for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime* have been revised and updated, and encourage Parties to make use of these tools as anticipated in paragraph 19 c) of Resolution Conf. 11.3 (Rev CoP19) on *Compliance and enforcement*;
- c) encourage Parties to actively engage in ICWC initiatives and operations and to reach out to ICWC for support where needed; and
- d) welcome the generous contributions from donor Parties enabling the implementation of the ICWC Strategic Programme.

39.3 CITES Big Cats Task Force..... SC77 Doc. 39.3

The Secretariat presents in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 39.3 the outcome document of the CITES Big Cats Task Force meeting that took place in Entebbe, Uganda, from 24 to 28 April 2023. The outcome document outlines measures to be undertaken on the following issues:

- a) strengthening effective implementation and enforcement of the Convention with regards to illegal trade in big cat specimens;
- b) strengthening regulation of facilities breeding big cats in captivity to prevent and detect any illegal trade from such facilities and deploy strengthened enforcement measures;
- c) reducing demand to combat illegal trade in big cat specimens;
- d) identification of big cat specimens in trade; and
- e) strengthening regional and international collaboration to address illegal trade in specimens of big cats.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider the proposal of a resolution on illegal trade in big cats, including the possible revision of Resolution 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* to be applicable to all big cat species and provide guidance to the Secretariat in this regard; and
- b) encourage all Parties affected by illegal trade in specimens of big cat species to make every effort to implement the strategies, measures and activities outlined in the CITES Big Cats Task Force outcome document, as a matter of priority

39.4 Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa SC77 Doc. 39.4

Nigeria, as Chair of the working group on wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa, presents an update on the progress of the working group in considering issues such as promoting collaboration between source, transit and consumer countries and the establishment and administration of a CITES enforcement fund or other mechanisms. The Chair notes that, while there has been an overall agreement by the working group that at this stage an additional funding mechanism is not needed, further discussions are required to explore other existing mechanisms that could provide targeted and sustainable financial support to combat wildlife crime and implement CITES.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the discussions of the working group and make any additional suggestions for consideration;
- b) request the working group to continue its discussions with regards to Decision 19.88 paragraph b);
- c) request the working group to finalize the questionnaire directed to Parties, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, regarding existing access to finance mechanisms for CITES enforcement;
- d) request the CITES Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties regarding existing access to finance mechanisms for CITES enforcement, once finalized by the working group; and
- e) request the working group to report on the implementation of Decision 19.88 paragraph b) to the 78th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

40. Marine turtles (Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.)..... SC77 Doc. 40

The Secretariat draws the Committee's attention to the study *Status, scope and trends of the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles, its conservation impacts, management options and mitigation priorities* (see [information document CoP18 Inf. 18](#)) and responses to two Notifications to the Parties that contain information on management and actions plans; illegal wildlife trade data; marine turtle DNA analysis; intra- and interregional cooperation; details on trade; and support to fisheries management authorities. The Secretariat notes that the scientific aspects raised by the study have to a large extent been addressed. Therefore, the Committee may wish to primarily focus on the compliance and enforcement aspects relevant to marine turtles in information document CoP18 Inf. 18 and in the responses to the Notifications, contained in an information document to SC77.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the observations of the Secretariat presented in paragraphs 8 to 10 of document SC77 Doc. 40; and
- b) consider establishing an intersessional working group on marine turtles, with a mandate to conduct the review anticipated in paragraph a) of Decision 18.217 (Rev. CoP19) with a particular focus on compliance and enforcement aspects relevant to marine turtles, and to propose amendments to Resolution Conf. 19.5 to further strengthen it, for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

41. Asian big cats (Felidae spp.)

41.1 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 41.1

The Secretariat reports on the status of Asian big cats in the wild, their conservation, and trade controls put in place by Parties, using information provided by the range States on measures taken to comply with Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species* and any relevant additional information provided by other countries. The Secretariat presents information provided by Cambodia, China, India, Israel, Slovakia, South Africa, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America on conservation status and measures; enforcement measures and activities to address illegal trade in Asian big cat specimens; reduction of demand for illegal tiger

and other Asian big cat specimens; Asian big cats in captivity; wildlife forensics related to Asian big cat specimens; and photographic identification databases for tigers.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the information provided by Parties in response to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/091;
- b) encourage all Parties affected by illegal trade in Asian big cat species to include seizure data related to these species in their annual illegal trade reports and submit their reports in a timely manner; and
- c) request the Secretariat to:
 - i) issue a Notification to the Parties inviting:
 - A. all range States of *Panthera pardus* within its Asian range to submit a report to the Secretariat on the conservation measures undertaken; poaching incidents detected; and seizure data involving *Panthera pardus* within their territories; and
 - B. all Parties that made seizures of specimens of *Panthera pardus* to submit a report to the Secretariat on seizure data involving *Panthera pardus*; and
 - ii) report on the information received to the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee.

41.2 Asian big cats in captivity SC77 Doc. 41.2

The Secretariat reports on the work conducted in accordance with Decision 18.108 (Rev. CoP 19) including missions to Parties with facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity that may be of concern. The Secretariat conducted missions to visit tiger facilities of concern in Thailand from 5 to 8 February 2023, the Lao People's Democratic Republic from 8 to 12 February 2023, Viet Nam from 12 to 14 February 2023, South Africa from 8 to 11 May 2023 and the Czech Republic from 29 to 31 May 2023.

Critically endangered subspecies of tigers [*Panthera tigris amoyensis* (South Africa) and *Panthera tigris corbetti* (Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam)] and leopard (*Panthera pardus delacouri*) (Thailand) were reported to be kept in facilities or observed in some of the facilities and these specimens could be important from a conservation perspective and may benefit from coordinated conservation breeding programmes. The Secretariat notes that facilities keeping tigers in captivity still exist in the five Parties with captive tiger populations that are not directly contributing to the conservation of tigers in the wild. The Secretariat did not find any evidence that the facilities visited are breeding tigers for their parts and derivatives and most countries have carcass destruction procedures in place. However, the Secretariat could not visit all facilities and in some cases were not allowed access to those scheduled to be visited.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) encourage all Parties in whose territories there are facilities keeping Asian big cats in captivity to:
 - i) implement paragraph 1 h) of Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19) on the *Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species*; and
 - ii) strengthen compliance monitoring and enforcement of legislative provisions relating to facilities keeping tigers in captivity through the strict implementation of regulatory requirements ensuring that registers are accurately maintained; identification of individual tigers is a compulsory requirement (using microchips, DNA analysis and stripe identification images as appropriate); inspections are carried out regularly; that the disposal is done with the necessary controls and oversight, and any irregularities strictly penalized;

- b) further encourage all Parties in whose territories there are facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and facilities housing large numbers of tigers to consider taking a more methodical approach regarding these facilities to improve their conservation and educational value, as well as to put an end to the activities of facilities that do not have conservation or educational value, fail to comply with regulations and pose a risk regarding parts and derivatives from these animals entering illegal trade. Such an approach could include:
 - i) identification of facilities keeping tigers of genetic and conservation value and engagement of these facilities in coordinated conservation breeding for such animals;
 - ii) identification of facilities keeping tigers in captivity that are suitably located to ensure public access and that meet husbandry and welfare conditions based on national and international guidelines, and implementation of support programmes where needed (for example providing guidance on development of educational materials, signs and posters), for these facilities to fully transform into facilities with educational value that are raising awareness benefitting conservation of tigers in the wild, including bringing the attention of the public to illegal trade and the need to combat it;
 - iii) implementing and enforcing measures to reduce the number of tigers in facilities that are not contributing to conservation of wild tigers or have limited educational value, by restricting breeding of tigers (e.g., by separating male and female tigers, sterilization or other disposal measures, including euthanasia) within these facilities, as well as restricting these facilities from acquiring any new animals;
 - iv) taking into consideration Decision 14.69 that directs Parties to restrict the captive population to a level supportive only to conserving wild tigers and that tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts and derivatives, prohibiting the establishment of new facilities keeping tigers in captivity with narrow exemptions where warranted;
 - v) assessing the need for rescue centres, sanctuaries, or other disposal measures, including euthanasia, etc. as may be required due to the phase-out of intensive tiger operations; and
 - vi) reviewing of management practices and controls to regulate activities of facilities keeping tigers in captivity to ensure that they are adequate to prevent tiger specimens from entering illegal trade from or through such facilities, including licensing of such facilities, accurate record keeping of individual tigers, regular inspections and well-regulated disposal of tigers that die in captivity.
- c) also encourage all Parties where a demand for tiger parts and derivatives exist to enhance their efforts in demand reduction activities related to illegal trade in Asian big cats in accordance with Resolution Conf. 17.4 (Rev. CoP19) on *Demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species* taking into consideration the *Guidance on demand reduction strategies to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species*;
- d) encourage all governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, and non-governmental organizations to urgently provide funds and other assistance to Parties with facilities that breed large numbers of tigers and those housing large numbers of tigers, to support the implementation of paragraph 92 b) above;

in addition to the recommendations a), b) and c) addressed to all Parties,

- e) encourage the **Czech Republic** to:
 - i) continue to collaborate with the State Veterinary Administration to strengthen procedures relating to the disposal process, including improved monitoring to ensure complete destruction of carcasses; and
 - ii) conduct an inspection of the facility that the Secretariat could not visit during its mission and provide a report on its findings to the Secretariat by 30 days before the document deadline of SC78 (i.e., 5 November 2024).

- f) encourage **South Africa** to:
 - i) standardize and strengthening legislative provisions relating to activities involving the keeping, breeding, international trade in and disposal of tigers;
 - ii) standardize processes relating to registers to be kept by facilities, inspections of facilities and destruction of carcasses through the development of standard operating procedures or other similar mechanisms;
 - iii) develop educational materials and displays to enhance the public education and awareness-raising value associated with the display of tigers;
 - iv) initiate a process to address the legislative gap relating to the regulation of activities involving alien Appendix-I listed species (including tigers);
 - iv) address compliance monitoring and enforcement of the existing permit conditions for all facilities with a specific focus on the facilities with long term non-compliances matters;
- g) encourage **Thailand** and **Viet Nam** to:
 - i) identify any specimens of the subspecies *Panthera tigris corbetti* and encourage facilities to engage in coordinated conservation breeding for these animals and other appropriate actions;
 - ii) strengthen measures to:
 - A. restrict the breeding of tigers in captive facilities and the importation of tiger to these facilities to levels supportive only to conserving tigers;
 - B. monitor individual tigers kept in facilities through the use of microchips, stripe pattern identification and DNA analysis, as appropriate;
 - C. prohibit the establishment of new facilities keeping tigers in captivity with narrow exemptions where warranted; and
 - D. restrict the parts and derivatives for which possession is authorized to prevent these specimens from entering illegal trade;
 - iii) develop educational materials and displays to enhance the public education and awareness-raising value associated with the display of tigers;
 - iv) enhance standard operating procedures for inspections and disposal of specimens (including destruction of carcasses after verification of individual that died and train officials to undertake inspections and monitor the disposal of carcasses, where needed).

42. Illegal trade in African great apes
(*Gorilla gorilla*, *Gorilla beringei*, *Pan troglodytes* and *Pan paniscus*) SC77 Doc. 42

Liberia presents a report containing the history of CITES activities related to great apes, including the convening of a CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force in 20026, and an update on illegal trade in African great apes.

In accordance with Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev.CoP18) on *Conservation of and trade in great apes*, the Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) review the information in document SC77 Doc. 42;
- b) review the following draft decisions contained in Annex 1 and the following proposed changes to Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18) in Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 42 and consider recommending them for adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting (CoP20).

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Directed to the Secretariat

20.AA The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding,

- a) re-establish and convene the CITES African Great Apes Task Force consisting of representatives of range, transit and consumer States affected by poaching and illicit trafficking in such specimens (bonobos, chimpanzees, gorillas), non-range States whose territories have commercial or unaccredited facilities or individuals with African great apes in captivity, GRASP, ICCWC partner organizations, representatives from African great ape rehabilitation centres and sanctuaries, and other relevant experts;
- b) assist the Task Force in reviewing the implementation of RC13.4 (Rev. CoP18) and the identification of gaps and current needs of range, transit and consumer states affected by the illegal trade in African great apes, including the development of concrete strategies with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, such as specific outreach to actors in the energy, extractive, and agricultural sectors, to minimize impacts on great ape populations and habitats in line with the 2005 Kinshasa Declaration on Great Apes;
- c) report on the work and recommendations of the Task Force no later than the 81st meeting of the Standing Committee (SC81).

Directed to the Standing Committee

20.BB In consultation with the Animals Committee, develop Terms of Reference for the CITES Great Apes Task Force

Directed to Parties

20.CC Parties affected by illegal trade in African great apes are encouraged to report on the implementation of Resolution Conf.13.4 (Rev.CoP18) and pursue joint investigations and operations aimed at halting the international trafficking of African great apes.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION CONF.13.4 (REV.COP18) ON
CONSERVATION AND TRADE IN GREAT APES

The following new provisions in underlined text are proposed for inclusion in the resolution:

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

7. CALLS UPON all governments, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies, non governmental organizations and other donors, as a matter of urgency, to assist the range States in any way possible in supporting the conservation of great apes including through:
- a) the provision of funding;
 - b) assistance with enforcement, training, capacity building and education;
 - c) population monitoring, and the gathering and exchange of scientific, technical and legal information and expertise;
 - d) habitat management and restoration;
 - e) mitigation of conflict between humans and apes in a manner that conserves in situ viable ape populations and habitat;
 - f) the development of projects and African great ape species specific national and regional Action Plans which deliver tangible benefits to local communities such as studies on alternative sources of protein and monitoring the efficacy of such alternatives;
 - g) the development and utilization of technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) facial recognition to build a global database of captive great apes and wild great apes monitored by camera traps, and a DNA database to facilitate the geolocalization of the wild origin of confiscated animals;

- h) sustainable livelihoods and habitats restoration projects for fringe communities residing around Protected Areas, Community Conservation Areas and other landscapes in range States, to enable and incentivise continued protection and management of African great ape populations;
- i) support of range States' One Health Program for prevention and mitigation of zoonotic diseases;
- j) short, medium, and long term strategies to ensure that accredited ape sanctuaries adhere to high operational standards including sustainability and that the welfare of the rescued African great apes remains a priority in the conservation of the species.

43. Jaguars (*Panthera onca*)..... SC77 Doc. 43

The Secretariat summarizes the outcomes of the meeting of jaguar range States held in Cuiabá, Brazil, from 18 to 22 September 2023. Representatives of 16 jaguar range States participated in the meeting: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The meeting consisted of sessions on different topics related to collaboration, integration and alignment; the long-term system for monitoring illegal killing, illegal trade and conservation of jaguars; the Intergovernmental Platform (and action plan or working programme); criteria for the selection of landscapes and sustainable financial mechanisms.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the main results and conclusions of the meeting of jaguar range States;
- b) request the Secretariat to prepare terms of reference for the creation of a modular system for monitoring illegal killing of jaguars, illegal trade in their parts and derivatives and other aspects related to conservation, for consideration by the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee;
- c) request the CITES Secretariat to prepare terms of reference for the creation of an intergovernmental platform as specified in paragraph 21 of document SC77 Doc. 43. The terms of reference should be presented to the next meeting of the Standing Committee (SC78);
- d) in line with activity B10 of the CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2021-2025 (Annex 2, SC73 Doc. 13), which establishes that the Secretariats of both Conventions should “collaborate on the conservation of the jaguar, taking into account existing mandates and ongoing efforts and initiatives in the region”, recommend that both Secretariats jointly develop, in close consultation with jaguar range States and inviting contributions from the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant organizations, a joint working programme establishing specific priorities for jaguar conservation throughout the region, activities to promote coexistence, and necessary actions for preventing and combating illegal killing and illegal trade of jaguars, their parts and derivatives for consideration by the 33rd meeting of the Animals Committee and the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee;
- e) recommend that both Secretariats, subject to the availability of external funding, jointly organize a second meeting of jaguar range States to discuss the implementation of the joint working programme for jaguar conservation with the support of relevant partner organizations;
- f) create, within the Standing Committee working group on jaguars, a working subgroup on financial opportunities for the jaguar that should consider the possibility of creating a regional common fund for jaguar conservation; and
- g) request the CITES Secretariat to follow up on the agreements related to paragraph 11 on the seven joint working areas and the players involved and paragraphs 25 to 27 on criteria/prioritization of landscapes through a Notification to the Parties requiring regular updates to the jaguar questionnaire.

44. Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*) SC77 Doc. 44

The Secretariat reports on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17) on *Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope*, highlighting the responses provided by China, India, Italy, Switzerland and the United States of America on their enforcement measures in eliminating the illicit trade in Tibetan antelope products. While there has been a decrease in the number of seizures in recent years,

the data also underscores that illegal trade in Tibetan antelope specimens continues. It therefore remains important for Parties to maintain vigilance and uphold their enforcement measures.

The Standing Committee is invited to note document SC77 Doc. 44.

45. Rhinoceroses (Rhinocerotidae spp.) SC77 Doc. 45

The Secretariat summarizes information provided by Botswana, China (including Hong Kong SAR of China), Mozambique, Qatar, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates regarding measures to address the illegal killing of rhinoceroses and trafficking of rhinoceros horn. It also provides an update on Malaysia and Viet Nam, which are respectively the fourth and third most affected by illegal trade in rhinoceros specimen in the period 2018 to 2020, in terms of weight and number of specimens detected. The Secretariat also draws the Committee's attention to the fact that Angola seems to be emerging as an exit point for illegal rhinoceros horn and ivory consignments from Africa to Asia and that Namibia experienced a significant increase in rhinoceros poaching in 2022. Regarding the convening of a follow-up CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force meeting, the Secretariat notes that it has secured about half of the necessary funding for the organization of that meeting.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) welcome the [Chitwan Declaration for Asian Rhinos Conservation 2023](#) agreed by the five Asian rhinoceros range States;
- b) welcome the reduction in poaching incidents observed in Botswana in 2022 and 2023 compared to previous years and encourage the Party to rapidly progress implementation of its 2023 to 2028 National Anti-Poaching Strategy;
- c) request the Parties to which Decisions 19.117, 19.118 and 19.119 are directed to take the comments and observations of the Secretariat in paragraphs 47 to 59 of document SC77 Doc.45, as relevant to them, into consideration in their implementation of these respective Decisions;
- d) note that Malaysia and Viet Nam did not provide any reporting on the implementation of Decision 19.118 and 19.119 and, considering any oral information that may be provided at SC77, decide if further measures to address rhinoceros specimen trafficking are required regarding any of these Parties;
- e) encourage Angola and Namibia to review trends associated with the illegal killing of rhinoceroses and illegal trade in rhinoceros specimens affecting them, and the measures and activities they are implementing to address these crimes, to ensure that these measures and activities are effective and adapted as may be needed to respond to any newly identified trends;
- f) request the Secretariat to seek information from the Parties concerned by recommendations c) to e), on activities conducted and measures implemented in accordance with these recommendations, and to include this information in its report to the 78th meeting of the Standing Committee, together with any recommendations the Secretariat may have; and
- g) request Parties included in the [Directory of illegal trade in rhinoceros horn focal points](#) to immediately inform the Secretariat if the details of their national focal points in the Directory should be updated.

Regulation of trade

46. Legal acquisition findings SC77 Doc. 46

The Secretariat presents a summary of its capacity-building activities related to legal acquisition findings, including the organization of training workshops and regular correspondence with Parties to answer their queries. The Secretariat is also working with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on the development of a database entitled "CITES-LEX" designed as a new online platform providing (i) a catalogue of instruments and resources aimed at facilitating Parties' access to legislations and related information relevant to CITES implementation, and (ii) materials and resources to support legal risk assessments on legal acquisition findings. Further, the Secretariat will invite Parties to provide observations and feedback to the Secretariat on their use of the "Rapid guide for the making of legal acquisition findings".

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) encourage Parties to implement Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) and use the “Rapid guide for making legal acquisition findings” when preparing their legal acquisition findings; and
- b) invite Parties to, where possible, share their legal acquisition findings to build knowledge and share best practices regarding the implementation of Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) and request the Secretariat to make any shared legal acquisition findings available on the CITES webpage.

47. Introduction from the sea..... SC77 Doc. 47

The Secretariat presents an update on the adoption of the *Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction* that is open for signature from 20 September 2023 to 20 September 2025 and then for ratification, approval, acceptance and accession. The Secretariat also presents a summary of the information provided by Parties on their implementation of Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) on *Introduction from the sea* and a detailed overview of the feedback it received on the ten most frequently asked questions on introduction from the sea and the responses proposed by the CITES Secretariat. Information and feedback were provided by Australia, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the recent adoption of the UN *Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction*;
- b) take note of the responses from Parties provided on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 14.6 (Rev. CoP16) and summarized above in paragraphs 10 to 14 of document SC77 Doc. 47;
- c) review the revised 10 questions most frequently asked on ‘CITES trade from areas beyond national jurisdiction’ and the responses prepared by the Secretariat, contained in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 47 and provide further inputs, as appropriate;
- d) request the Secretariat to make the final document available on the CITES webpage and to use it as part of its capacity-building material to test its utility and applicability and collect further feedback; and
- e) request the Secretariat to prepare a further report for its 78th meeting for onward submission to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

48. Purpose-of-transaction codes..... No document

Georgia, as Chair of the intersessional working group on purpose-of-transaction codes will provide an oral update on the progress of the working group.

49. Electronic systems and information technology..... SC77 Doc. 49

Switzerland as Chair of the Standing Committee’s working group on electronic systems and information technologies, in consultation with the Secretariat, provides an update on the progress of the working group and on the activities undertaken by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat has enhanced its collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), as well as with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development’s (UNCTAD) ASYCUDA Programme that provides the eCITES BaseSolution, an off-the-shelf solution for electronic CITES permitting systems. The Secretariat published version 3.0 of the CITES Electronic Permitting Toolkit in English, French and Spanish and translated the guidelines and specifications for Electronic Permit Information eXchange (EPIX) of CITES permits and certificates into French and Spanish. The Secretariat commissioned a Study on the use of two-dimensional (2D) barcodes on CITES permits/certificates to collect information regarding the current practices on the use of two-dimensional (2D) barcodes on CITES permits and analyse and prepare the elements of draft guidelines on the use of 2D codes in electronic CITES permitting. The Secretariat pursued its capacity-building activities with, *inter alia*, a regional workshop on electronic CITES permitting systems in Asia.

The working group focused its deliberations on i) possible alternatives to the physical endorsement of the CITES permits at the border including in transit; ii) the use of two-dimensional barcodes; and iii) risk-based control procedures. The working group also discussed the challenges of using HS codes in implementing risk-based control procedures in different countries.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of document SC77 Doc. 49.

50. Stocks and stockpiles SC77 Doc. 50

The Secretariat summarizes previous intersessional work on the issue of stocks and stockpiles and provides an overview of current species-specific Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties that include provisions related to stocks/stockpiles. The Secretariat proposes the following definition of stocks and stockpiles: "In the context of CITES, the words stocks and stockpiles are used interchangeably to refer to any volume or number of accumulated dead specimens of CITES-listed species held temporarily by public or private entities." The Secretariat further highlights that there is some merit in providing guidance on management and control of stocks and stockpiles and on the methods for preventing specimens from entering into illegal trade.

The Standing Committee is invited to

- a) consider the work conducted in past intersessional periods as summarized in paragraph 3 to 10 of document SC77 Doc. 50;
- b) take note of the review of existing provisions on stocks/stockpiles in Resolutions and Decisions and the information on their implementation contained in paragraph 11 of document SC77 Doc. 50;
- c) consider the suggested definition of stocks/stockpiles contained in paragraph 16 of document SC77 Doc. 50 and agree on a definition to assist Parties with implementation;
- d) encourage Parties to use the [Practical Guidance](#) and [Ensuring Effective Stockpile Management: A Guidance Document](#) as needed for the management of stockpiles of rhino horn, elephant ivory, pangolin scales and saiga horn as well as stocks/stockpiles of other species where the guidance can be applied and provide feedback to the Secretariat on the use of the guidance; and
- e) consider whether additional guidance on management and controls of stockpiles of timber tree species is needed and, if appropriate, develop such guidance with the assistance of the CITES Secretariat.

51. Stocks and stockpiles (elephant ivory) SC77 Doc. 51

The Secretariat presents a summary related to stockpile declarations for 2022 and an overview of the number of Parties that had informed the Secretariat of stockpiles of ivory within their territory from 2014 to 2023. The Secretariat indicates that it is currently not able to identify all those Parties which are urged to make submissions based on the criteria outlined in paragraph 7 e) of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19), i.e. Parties in whose jurisdiction there is an ivory carving industry, domestic trade in ivory, unregulated market for or illegal trade in ivory, or where ivory stockpiles exist and Parties designated as ivory importing countries. Firstly, the Secretariat does not possess a formal list of those Parties where an ivory carving industry exists, where there is domestic trade in ivory, an unregulated market or illegal trade in ivory, or where ivory stockpiles actually exist. Secondly, the Parties have not agreed on a definition of what constitutes 'a stockpile'. The Secretariat had previously identified Burundi as a Party where ivory stockpiles are not well secured based on information provided by the Party in 2004 and on a seizure in Uganda in 2015 and intends to put in place arrangements to conduct a technical mission to Burundi, in accordance with paragraph 29 e) in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *CITES compliance procedures*, to verify the current status of the Burundi stockpile. The Secretariat informs the Committee that it has recently initiated a project to better systematize and secure the data on ivory stockpiles reported by Parties.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) encourage Parties to step up their efforts to comply with the provisions of paragraph 7 e) of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens* concerning stockpiles, with a view of submitting the required information to the Secretariat every year;

- b) invite regional Members and Alternate regional Members, as part of their regular contact with Parties in their region, to remind Parties of the obligations of paragraph 7 e) of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19);
- c) recommend that Parties submit information on destroyed stockpiles to the extent possible; and
- d) request the Secretariat to continue to engage with Burundi to put in place arrangements to conduct a technical mission to Burundi, in accordance with paragraph 29 e) in the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.3 on *CITES compliance procedures*, to verify the current status of the Burundi stockpile, and to report to the Committee on its findings.

52. Transport of live specimens SC77 Doc. 52

The Secretariat proposes a way forward for the organization of a workshop to share best practices related to live animal and plant transport and presents to the Committee in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 52 draft terms of reference for the online workshop on transport of live specimens. These terms of reference take into account comments provided by the Animals and Plants Committees and by Parties and relevant experts.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) agree to the Terms of Reference for the virtual workshop on transport of live specimens so the Secretariat may finalize them after the 77th meeting; and
- b) subject to the availability of external funds, invite the Secretariat to organize the workshop in accordance with the terms of reference and to collaborate with experts from Parties, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders as resource persons.

53. Rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and musical instruments SC77 Doc. 53

Australia, as Chair of the working group on rapid movement of wildlife diagnostic samples and of musical instruments, provides an update on the progress of the working group, indicating that the working group agreed to complete its work in two separate subgroups, one focusing on wildlife diagnostic samples and the other one on musical instruments. On wildlife diagnostic samples, the group noted that simplified procedures are not used by every Party, creating inconsistency. Many members expressed that better guidance for Parties on using the simplified procedures in emergency situations would be beneficial. Members also expressed a specific desire to better define the requirements for cataloguing of specimens under different circumstances (e.g., research, diagnosis, or forensic). On musical instruments, similar to the wildlife diagnostic samples, the most significant barriers to the movement of musical instruments via existing simplified procedures include the inconsistent use of these procedures by Parties. In both subgroups, members suggested that better guidance for Parties on how to apply the simplified procedures available could be beneficial.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) review the progress made by the working group; and
- b) offer its comments and suggestions, in particular with respect to work the group could undertake following SC77.

54. Specimens produced through biotechnology SC77 Doc. 54

Cuba, as Chair of the intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology, provides an update on the progress of the working group. The working group is focusing its deliberations on the following questions:

- a) Do you think it is pertinent to consult the Parties on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives*, and on which specimens, identified by the Parties as produced through biotechnology, are traded; taking into account that the parties were already consulted in 2020, Notification No. 2020/062, on the application of Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP19)?

- b) Do you consider it necessary to create a new source code for specimens obtained through biotechnology, considering that diverging views were expressed on this matter during the discussions of this working group in its previous period?

The Standing Committee is invited to note the interim report of the intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology.

55. Dialogue meeting for African elephant range States (*Loxodonta africana*)..... SC77 Doc. 55 (Rev. 1)

Botswana proposes draft terms of reference for a CITES Dialogue Meeting on trade in live African elephants and other issues of African elephant conservation in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 55 (Rev.1). At the African Union High-Level Conference on the Implementation of the outcomes of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on biological Diversity (CBD COP15) and CITES CoP19 took place in Addis Ababa, from 31 May to 2 June 2023, Botswana offered to host the dialogue meeting in early 2024 to ensure that it takes place well in advance of the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20).

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) pursuant to Decision 19.167, call for the CITES dialogue meeting as per Resolution Conf. 14.5 on *Dialogue meetings* for African elephant range States;
- b) welcome Botswana's offer to host the dialogue meeting, in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee;
- c) review the draft terms of reference found in the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 55 (Rev. 1) and provide inputs;
- d) instruct the Secretariat, on the basis of the draft terms of reference, to support the organization of a dialogue meeting in the first half of 2024, in collaboration with Botswana, the Chair of the Standing Committee, and the African regional representatives of the Committee, in accordance with the Annex to Resolution Conf. 14.5 on *Dialogue meetings*;
- e) request the Secretariat to ensure adequate funds are available to support 2 delegates per African elephant range State, as well as other African state Parties, as well as to assist Botswana on the overriding costs of hosting the dialogue meeting such as conference facility and provision of interpretation for the two languages of the Convention been English and French.

56. Disposal of confiscated specimens..... SC77 Doc. 56

The Secretariat informs the Committee that it has updated the dedicated webpage on disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens on the CITES website and that it had not received information on existing networks and resources on the management of seized and confiscated live animals in place in their country. The Secretariat has secured partial funding from the European Union to develop new materials consistent with Annex 3 to Resolution Conf 17.8 (Rev. CoP19) on *Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species*.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the update provided on the implementation of Decisions 19.169 to 19.174.

57. Labelling system for trade in caviar *No document*

Georgia, as Chair of the intersessional working group on labelling system for trade in caviar will provide an oral update on the progress of the working group.

Exemptions and special trade provisions

58. Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source SC77 Doc. 58

Belgium and Canada, as co-chairs of the intersessional working group on the review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source, provide an update on the progress

of the working group and indicate that they had shared with the Animals and Plants Committees a [roadmap](#) for a review of CITES provisions related trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source. The Animals and Plants Committees established a joint working group that will work separately and jointly with the Standing Committee's working group.

The Standing Committee is invited to note this document.

59. Review of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*..... SC77 Doc. 59

The United States of America, as Chair of the intersessional working group on the review of Resolution Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*, provides an update on the progress of the working group. The deliberations of the working group focus on what constitute a major change in the nature of an operation, information to be included in the Register on the CITES website, and the process relating to major changes in the nature of an operation or in the type(s) of products being produced for export. Other matters were also raised by working group members.

The Standing Committee is invited to note this interim report of the working group and provide any advice or comments on the document or process to date.

60. Identifying information on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade SC77 Doc. 60

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as Chair of the intersessional working group on species at risk of extinction affected by international trade, provides an update on the progress of the working group. The main areas for discussion are expected to be to:

- a) continue to review methods of identifying species that may be at risk of extinction and threatened by international trade, including any existing assessments that have looked at this previously;
- b) understand the issues or difficulties Parties face when developing proposals to amend the CITES Appendices;
- c) review and provide recommendations on the support, materials, guidance or any other capacity building (considering Resolution Conf. 19.2 on *Capacity-building*) that Parties might benefit from in developing proposals to amend the CITES Appendices; and
- d) review the recommendations of the joint AC/PC intersessional working group and provide any recommendation of its own to the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of this interim report and the progress made in implementation of Decisions 19.186 to 19.188 and offer guidance to the working group as it seeks to fulfil its mandate; and
- b) provide any views from their respective regions on the main areas for future discussion described in paragraph 7 of document SC77 Doc. 60 (see also above), in particular where issues or difficulties have been experienced by any Parties within their region seeking to develop or submit species listing proposals.

61. Phytosanitary certificates that are regarded as artificial propagation certificates SC77 Doc. 61

The Republic of Korea presents the results of a survey of 12 Parties that implement paragraph 15 of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates*, i.e., those Parties that issue phytosanitary certificates as certificates of artificially propagated Appendix-II specimens. The Republic of Korea notes that each Party has different taxa or requirements for applying these special procedures and that these differences can lead to confusion.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the information presented in document SC77 Doc. 61 and its Annex;

- b) encourage Parties, in particular Parties implementing special procedures to consider phytosanitary certificates as certificates of artificial propagation in accordance with paragraph 5 of Article VII, to provide the Secretariat with information relating to this document;
- c) request the Secretariat to update the relevant information on the website, based on the information provided in accordance with paragraph b) above; and
- d) further request the Secretariat to report on any recommendations for improving this special procedure that are identified in the course of this process for consideration at the 78th Standing Committee.

Species conservation and trade

Fauna

62. West African vultures (Accipitridae spp.) SC77 Doc. 62

The Secretariat presents information on enforcement of the Convention for West African vultures and on seizures reported in Annual Illegal Trade Reports from 2017 to 2021. The Secretariat also provides an update on support provided to West African vultures' range States on trade-related aspects of the Multi-species Action Plan to Conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP). Further, the Secretariat also reports on the recommendations agreed by the Animals Committee at its 32nd meeting.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) encourage Parties, West African range States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to strengthen efforts in mobilizing activities as anticipated by Decision 19.193; and
- b) encourage West African vulture range States to strengthen and expand initiatives aimed at implementing demand reduction strategies concerning belief-based use and consumption of vulture parts and derivatives.

63. Elephants (Elephantidae spp.)

63.1 Report of the Secretariat on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19)..... SC77 Doc. 63.1 (Rev. 1)

The Secretariat presents new data from the Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) programme and the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) and provides an overview of trade in elephant specimens as recorded in the CITES database by the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC); new and relevant information on the conservation status of elephants, pertinent conservation actions and management strategies by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups; and an update on the implementation of the African Elephant Action Plan [see Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 63.1 (Rev. 2)]. The Secretariat also reports on the implementation of Decisions 19.94 and 19.95 on the *Implementation of priority recommendations from the review of the ETIS programme*; Decisions 19.99 and 19.100 on *Ivory seizures and domestic ivory markets*; Decisions 18.117 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.118 on the *Closure of domestic ivory markets*; and on the MIKE and ETIS Subgroup of the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the downward Proportion of Illegally Killed Elephants (PIKE) trend in Africa and the lower number of seizures reported under the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) and commend the efforts of elephant range States and other Parties and partners, in supporting actions to maintain this positive trend;
- b) encourage elephant range States to continue to use the Online Database of the programme Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) for MIKE data submission and Parties to use ETIS Online to submit seizure information;
- c) encourage Parties to participate in the ETIS data validation process, including through response to Notifications to the Parties on this matter;

- d) request TRAFFIC to include an option in the ETIS forms (Word, Excel and Online) for Parties to indicate if they do not want their ETIS data made available to the members of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) for global research and analysis;
- e) provide guidance on the criteria to be used to identify countries with legal domestic ivory markets, and the research questions to be addressed with ETIS data, to further inform the consideration by the MIKE-ETIS Technical Advisory Group of the feasibility of such an analysis; and
- f) welcome the revised African Elephant Action Plan approved by African range States.

63.2 Financial and operational sustainability of the MIKE and ETIS programmes SC77 Doc. 63.2

The Secretariat informs the Committee that the European Union is programming to co-finance the implementation of a modified MIKE programme for an additional five-year period, beginning in 2025. The Secretariat therefore plans to design a modified MIKE programme in consultation with African elephant range states, MIKE site focal points, the MIKE Technical Advisory Group, and donors, ensuring that it continues to deliver its core mandates under Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) on *Trade in elephant specimens*. The Secretariat notes that funding shortfalls remain in meeting the resource requirements for the continued implementation of the ETIS programme beyond mid-2024. If these resources are not made available, the responsibilities of the ETIS programme mandated in Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP19) may not be met.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the Secretariat's plan to redesign the MIKE programme activities to consider the outcomes of the evaluation and reflect the current conservation needs and realities of the African Elephant range States while addressing financial and operational sustainability; and
- b) encourage the Secretariat to prepare proposals and explore alternative options pursuant to Decision 19.36, paragraph a).

64. Great apes (Hominidae spp.):

Report on the implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18) SC77 Doc. 64

The Secretariat reports on its work with the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), an alliance of over 100 national governments, conservation organizations, research institutions, United Nations agencies and private companies, committed to ensuring the long-term survival of great apes and their habitats in Africa and Asia; on illegal trade in great apes as reported by CITES Parties; and on Status of and threats to great apes.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) recall recommendations in Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation of and trade in great apes* and, considering the continued declines in great ape populations reported in document SC77 Doc. 64 and its Annexes, encourage Parties, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies and non-governmental organizations to implement comprehensive enforcement controls to address illegal trade in great apes, including local and online sales of specimens, including live apes;
- b) encourage all great ape range States to take urgent steps to develop, implement, or expand *in situ* great ape management and conservation programmes addressing the major drivers of great ape population declines and illegal trade, namely poaching for wild meat, or conflict, and deforestation of great ape habitats;
- c) encourage great ape range States to coordinate action on known or suspected illegal great ape trade;
- d) urge all Parties to provide accurate and up-to-date information on illegal trade in great apes in the CITES Annual Illegal Trade report in a timely manner, following the guidelines developed by the Secretariat and, as appropriate, consider contributing to the GRASP Apes Seizure database and the IUCN SSC A.P.E.S. database as per Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Rev. CoP18); and

- e) encourage Parties, intergovernmental organizations, international aid agencies and non-governmental organizations to consider any relevant actions or assistance to address illegal trade in great apes and support the conservation of great apes, and to bring any such actions or assistance to the attention of the Secretariat.

65. Saiga antelopes (*Saiga* spp.)..... SC77 Doc. 65

The Secretariat provides an overview of the information it has received from range States of the saiga antelope and important consumer and trading countries on their implementation of measures directed to them in the *Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope for 2021-2025* [MTIWP (2021-2025)], developed in support of the *Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (Saiga spp.)* and its *Saiga Action Plan*. At the time of writing, the Secretariat had received responses from Japan, Malaysia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam. The Secretariat also presents information on trade in specimens of saiga antelope. Further, as requested by the Animals Committee, the Secretariat convey to the Standing Committee the concerns raised by the United States of America about the reexports of *Saiga* spp. when there is a zero export quota for wild specimens traded for commercial purposes and about the possible incorrect use of purpose code “M” for a 2021 trade record. The Secretariat also followed up with Ukraine on its use of source code “U” for *S. tatarica* (noting that it is not a range State for the species).

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the progress range State Parties and important consumer and trading countries/regions of saiga parts and derivatives have made on the implementation of the *Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope for 2021-2025*; and
- b) recommend that range States of the saiga antelope (*Saiga* spp.) and important consumer and trading countries and regions of saiga parts and derivatives refer to Resolution Conf. 18.7 (Rev. CoP19) on *Legal acquisition findings* when verifying the origin of specimens and only use source code “U” in accordance with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP19) on *Permits and certificates*.

Aquatic species

66. Eels (*Anguilla* spp.)..... SC77 Doc. 66

The Secretariat provides an overview of the Animals Committee’s work on eels that is *inter alia* reviewing the potential use of source code R (ranching) for specimens of European eel (*A. anguilla*) from aquaculture production systems and the potential risks and benefits of reintroducing seized, live European eels to the wild. The Secretariat informs the Standing Committee that it is compiling a summary of Parties’ responses to its request of information on the status, management and trade in eels (*Anguilla* spp.). Since this summary is not yet available and has not yet been considered by the Animals Committee, the Secretariat proposes that the Standing Committee establish an intersessional working group to consider these responses and any pertinent information when they are available. The Secretariat also presents an analysis of the data on seizures of *A. anguilla* in the CITES Illegal Trade Database as submitted by CITES Parties and provides additional information on illegal trade in *A. anguilla*.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the information in paragraphs 14 to 17 concerning the ongoing work on eels being carried out by the Animals Committee with regards to the implementation of Decision 19.220 and the information on illegal trade in European eel outlined in paragraphs 21 to 33;
- b) invite the views of the Animals Committee on the possible development of a specific Resolution on European eels;
- c) consider establishing an intersessional working group with the following mandate:
 - i) review the Secretariat’s summary of the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2021/018 and Notification to the Parties No. 2023/062 on eels, including any updates provided under Decision 19.218 and any recommendations from the Secretariat to improve the implementation of the Convention for European eels;

- ii) consider the recommendations of the Animals Committee;
 - iii) consider the applicability of developing a specific Resolution on European eel; and
 - iv) make draft recommendations to improve the implementation of the Convention for European eel for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.
- d) encourage Parties to actively engage in any operations and targeted activities to address illegal eel trade.

67. Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.)

67.1 Evidence of continued non-compliant trade in Appendix-II listed shark species (*Carcharhinus longimanus*)..... SC77 Doc. 67.1

Maldives presents a global analysis of the implementation of the inclusion in Appendix II of the oceanic whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*) and addresses the possible extent of Illegal, Unregulated, and Unreported (IUU) fishing, and trade in this species that may not be in full compliance with CITES. Since its inclusion on Appendix II, the Oceanic Whitetip Shark (OWT) has been reassessed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as Critically Endangered globally and there is a risk that inadequate non-detriment findings are being issued to authorize trade. Maldives welcomes the Animals Committee's decision to select *Carcharhinus longimanus* for the Review of Significant Trade process during the current intersessional period. However, given that there appears to be ongoing and substantial illegal and undocumented international trade in the species and that inadequate legal acquisition findings may occur, Maldives believes further action is required.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) request the Secretariat to prioritize *Carcharhinus longimanus* in its analysis being conducted under Decision 19.223, paragraph c), regarding the mismatch between catch and trade data;
- b) request Parties, especially those that have a documented historic role in the trade of *Carcharhinus longimanus*, as noted in Table 8 of the Annex to document SC77 Doc. 67.1 to report to the Secretariat on their national level implementation efforts and regulations for implementing the listing of *Carcharhinus longimanus*;
- c) request the Secretariat compile the responses of Parties and present them to the 78th session of the Standing Committee (SC78);
- d) based on the responses of Parties and the report of the Secretariat, identify possible cases of non-compliance; consider the development of guidance to support comprehensive reporting of shark trade; identify whether any amendments are necessary to relevant Resolutions of the Conference of Parties;
- e) request the Secretariat to prioritize *Carcharhinus longimanus* under Decision 19.225, which requests the Secretariat to continue to monitor IFS implementation; and
- f) strongly encourage Parties who have confiscations or seizures of specimens of *Carcharhinus longimanus* or are encountering difficulties implementing the listing of this species, to submit that information in their reports to the Standing Committee and Secretariat.

67.2 Report of the Animals Committee SC77 Doc. 67.2

The Animals Committee bring to the attention of the Standing Committee several issues that arose as part of its implementation of Decision 19.225.

The Standing Committee is invited to consider the following recommendations of the Animals Committee. The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) encourage Parties to report the trade of sharks and rays using the preferred terms and units (as identified in the latest *Guidelines for the preparation and submission for CITES annual reports*) at the species level and consider the addition of taxon-specific terms to assist in the reporting;
- b) consider implications of the limited number of species-specific Harmonized System (HS) codes available under the World Custom's Organization (WCO)'s HS;
- c) request that Parties adopt more comprehensive national classifications based on WCO's HS Nomenclature;
- d) encourage Parties to use the available HS codes when reporting trade in the annual trade reports;
- e) consider the development of new digital reporting and traceability mechanisms; and
- f) consider the appropriate use of pre-Convention permitting for different shark and ray product types for specimens that meet the requirements of Resolution Conf. 13.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of Article VII, paragraph 2, concerning 'pre-Convention' specimens*.

67.3 Report of the Secretariat SC77 Doc. 67.3

The Secretariat informs the Committee that it has received information from 26 Parties on conservation and management of sharks and rays, with a particular focus on the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs) and legal acquisition findings (LAFs); identification and monitoring of CITES-listed shark products; stockpiles of commercial and/or pre-Convention shark parts and derivatives; and capacity-building needs to assist developing countries and small island developing States with reporting requirements. The Secretariat also provides an update on its capacity-building activities for implementing Appendix-II shark and ray listings to Parties, in particular Nicaragua and Yemen and with the organization of a regional training workshop on CITES, fisheries, and legal acquisition findings in May 2023 in Manta, Ecuador. The Secretariat is collaborating with TRAFFIC and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to conduct a further study on the apparent mismatch between the trade in products of CITES-listed sharks recorded in the CITES Trade Database and what would be expected based on the information available on catches of CITES-listed species. The Secretariat also presents information from the CITES Trade Database on commercial trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2000, sorted by species and by product (see Annex 2 to document SC77 Doc. 67.3).

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) take note of the progress made on the implementation of Decisions 19.222 to 19.224;
- b) request the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on sharks and rays to consider the non-scientific aspects of the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2023/027 contained in Annex 2 to document AC32 Doc. 37 (Rev. 1) to implement its mandate; and
- c) invite the Secretariat to consider updating the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual and illegal reports* to include explicit guidance on reporting on specimens taken from areas beyond national jurisdiction and report on this at its 78th meeting.

68. Queen conch (*Strombus gigas*) SC77 Doc. 68

The Secretariat reports on its implementation of Decisions 19.233 to 19.236 on queen conch, specifically on the fifth and sixth meetings of the CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM/CITES Working Group on Queen Conch in 2021 and 2023, respectively; and on the level of illegal trade in queen conch as reported in the CITES illegal trade reports between 2016 and 2021. The Secretariat further draws the Standing Committee's attention to a project entitled "Seizing the trade and business potential of Blue BioTrade products for promoting sustainable livelihoods and conservation of marine biodiversity in selected Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Countries" (Blue BioTrade Project) and on a project on queen conch genetics to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, involving the University of Rhode Island and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI).

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) note the reports produced under Phase 1 of the UNCTAD-OECS-CITES Blue BioTrade project on queen conch referred to in paragraph 16 of document SC77 Doc. 68;
- b) remind Parties that the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report* in Annex 2 to Notification to the Parties No. 2021/044 indicate that shells should preferably be reported by number and that meat should be reported in kilograms; and
- c) remind Parties that, according to paragraph 3 b) iv) of Resolution Conf. 13.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Control of trade in personal and household effects*, up to three specimens of queen conch shells are exempt from the requirement for CITES permits.

Flora

69. Products containing specimens of Appendix-II orchids (Orchidaceae spp.)..... SC77 Doc. 69

The Secretariat informs the Committee that it had reported to the Plants Committee on the study entitled *A Review of the Edible Orchid Trade* and the Plants Committee made recommendations relating to the development of identification manuals; the need for additional support for ongoing red list assessments for tuberous orchids and the need to understand regional differences in trade in tuberous orchids. These recommendations were also directed to the Standing Committee for its consideration.

The Standing Committee is invited to agree to the following recommendations of the Plants Committee. The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) emphasize the need for identification manuals and training;
- b) urge Parties and other donors to support red list assessments for tuberous orchid taxa in international trade;
- c) urge Parties to regulate the trade in tuberous orchids as is currently required under the Convention;
- d) request the Secretariat to issue a Notification to Parties inviting them to provide information on:
 - i) trade volumes;
 - ii) manuals and regulations relating to trade in tuberous orchid, including domestic trade;
 - iii) enforcement challenges; and
 - iv) other relevant information related to trade in tuberous orchids, including any capacity-building needs; and
- e) consider the study called for in paragraph b) of Decision 19.246, if available; the Plants Committee's recommendations on the study, and any responses to the Notification at its 78th meeting and propose recommendations to the 20th meeting of the Conference of Parties (CoP20), including any draft decisions, as appropriate.

Appendices of the Convention

Annotations

70. Annotations..... SC77 Doc. 70

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as Chair of the intersessional working group on annotations, provides an update on the activities of the working group. In addition to the terms of reference agreed by the Standing Committee at its 76th meeting, the Plants Committee at its 26th session invited the working group to consider as a priority, the completion of its tasks under paragraphs a) and c) of its mandate, with a particular focus on the review of annotation #14; and consider paragraphs g) and h) of annotation A10 for *Loxodonta africana* as part of its mandate.

The working group identified annotation #14, especially the term 'exhausted agarwood powder', annotations #11 and #12 with clarification and guidance on when an extract becomes an ingredient, and annotation #4 where implementation would benefit from clarification or amendment. The working group members identified additional implementation matters as worth considering: a review of the timber annotations to determine if they could be simplified; a clarification of annotation #3 interpretation; and interpretation of the term 'finished products packaged and ready for retail trade.' Additional actions have been focused on identifying definitions in the current annotations which require interpretation and guidance.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of this interim report, and to offer comments or guidance to the working group regarding the tasks included in the Terms of Reference contained in paragraph 3 and 4 of document SC77 Doc. 70.

71. Implications of the transfer of a species from one Appendix to another..... SC77 Doc. 71

The Secretariat proposes that the issue of the implications of the transfer of a species from one Appendix to another refers to possible 'transition arrangements', which is different and separate from the question of the exemption provided under Article VII of the Convention for 'pre-Convention' specimens. The Secretariat further notes that, beyond the transfer of a species from one Appendix to another, other situations such as the period between the adoption of a listing of a new species or new specimens in the Convention's Appendices and the entry into force of such listings, or the period when Parties agree on a delay in the entry into force of the listings (12 months for *Carcharhinidae* spp., 24 months for *Handroanthus* spp., *Roseodendron* spp. and *Tabebuia* spp.), constitute periods of transition.

The Standing Committee is thus invited to request the Secretariat to:

- a) develop draft guidance and best practices related to periods of transition and possible transitory measures, including but not limited to the period between the adoption of a proposal to transfer a species from one Appendix to another and the entry into force of the new listing;
- b) in accordance with Decision 18.151 (Rev. CoP19), consider, in consultation with the Plants Committee, as appropriate, whether special recommendations should apply in the case of a transfer of a tree species with annotation #5 or other annotated plant species; and
- c) report back to the Standing Committee at its 78th meeting.

72. Information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species..... SC77 Doc. 72

The Secretariat provides an update on the development of an information system for trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species, noting that partial funding had been secured from Switzerland. It has developed draft terms of reference (ToRs) for a study on the feasibility and requirements for an information system on trade in specimens of CITES-listed tree species. The draft ToRs have been shared with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Plants Committee. The Secretariat is also consulting with the Members of the Plants Committee and will report to the Standing Committee on those inputs.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of Decision 19.265.

73. Informal review mechanism for existing and proposed annotations..... SC77 Doc. 73

The Secretariat is making progress on the undertaking of a study of the feasibility and requirements for an informal review mechanism for existing and proposed annotations in accordance with Decision 19.266, taking into account the proposal for the establishment of a review mechanism for annotations as contained in document SC74 Doc. 82 as well as the comments made during SC74.

The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the Secretariat's progress in the implementation of Decisions 19.266 and 19.267.

Nomenclature matters

74. Taxonomy and nomenclature of African elephants (*Loxodonta* spp.) SC77 Doc. 74

The Secretariat summarizes the perspectives of Parties and other stakeholders on the potential effects of recognizing African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) as a separate species to African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) for CITES purposes and develops a list of all current Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties that would be impacted by such a change of nomenclature. The Secretariat notes that there is a scientific consensus and agreement among Parties and stakeholders that there are two distinct species of African elephants on the African continent: the forest elephant (*L. cyclotis*) and the savannah elephant (*L. africana*) and that it may be time for CITES to recognize that *L. africana* should be split into two species. The Secretariat recalls the provisions related to nomenclature changes of Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP19) on *Standard nomenclature*, highlighting the elements to be considered when a name change of a taxon is proposed: a) whether the name change would alter the scope of protection; b) whether it would cause additional species to be included; and c) ensure that the original intent of the listing is retained. The Secretariat then applies these elements to the possible nomenclature change, emphasizing the need for a list of the countries of occurrence for each species. The Secretariat recalls that the Animals Committee will consider proposing for adoption a new nomenclature standard reference.

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- a) consider the summary of the information provided by the Parties and stakeholders with respect to the effect and implications of a change to the nomenclature of the African elephant;
- b) consider the list of Resolutions, Decisions and other matters analyzed by the Secretariat in paragraphs 18 to 33 of document SC77 Doc. 74 that could be potentially impacted by a taxonomic change and provide any additional perspectives;
- c) consider the approach to the implementation of the taxonomic change as outlined in paragraphs 34 to 47 of document SC77 Doc. 74;
- d) recommend the inclusion of the topic African elephant nomenclature changes in the proposed dialogue meeting for African elephant range States;
- e) defer any conclusion on the standard nomenclature reference to the Animals Committee for its consideration its 33rd meeting; and
- f) should the Animals Committee agree to recommend a change to nomenclature and to the standard reference at its 33rd meeting, request the Secretariat to prepare possible proposals for consequential amendments to relevant Resolutions and CITES guidelines and submit them for consideration by the Committee at its 78th meeting.

Concluding items

75. Any other business *No document*

The Committee will be invited to discuss any other business that might be brought to its attention. Delegations wishing to propose subjects for discussion under this item are invited to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible.

76. Determination of the time and venue of the 78th meeting *No document*

The Standing Committee is invited to note that its 78th meeting would take place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 3 to 8 February 2025.

77. Closing remarks *No document*

Following the remarks by Members of the Committee, observers representing Parties and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and the Secretary-General, the Chair will thank all participants for their cooperation and the Secretariat and the interpreters for their work, and will close the meeting.