

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



Joint sessions of the 27th meeting of the Animals Committee and
21st meeting of the Plants Committee
Veracruz (Mexico), 2-3 May 2014

Strategic matters

Capacity building

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, March 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 16.29 on *Capacity building* where, in paragraph b), the Secretariat is directed to:

Collaborate with the Animals and Plants Committees on relevant capacity-building activities, inter alia to improve and expand the Secretariat's training materials on the making of non-detriment findings, including those available through the CITES Virtual College;
3. In addition, the Conference of the Parties revised Resolution Conf. 11.1 on *Establishment of Committees*, where in Annex 2 the Animals and Plants Committees are tasked to:
 - d) *cooperate with the Secretariat on the implementation of its programme of work to assist Scientific Authorities and provide scientific advice on training materials used in capacity building.*
4. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties, in Resolution Conf. 16.7 on *Non-detriment findings*, directs the Secretariat:
 - a) *to maintain a prominent section for non-detriment findings on the CITES website and to update it regularly with information from the Animals and Plants Committees, Parties and other sources;*
 - b) *to implement a user-friendly mechanism on the CITES website that would allow Parties to easily submit relevant information to be considered for inclusion in the website;*
 - c) *to ensure that this information is accessible in the appropriate sections of the CITES Virtual College; and*
 - d) *to assist in identifying possible funding sources to help Parties implementing capacity-building activities related to the making of non-detriment findings.*
5. In light of the above, the Secretariat communicated with the Chair of the Plants Committee to seek her advice on the implementation of Decision 16.29, and on updating relevant materials on the CITES Virtual College and the CITES websites. These should also reflect new and revised Decisions and Resolutions that are related to the making of non-detriment findings.

6. Over the years, the Secretariat has developed a number of capacity-building tools targeting the Scientific Authorities of Parties. These include: PowerPoint presentations; online courses available through the CITES Virtual College; identification materials, including the CITES Wiki Identification Manual; and participation in the International University of Andalusia Master's course on *Management, Access and Conservation of Species in Trade: the International Framework*. Furthermore, the development of new databases, such as the Significant Trade Database, the new web version of the CITES Checklist, Species+, and the Trade Information Query Tool were designed to enhance access to information relevant to Scientific Authorities and improve their capacity. Finally, the Secretariat continues to provide support through the provision of general and specialized training workshops.
7. Since CoP16, the Secretariat has undertaken a number of activities that contribute to the revision and development of training materials for the enhancement of capacities of Scientific Authorities. These include training sessions for the Scientific Authorities (flora and fauna) of Madagascar with financial support from the European Union (EU), and of the Maldives and Bahrain, both new Parties, with financial support from Japan. Similar sessions for two other new Parties, Lebanon and Angola, are planned for the first half of 2014. In addition, within the framework of an EU-funded project on marine species, standard presentation materials on the new CITES listing of sharks and manta rays were developed and placed on the CITES website¹ and the CITES Virtual College.²
8. Furthermore, the Secretariat has engaged in the implementation of Decisions 14.82 to 14.85 on *Grey parrot*, 16.102 to 16.108 on *Snake trade and conservation management (Serpentes spp.)*, 16.109 to 16.124 on *Tortoises and freshwater turtles (Testudines spp.)*, 16.139 to 16.140 on *Humphead wrasse (Cheilinus undulatus)*, 16.141 to 16.148 on *Regional cooperation on the management of and trade in the queen conch (Strombus gigas)*, 16.152 on *Malagasy ebonies (Diospyros spp.) and Malagasy rosewoods (Dalbergia spp.)* and 16.153 to 16.154 on *East African sandalwood (Osyris lanceolata)* which should result in guidance for national Scientific Authorities in the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs), the establishment of export quotas, training courses and possibly other capacity-building tools.
9. Some of the work on NDFs and in support of Scientific Authorities has been made possible through targeted capacity-building projects generously supported by the European Union and implemented by the Secretariat. Activities undertaken in recent years include: development of an inspection manual for use in commercial breeding facilities of freshwater turtles, tortoises, pythons and monitor lizards in Southeast Asia; building in-country capacity to undertake NDFs with regard to *Hippocampus* species in Thailand and Viet Nam; strengthening capacity for making NDFs for international trade of African grey parrots, and for monitoring and regulating this trade in support of Decisions 14.83 and 14.84; studies and guidance on trade in *Furcifer angeli*, *Mantella aurantiaca*, *Mantella viridis* and *Crocodylus niloticus* in Madagascar; enhancement of policies and regulations concerning trophy hunting of *Ovis ammon* in Central Asia, and guidance for the making of NDFs for trade in the species; sustainable use of and trade in *Falco cherrug*; and stock assessment of selected euphorbia and palmae in Madagascar in support of NDFs. These and other outputs of relevant activities will be made available on the CITES Website shortly.
10. Since CoP16, the Secretariat updated the course *Introduction to CITES and Non-Detriment Findings* on the CITES Virtual College and the section on NDFs) on the CITES website by including references to new Resolutions and Decisions adopted at CoP16. Further updates and revisions will be undertaken based on the suggestions of the Animals and Plants Committees made in the Annex to document AC26/PC20 Doc. 9 and presented in document CoP16 Doc. 23 (Rev. 1).
11. The suggestions by the Animals and Plants Committees referred to in the paragraph above provide a useful starting point in the further improvement of the CITES Virtual College. However, in the opinion of the Secretariat, the content of the training materials on the CITES Virtual College, including the courses and materials aimed at Scientific Authorities, require in-depth review and improvement, particularly in light of recommendations adopted by the Animals and Plants Committees.³ The Secretariat's capacity building materials have not been significantly revised for over 15 years, which may have rendered some materials less relevant and outdated. They will require updating to incorporate modern education approaches and technologies so that they can be more relevant, dynamic, interactive and adaptable to the needs of the target audience.

¹ <http://www.cites.org/eng/prog/shark/index.php>

² <https://cites.unia.es/cites/mod/resource/view.php?id=58>

³ See Annex of the Report of the working group (AC26/PC20, Doc.9: <http://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac-pc/AC26-PC20/E-AC26-PC20-09.pdf>)

12. The Secretariat notes the need to collaborate with and seek the guidance of the Animals and Plants Committees on the development of new targeted capacity-building activities concerning the making of NDFs, the improvement and expansion of the Secretariat's NDF training materials, the development of a prominent NDF section on the CITES website and of a user-friendly system to exchange NDF-related information, and the identification of funding sources, which will be initiated during the current intersessional period, subject to the availability of funds.
13. The Secretariat intends to seek further guidance and scientific advice of the Animals and Plants Committees to improve and expand the Secretariat's training materials used in capacity building, such as those on the making of non-detriment findings and the establishment of quotas to reflect Resolution Conf. 16.7 on *Non-detriment findings* which *inter alia* provides a number of concepts and non-binding guiding principles for Scientific Authorities to take into account in considering whether trade may be detrimental to the survival of a species.

Recommendation

14. The Animals and Plants Committees are invited to consider the provision of advice to the Secretariat in light of Resolution 11.1 (Rev. CoP16) Annex 2, paragraph d) Decision 16.29, paragraph b) and Resolution Conf. 16.7.