

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



Joint sessions of the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee and
the 23rd meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 22 July 2017

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species

COUNTRY-WIDE SIGNIFICANT TRADE REVIEWS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted the following Decision concerning country-wide Significant Trade Reviews:

17.111 Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

The Animals and Plants Committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, shall explore potential benefits and disadvantages of country-wide significant trade reviews, drawing upon the lessons learned, outcomes and impacts of the country-wide Review of Significant Trade of Madagascar as relevant.

Background

3. Decision 17.111 was agreed in the context of a broad evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, which was conducted between 2004 and 2016 under the auspices of the Animals and Plants Committees. The recommendations emanating from this evaluation were presented at CoP17 by the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees (see document [CoP17 Doc. 33](#)), and resulted in the adoption of a comprehensively revised Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP17) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*, as well as several supporting Decisions (Decisions 17.108 to 17.111).
4. During their evaluation, the Animals and Plants Committees had agreed to conduct a case study on the country-based Review of Significant Trade in Madagascar (for both fauna and flora), which has been the only country subjected to such a review. However, it was recognized from the onset that such a study would be quite complex and require a different approach than for other cases that the Committees had selected. However, the available funds did not allow this case study to be undertaken (see document [AC26/PC20 Doc. 7](#)).
5. In their document to CoP17, the Chairs of the Animal and Plants Committees noted that, while a country-based Review of Significant Trade is a large task, there are benefits to this approach for range States that are selected within the Review of Significant Trade for multiple species. In undertaking a country-wide review, the Chairs noted that a project approach with clear deliverables and realistic expectations would be necessary. The Committees did not have sufficient time to consider a more detailed approach to country-wide reviews of Significant Trade, and proposed to explore the benefits and disadvantages of country-wide reviews of Significant Trade further through the adoption of Decision 17.111.

Discussion

6. The Secretariat is of the opinion that the implementation of Decision 17.111 would benefit from a supporting consultancy to analyse potential benefits and disadvantages of country-wide approaches to improve compliance with the scientific requirements of the Convention, particularly those contained in paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) of Article IV; examine outcomes and impacts, with Madagascar as a case study; formulate lessons learned; and propose recommendations for consideration by the Animals and Plants Committees. In its comments on document CoP17 Doc. 33, the Secretariat indicated that such a consultancy would cost in the order of 10,000 USD. To date, it has not secured such funding.
7. It is not certain that the Secretariat will be able to secure the external resources required for conducting the analysis that it proposes in paragraph 6 above. The Committees may therefore wish to start examining various aspects concerning the possible conduct of country-wide significant trade reviews. During their earlier evaluations, the Animals and Plants Committees have already noted the need to give further consideration to the development of selection criteria; and to consider a mechanism for a wider needs/gap analysis and the development of country action plans to encourage a holistic approach to the implementation of the Convention (see document [AC27/PC21 Doc. 12.1](#)). Based on the Terms of Reference for an evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade [Decision 13.67 (Rev. CoP14)] and documents submitted by Madagascar in the context of its Review of Significant Trade (e.g. documents [AC23 Doc. 8.2](#) and [PC17 Doc. 8.2](#)), the Committees could consider the following issues:
 - a) the process and criteria for selecting countries for this type of review (including the reliance on numerical data);
 - b) the process and means used to compile and review information concerning the implementation of Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) for the selected countries, and the subsequent use of this information by the Animals and Plants Committees, e.g. for categorization and the issuance of recommendations to the Parties concerned and the Standing Committee;
 - c) the types of recommendations to be made, bearing in mind that a project approach with clear deliverables and realistic expectations would be necessary;
 - d) the use of the recommendations by range States as guidance for managing target species and other CITES-listed species with similar characteristics;
 - e) the nature and scale of the support provided to range States for implementing the recommendations, including field projects, financial aid and assistance in building local and national capacities;
 - f) the process to monitor and review the implementation of recommendations;
 - g) the impacts of the process on other aspects of CITES implementation in the country; and
 - h) possible amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP17).

Recommendations

8. The Animals and Plants Committees are invited to:
 - a) consider establishing an intersessional working group on country-wide significant trade reviews to address the issues mentioned in paragraph 7 above and, if possible, review the outcomes of the consultancy proposed in paragraph 6; and
 - b) agree to review the recommendations of the intersessional working group, the possible outputs of a consultancy on country-wide significant trade reviews, and progress with the implementation of Decision 17.111 at their next meetings in 2018.