

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



Joint sessions of the 31st meeting of the Animals Committee and
the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 17 July 2020

Interpretation and implementation matters

Regulation of trade

IDENTIFICATION MATERIALS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 18th meeting (CoP18, Geneva, 2019), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 18.135 to 18.139 on *Identification materials* as follows:

18.135 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) *continue collecting information on identification materials and share it through the CITES Website and the CITES Virtual College; and*
- b) *subject to the availability of external funding, and with input from the joint working group called for under Decision 18.137, revise and redesign the CITES Virtual College in order to make the identification materials available in a more user-friendly manner.*

18.136 Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall undertake a review of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on Identification Manual. It shall:

- a) *collect and compile information on the current state of species identification activities and needs, and assess their relevance for the review of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16);*
- b) *consider whether Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) would best be revised or replaced with a new resolution on Identification of specimens of CITES-listed species, and prepare a draft text of the revised or new resolution;*
- c) *propose a revised resolution in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees and the Standing Committee; and*
- d) *report on the progress and make recommendations at the meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees, and the meeting of the Standing Committee, as appropriate.*

18.137 Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

The Animals and Plants Committees shall establish a joint working group on identification materials that are used by Parties to identify CITES-listed species and provide inputs to the Secretariat based on the outcomes of the following working group tasks, in consultation with the Secretariat:

- a) *review selected identification materials, including material compiled as per Decision 18.136 paragraph a), and assess the need for their revision and improvement, taking into account the materials that are being developed or have already been developed by Parties and materials requested in Decisions or Resolutions;*
- b) *review Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on Identification Manual, taking into account the review outlined in Decision 18.137 paragraphs a) and c), to promote accuracy and availability of identification materials;*
- c) *consider ways to improve the accuracy and availability of identification materials on CITES-listed species; and*
- d) *report on progress with these activities at the next meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees.*

18.138 Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) *provide inputs on the draft resolution text prepared by the Secretariat and revised by the Animals and Plants Committees, to ensure that the needs for identification materials expressed by Parties and authorities responsible for wildlife law enforcement are taken into account; and*
- b) *submit the revised draft resolution to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.*

18.139 Directed to Parties

Parties are encouraged to support the efforts of the working group on identification materials by providing to the Secretariat information on available identification and guidance materials that are used by Parties, and particularly by enforcement and inspection officers, to facilitate implementation of the Convention.

Progress to date: Decisions directed to the Secretariat

3. In implementation of Decision 17.161, paragraph c), which instructed the Secretariat to *explore means to improve and promote the accuracy and availability of identification materials on CITES-listed species*, the Secretariat commissioned the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-WCMC) to create a full scan of the *CITES Identification Manual* available for download and consider any additional functionalities that may be useful. Accordingly, UNEP-WCMC has created a downloadable PDF version of the *CITES Identification Manual*, which is available on the [identification materials page](#) of the CITES website. UNEP-WCMC is also creating additional ways for accessing the digitized version of the *CITES Identification Manual* through the [CITES Checklist](#) and [Species+](#)¹. Users would be able to search for and download the complete Manual, individual volumes, individual identification sheets for specific species, and customized selections of sheets for any given taxonomic and/or geographic range. The additional identification materials that are currently available on the CITES Virtual College are also made available through the same search function.
4. The above functions added to the CITES Checklist may be considered as part of the effort to *make the identification materials available in a more user-friendly manner*, which is called for under Decision 18.135, paragraph b). With regard to the revision and redesign of the CITES Virtual College, however, the Secretariat has not been able to secure the funds to date. With input from the joint working group called for in

¹ *At the time of writing the present document (early April 2020), this function was still under development; it will most likely be available before AC31/PC25.*

Decision 18.137, resource mobilization efforts will continue towards the development of a user-friendly identification materials database on the CITES website, which could potentially be updated with new materials submitted directly by the users.

5. In implementation of Decision 18.136, paragraph a), the Secretariat issued the Notification to Parties [No. 2020/030](#) on *Information on identification materials* in order to seek inputs from Parties and other stakeholders on the current state of species identification activities and needs. Since the deadline for responding to the Notification is 20 April, the summary of the responses received will be reported as an information document to the present meeting.
6. With regard to Decision 18.136, paragraph b), the Secretariat proposed to the Standing Committee at its 70th meeting ([SC70 Doc.42.1](#)) that a new resolution on *Identification of specimens of CITES-listed species* was necessary for the following reasons:

The Secretariat notes that the issue of species identification in the context of CITES has evolved significantly in recent years. There is an ever-increasing challenge, particularly for CITES authorities and enforcement officials, to identify specimens of CITES-listed species in trade in a timely, practical and effective manner. The means for identification have diversified, including visual means, as well as molecular, DNA and other techniques. The delivery and dissemination methods for identification guidance now include visual guides in paper- and electronic formats, DNA test kits and other types of services using handheld devices, social media tools, and so on, often involving a wide variety of partners and experts. Yet, none of these new identification techniques, opportunities or challenges are reflected in Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16), of which large sections have become obsolete.

In this regard, the Secretariat notes that all preamble paragraphs, and most operational paragraphs of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16), no longer correspond to the current practice due to the cessation since 2009 of the Secretariat's updating the CITES Identification Manual and the preparation of identification sheets. The only sections of the Resolution that remain pertinent today can be found in paragraph 1, items c), d), e), h), and i). This calls for a substantial redrafting of the resolution, or its cancellation and replacement by a new resolution on identification.

[...] many CITES Decisions contain references to species identification needs, and this may also be the case with the new decisions that will be adopted at CoP18. Some of the common and recurrent elements may benefit from consolidation into a single resolution, so that they may be dealt with under longer-term guidance. The Secretariat will therefore propose to draft a new resolution on Identification of specimens of CITES-listed species...

7. The Secretariat maintains its view expressed at SC70 and therefore proposes to replace Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) with a new resolution entitled *Identification of specimens of CITES-listed species*, or a similar title, as appropriate. The Secretariat will develop the draft text in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees and the Standing Committee, with the intention of submitting a new proposed resolution for adoption at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Establishment of a joint working group on identification materials

8. Decision 18.137 calls for the establishment of a joint working group on identification materials to help Parties identify CITES-listed species and sets out the terms of reference for the working group.
9. Should the Animals and Plants Committees agree to the Secretariat's proposal to replace Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) with a new resolution as per paragraph 6 of this document, the terms of reference of the working group may need to be modified slightly as follows:
 - a) *review selected identification materials, including material compiled as per Decision 18.136 paragraph a), and assess the need for their revision and improvement, taking into account the materials that are being developed or have already been developed by Parties and materials requested in Decisions or Resolutions;*
 - b) *review Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on Identification Manual with the aim of replacing it with a new resolution, and advise the Secretariat as it develops the proposed new draft resolution, also taking into account paragraphs a) and c) of these terms of reference;*

- c) consider ways to improve the accuracy and availability of identification materials on CITES-listed species; and*
 - d) report on progress with these activities at the next meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees.*
10. In preparation of the working group's work under Decision 18.137, paragraph a), the Secretariat has prepared a list of references found in Resolutions and Decisions on species identification as per Annexes 1 and 2 to this document.

Recommendations

11. The Animals and Plants Committees may wish to establish a joint working group on capacity building and identification materials with the revised terms of reference outlined in paragraph 9 above.

SUMMARY OF REFERENCES FOUND IN COP RESOLUTIONS IN EFFECT AFTER COP18

Number	Title	Text
Conf. 7.12 (Rev. CoP15)	<i>Marking requirements for trade in specimens of taxa with populations in both Appendix I and Appendix II</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. RECOMMENDS that: a) with respect to the identification of live specimens, any marking system that requires the attachment of a tag, band or other uniquely marked label, or the marking of a part of the animal's anatomy be undertaken only with due regard for the humane care, well-being and natural behaviour of the specimen concerned; ...
Conf. 8.13 (Rev. CoP17)	<i>Use of coded-microchip implants for marking live animals in trade</i>	RECOGNIZING the increasingly wide use of coded-microchip implants for the individual identification of animals; ... MINDFUL that the provisions of Article VI, paragraph 7, allow a Management Authority to determine appropriate methods of marking specimens for the purposes of assisting in identification; and AWARE that the International Union for Conservation of Nature / Species Survival Commission (IUCN/SSC) Conservation Breeding Specialist Group has already undertaken an extensive review of the application of coded-microchip implants, and that effective implementation of Article VI, paragraph 7, will result in increasingly wider use of coded-microchip implants for the identification of animals; THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. RECOMMENDS that: a) Parties, where possible and appropriate, without excluding the use of other methods, adopt the use of implantable transponders bearing permanent, non-programmable, unalterable and permanently unique codes for the identification of live animals; ...
Conf. 9.5 (Rev. CoP16)	<i>Trade with States not party to the Convention</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. RECOMMENDS that: a) permits and certificates issued by States not party to the Convention not be accepted by Parties unless they contain: ... ii) sufficient identification of the species concerned for the purposes of the Convention; ...
Conf. 9.14 (Rev. CoP17)	<i>Conservation of and trade in African and Asian rhinoceroses</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. RECOMMENDS that: ... e) immediately bring the seizure of illegal rhinoceros specimens made within their territories: i) to the attention of authorities in countries of origin, transit and destination, as applicable, providing information associated with the seizure, for example on <i>modus operandi</i> , accompanying documentation, any identification marks on the seized specimens, where appropriate the details of the offenders involved, and any other information that could assist the initiation of investigations as appropriate, in countries of origin, transit and destination; or

		<p>ii) to the attention of the CITES Secretariat in cases where sufficient information is not available to identify the countries of origin, transit and destination of the seized rhinoceros specimens, including information describing the circumstances of the seizure;</p> <p>...</p> <p>2. URGES</p> <p>a) all Parties that have stocks of rhinoceros horn to identify, mark, register and secure such stocks, and declare these to the Secretariat each year before 28 February, in a format to be defined by the Secretariat;</p> <p>...</p>
Conf. 9.20 (Rev.)	<i>Guidelines for evaluating marine turtle ranching proposals submitted pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)</i>	<p><u>2. Trade controls</u></p> <p>Proponents must take every reasonable measure to ensure that the trade in products from approved ranches does not stimulate an increase in trade from other sources in a manner detrimental to the survival of the population, other populations or other species of marine turtle, or serve as a cause for such trade. Therefore, before international trade is authorized, the proponent Party should ensure that both it and any country to which the products of the ranching operation are destined have adequate legal frameworks and administrative measures for monitoring and reporting, and adequate local and national enforcement capabilities. In particular each proponent Party must:</p> <p>...</p> <p>d) Describe marking and tracking procedures for all parts and derivatives from approved ranches that will allow the unambiguous identification of ranch products, including methods for marking products and packages, packaging types, transport methods, shipping routes, product documentation, secure storage of products, inventory control up to the point of export and specification of the maximum quantities of products (quotas) to be exported annually.</p> <p><u>3. The ranching operation</u></p> <p>To satisfy recommendation in paragraph 2 d) ii)² of Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)³, the proponent should provide information on:</p> <p>...</p> <p>c) <u>Operating procedures</u>, taking account of:</p> <p>...</p> <p>iii) production schedules, including production profiles by age- and size-class, growth rates, methods used to identify ranch stocks, culling procedures exclusive of harvesting, reports of non-harvest mortality, methods of disposal of carcasses from non-harvest mortality and number of specimens by age- and size-class that will be harvested each year;</p>
Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17)	<i>Criteria for amendment of Appendices I and II</i>	<p>Annex 3 Special cases</p> <p>...</p> <p>Higher taxa</p> <p>...</p> <p>Parties contemplating preparing a proposal to transfer an individual plant species from a higher-taxon listing in Appendix II to a separate listing in Appendix I should consider:</p> <p>...</p> <p>iii) any practical problems in identifying the species, particularly in the form in which it may be traded.</p> <p>Annex 6 Format for proposals to amend the Appendices</p>

² Corrected by the Secretariat following the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties: originally referred to "paragraph e) ii)".

³ Corrected by the Secretariat following the 11th, 14th and 15th meetings of the Conference of the Parties: originally referred to Resolution Conf. 10.18, later corrected to Resolution Conf. 11.16, then to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14).

		<p>...</p> <p>A. <u>Proposal Annotations</u> If a specific annotation to the listing in the Appendices is proposed, the proponent should:</p> <p>...</p> <p>– where applicable, provide identification sheets to be included in the CITES Identification Manual that illustrate the parts and derivatives covered under the annotation.</p> <p>...</p> <p>C. <u>Supporting statement</u></p> <p>1. <u>Taxonomy</u> The proponent should provide sufficient information to allow the Conference of the Parties to identify clearly the taxon that is the subject of the proposal.</p> <p>...</p> <p>1.7 Code numbers If the species concerned is already included in the Appendices, refer to the code numbers in the CITES Identification Manual.</p> <p>...</p> <p>9. <u>Information on similar species</u> Give the names of species of which specimens in trade look very similar. Provide details on how they may be distinguished, including, in particular, details on those commodities or parts and derivatives most common in trade, and explain whether or not it is reasonable to expect an informed non-expert to be able to make a firm identification. Provide details on how to resolve potential difficulties in distinguishing specimens of the species proposed for listing from those of similar species, in particular those specimens most common in trade.</p>
Conf. 10.8 (Rev. CoP14)	<i>Conservation of and trade in bears</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>1. URGES all Parties, particularly bear range and consuming countries, to continue to take action to reduce the illegal trade in bear parts and derivatives by:</p> <p>...</p> <p>g) sharing forensic technology to assist Parties lacking sufficient capabilities for the identification of bear parts and derivatives, and for examination of products labelled as containing parts and derivatives of bears;</p> <p>...</p>
Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Trade in elephant specimens</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>...</p> <p>11. DIRECTS the Secretariat, subject to available resources, to provide technical assistance to Parties to:</p> <p>...</p> <p>c) identify specimens of elephant ivory, other types of ivory and ivory look-alike materials;</p> <p>...</p>
Conf. 10.13 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Implementation of the Convention for tree species</i>	<p>...</p> <p>AWARE that unambiguous identification of timber, by its nature, can be a complex procedure, requiring particular expertise; RECOGNIZING that the development of timber identification materials is essential for the effective implementation of the Convention and that the cost of production will be considerable;</p> <p>...</p> <p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>...</p>

		<p>Regarding identification and forensics for tree species</p> <p>j) Parties acknowledge the fundamental importance of timber identification and continued development of advanced analytical wood identification techniques and operational tools to the successful implementation of CITES for timber species;</p> <p>k) Parties are encouraged to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to create and maintain wood sample collections and facilitate exchange of wood samples and associated database information, including guidelines for the collection of wood samples, and make these available to support timber identification and development of analytical methodologies and identification protocols for CITES-listed and look-alike tree species; and</p> <p>l) Parties are encouraged to collaborate with relevant stakeholders to develop shared priorities for timber identification, including priority species, and on developing identification techniques, such as DNA analysis, chemical analysis and imaging, Near Infrared Spectrometry (NIRS), Directed Analysis in Real Time mass spectrometry (DART), and macro- and microscopic identification of wood and fibre samples;</p>
Conf. 10.19 (Rev. CoP14)	<i>Traditional medicines</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>1. RECOMMENDS that the Parties:</p> <p>...</p> <p>b) promote the development of techniques, including the application of forensic science, for identifying parts and derivatives used in traditional medicines;</p> <p>...</p>
Conf. 10.20	<i>Frequent cross-border movements of personally owned live animals</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>1. RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>...</p> <p>d) the Management Authority require the applicant for a certificate of ownership to provide his name and address and pertinent data regarding the live animal, including the species, sex and mark number or other means of identification;</p> <p>...</p> <p>j) the Parties concerned require that any live animal that is a personal or household effect be securely marked or otherwise appropriately identified and that this mark be included on the certificate of ownership so that the authorities of the State into which the live animal enters can verify that the certificate corresponds to the live animal in question;</p>
Conf. 11.3 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Compliance and enforcement</i>	<p>Regarding additional actions to promote enforcement</p> <p>15. RECOMMENDS further that the Parties:</p> <p>a) take the necessary measures to develop a comprehensive strategy for border controls, audits and investigations, by:</p> <p>...</p> <p>ii) ensuring that officers in charge of control are aware of and trained in CITES matters regarding, for example, CITES requirements, identification of specimens and the handling of live animals;</p> <p>...</p> <p>q) carry out focused national and regional capacity-building activities with particular focus on fostering inter-agency cooperation and improving knowledge of legislation; species identification; risk analysis and investigation of criminal actions;</p>
Conf. 11.4 (Rev. CoP12)	<i>Conservation of cetaceans, trade in cetacean specimens and the relationship with the International Whaling Commission</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>Regarding cooperation in monitoring illegal trade in whale parts and derivatives</p> <p>9. ENCOURAGES all countries concerned to voluntarily:</p> <p>...</p> <p>b) collect and inventory skin or meat samples for DNA identification from all such frozen whale specimens;</p> <p>10. RECOMMENDS that all countries concerned collect and inventory skin or meat samples for DNA identification from baleen whales:</p>

Conf. 11.7	<i>Conservation of and trade in musk deer</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>2. RECOMMENDS that manufacturing and consumer States cooperate in the development and distribution of identification guides for manufactured products containing musk to assist with enforcement efforts; ...</p>
Conf. 11.8 (Rev. CoP17)	<i>Conservation of and control of trade in the Tibetan antelope</i>	<p>COMMENDING the initiatives by Parties to facilitate cooperation in conservation of the Tibetan antelope and to address illegal hunting of the Tibetan antelope, including:</p> <p>...</p> <p>b) France, India, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States, which have taken steps to protect the species, including enforcement and judicial action to halt the illegal trade in Tibetan antelope parts and derivatives and the development of identification techniques for such parts and derivatives;</p> <p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>3. URGES:</p> <p>...</p> <p>b) all countries and territories with relevant experience and technical capabilities to strengthen cooperation and the exchange of information, technology and experience with regard to education and awareness, law enforcement such as smuggling routes and methods, and techniques for the identification of parts and derivatives of the Tibetan antelope; ...</p>
Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>1. URGES:</p> <p>a) all Parties to:</p> <p>...</p> <p>iii) develop and implement research programmes to identify the species involved in trade, to monitor and assess the impact of trade on wild populations, and to evaluate the conservation risks and benefits of large-scale commercial breeding of tortoises and freshwater turtles;</p> <p>...</p> <p>d) all Parties affected by illegal trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles to:</p> <p>...</p> <p>iii) where necessary facilitate the compilation, dissemination and translation into local languages, of information on tortoises and freshwater turtles, for use by enforcement officers, drawing on existing identification and enforcement guides, and focusing on identification, local names, distribution and illustrations;</p> <p>iv) where necessary, develop supplementary identification guidance, tailored to the specific needs of the Party concerned, containing basic information on the characteristics used for tortoise and freshwater turtle identification, to support the accurate application of existing identification material;</p> <p>...</p>
Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15)	<i>Trade in stony corals</i>	<p>...</p> <p>AWARE, however, that coral rock cannot be readily identified other than to the order Scleractinia and that accordingly non-detriment findings under Article IV, paragraph 2 (a), of the Convention cannot be readily applied;</p> <p>...</p> <p>RECOGNIZING also that it is frequently difficult to identify live or dead corals to the species level owing to the lack of a standard nomenclature and the lack of comprehensive and accessible identification guides for the non-specialist;</p> <p>...</p>

<p>Conf. 11.11 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Regulation of trade in plants</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ... Regarding enforcement for plants 12. RECOMMENDS that Parties ensure that: ... b) enforcing agencies obtain access to materials and expertise enabling identification of plant specimens in trade, including whether the specimens are of wild or artificially propagated origin; ...</p>
<p>Conf. 11.12 (Rev. CoP15)</p>	<p><i>Universal tagging system for the identification of crocodilian skins</i></p>	<p>... RECALLING that Article VI, paragraph 7, of the Convention provides that specimens of species listed in the Appendices may be marked to assist in identifying them; ... 1. RECOMMENDS: a) the maintenance of a universal tagging system for the identification of raw, tanned, and/or finished crocodilian skins by the general application of non-reusable tags to all crocodilian skins entering international trade from the countries of origin; b) that crocodilian skins, flanks and chalecos be individually tagged before export; c) that the non-reusable tags include, as a minimum: the ISO two-letter code for the country of origin; a unique serial identification number; a standard species code (as provided in Annex 1); and, where appropriate, the year of skin production or harvest, in accordance with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15), adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000) and amended at its 14th and 15th meetings (The Hague, 2007; Doha 2010); and further, that such tags have as a minimum the following characteristics: a tamper-resistant, self-locking mechanism, heat resistance, inertia to chemical and mechanical processing, and alphanumeric information, which may include bar-coding, applied by permanent stamping;</p>
<p>Conf. 11.15 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum, herbarium, diagnostic and forensic research specimens</i></p>	<p>Annex Examples of the types of forensic reference samples that may qualify for provisions under non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum and herbarium specimens and their use (Note: Depending on the specific circumstances, the type of sample and typical sample size eligible for exchange under this Resolution may differ.) [Multiple types of samples listed as “<i>species identification</i>” as the purpose of the use of sample]</p>
<p>Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)</p>	<p><i>Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION Regarding proposals to transfer populations from Appendix I to Appendix II for ranching 2. RECOMMENDS that: b) in order to be considered by the Conference of the Parties, any proposal to transfer a population to Appendix II in order to conduct a ranching programme satisfy the following general criteria: ... ii) all products (including live specimens) of each operation must be adequately identified and documented to ensure that they can be readily distinguished from products of Appendix-I populations; ...</p>
<p>Conf. 11.21 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Use of annotations in Appendices I and II</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 6. RECOMMENDS the following guidance and principles for annotations: e) annotations that specify the types of specimens included in the Appendices should be used sparingly, as their implementation is particularly challenging, especially where there are identification problems or where the purpose of trade has been specified;</p>

<p>Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Permits and certificates</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>...</p> <p>VII. Regarding travelling-exhibition certificates</p> <p>14. RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>k) Parties require that specimens be marked or identified in such a way that the authorities of each State into which an exhibition enters can verify that the travelling-exhibition certificates correspond to the specimens being imported;</p> <p>...</p> <p>XI. Regarding permits and certificates for coral specimens</p> <p>19. RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>a) on permits and certificates issued to authorize trade in specimens of hard corals of the genera included in the most recent CITES list of Coral taxa where identification to genus level is acceptable, where the species cannot be readily determined, the specimens may be recorded at the genus level. This list is maintained by the Secretariat and may be amended with the concurrence of the Animals Committee;</p> <p>b) on permits and certificates for trade in specimens that are readily recognizable as coral rock [as defined in Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) Annex], where the genus cannot be readily determined, the scientific name for the specimens should be 'Scleractinia';</p> <p>c) any Party wishing to authorize export of coral rock identified to ordinate level only should, in view of the inability to make a non-detriment finding for coral rock pursuant to Article IV, paragraph 2 (a), apply the provisions of Article IV, paragraph 3;</p> <p>...</p> <p>e) on permits and certificates for trade in worked specimens of black coral, where the species cannot be readily determined, the specimens may be recorded at the genus level and, where the genus cannot be readily determined, the scientific name for the given specimens should be 'Antipatharia'; and</p> <p>f) raw black coral and live black coral should continue to be identified in trade to species level;</p> <p>...</p> <p>24. RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>...</p> <p>e) Parties refuse to accept permits and certificates that do not indicate the scientific name of the species concerned (including subspecies when appropriate), except in the case where:</p> <p>...</p> <p>iii) certain manufactured products contain pre-Convention specimens that can not be identified to the species level;</p>
<p>Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Conservation of and trade in tigers and other Appendix-I Asian big cat species</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>1. URGES:</p> <p>...</p> <p>l) all Parties that make seizures of tiger skins within their territories, when possible, to share images of the seized tiger skins with the national focal points or agencies in tiger range States, which have photographic identification databases for tigers, and the capacity to identify tigers from photographs of tiger skins, so as to identify the origin of illegal specimens. The images should be taken from above with the skin spread. In the case of whole tiger carcasses seized with the skin intact, images should be taken of both sides of the carcass;</p> <p>...</p> <p>4. REQUESTS:</p> <p>a) countries and organizations with the relevant expertise to encourage and support range and consumer States, as a matter of urgency, in the development of practical identification manuals to aid the detection and accurate identification of parts and derivatives of Asian big cats;</p> <p>...</p>

<p>Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Conservation and management of sharks</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ... 11. FURTHER ENCOURAGES Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies to develop robust, low-cost tools and systems, where not already existing, to ensure that shark species, in particular CITES-listed species, are identified accurately at the first point of capture/landing, and undertake studies of trade in all shark products; ...</p>
<p>Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17)</p>	<p><i>Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish</i></p>	<p>... RECALLING that Article VI, paragraph 7, of the Convention provides that specimens of species listed in the Appendices may be marked to assist in identifying them; ... NOTING that, in order to assist the Parties in identifying legal caviar in trade, marking should be standardized and that particular specifications for the design of labels are fundamental, should be generally applied and should also take into account marking systems currently in place and anticipated technological advances in marking systems; THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ... 7. CALLS UPON range States, importing countries and other experts and appropriate organizations, such as the IUCN/SSC Sturgeon Specialist Group, in consultation with the Secretariat and the Animals Committee, to continue to explore the development of a uniform DNA-based identification system for parts and derivatives and aquaculture stocks of Acipenseriformes species to assist in the subsequent identification of the origin of specimens in trade and the development and application of methods for differentiating wild from aquaculture origin caviar in cases where DNA-based methods are not useful; ... Annex 1 CITES guidelines for a universal labelling system for the trade in and identification of caviar</p>
<p>Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15)</p>	<p><i>Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ... 5. RESOLVES that: ... f) registered captive-breeding operations shall ensure that an appropriate and secure marking system is used to clearly identify all breeding stock and specimens in trade, and shall undertake to adopt superior marking and identification methods as these become available; ... 8. AGREES further that: a) Parties shall restrict imports for primarily commercial purposes, as defined in Resolution Conf. 5.10 (Rev. CoP15), of captive-bred specimens of Appendix-I species to those produced by operations included in the Secretariat's Register and shall reject any document granted under Article VII, paragraph 4, if the specimens concerned do not originate from such an operation and if the document does not describe the specific identifying mark applied to each specimen;</p>
<p>Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18)</p>	<p><i>Standard nomenclature</i></p>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ... 2. RECOMMENDS that: a) a subspecies be proposed for inclusion in the Appendices only if it is generally recognized as a valid taxon, and easily identifiable in the traded form; b) where there are identification difficulties, the problem be approached by either including the entire species in Appendix I or Appendix II or by circumscribing the range of the subspecies warranting protection and listing the populations within this area on a country basis; ...</p>

Conf. 13.11 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Wild meat</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ... 6. ENCOURAGES Parties to, as appropriate: ... b) support the development and dissemination of identification tools for identifying CITES-listed species traded as wild meat;
Conf. 16.5	<i>Cooperation with the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation of the Convention on Biological Diversity</i>	“CITES Identification Manual and Web pages” mentioned under CITES’s potential contribution towards GSPC Targets 14 (<i>The importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation incorporated into communication, education and public awareness programmes</i>) and 15 (<i>The number of trained people working with appropriate facilities sufficient according to national needs, to achieve the targets of this Strategy</i>).
Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17)	<i>Non-detriment findings</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. RECOMMENDS that: ... v) the making of an effective non-detriment finding relies upon a correct identification of the species concerned and verification that it is specimens of this species that are to be exported; ...
Conf. 16.8 (Rev. CoP17)	<i>Frequent cross-border non-commercial movements of musical instruments</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. RECOMMENDS that for non-commercial cross-border movement of musical instruments derived from CITES species, other than Appendix-I specimens acquired after the species was included in the Appendices: ... c) the competent CITES authority require the applicant for a musical instrument certificate to provide their name and address and pertinent data regarding the musical instrument, including the species used to manufacture the instrument, and a means of identification, such as the manufacturer’s name or serial number or other means of identification; ... h) the Parties concerned require that the musical instrument be appropriately identified and that the identification mark or a detailed description of the instrument be included on the musical instrument certificate so that the authorities of the State into which the musical instrument enters can verify that the certificate corresponds to the musical instrument in question; ...
Conf. 17.8	<i>Disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens of CITES-listed species</i>	Annex 3 Guidelines to develop an action plan on seized and/or confiscated live specimens ... 6. include a list of experts who or institutions which can assist in species identification, care and/or other technical aspects of the seizure, confiscation and disposal process; ...
Conf. 17.10	<i>Conservation of and trade in pangolins</i>	THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION 1. URGES all Parties to: ... d) carry out capacity-building activities with a particular focus on: i) methods and techniques to detect and identify illegally traded pangolins, including specimens from alleged captive-breeding operations; ... e) promote the development of techniques, including the application of forensic science, for identifying parts and derivatives of pangolins in trade; ...

Conf. 17.12	<i>Conservation, sustainable use of and trade in snakes</i>	<p>THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION</p> <p>...</p> <p>Regarding monitoring and trade controls</p> <p>16. ENCOURAGES Parties to pursue the development and dissemination of forensic methods to assist Parties in the identification of snake parts and derivatives, and for examination of products labelled as containing parts and derivatives of snakes;</p> <p>Regarding traceability systems for snake skins</p> <p>...</p> <p>18. ENCOURAGES Parties to share experiences in the use of traceability systems for specimens of CITES-listed snake species, including the use of identification technologies;</p> <p>19. RECOMMENDS:</p> <p>...</p> <p>e) the identification of skins make use of devices that are tamper-proof, affordable, uniquely serially numbered and contain the following minimum information: species, country of origin (where relevant regional code), year of harvest or production, unique serial number, and source code, or technologies that may accomplish the same requirements. In addition, Parties are encouraged to add other information they deem necessary; and</p> <p>f) the Secretariat should compile such information on available identification technologies and projects to make them available to Parties;</p> <p>...</p>
Conf. 18.2	<i>Establishment of Committees</i>	<p>Annex 2 Terms of Reference of the Animals and Plants Committees of the Conference of the Parties</p> <p>...</p> <p>Membership</p> <p>10. Regarding nomination of candidates, the following guidelines should be implemented:</p> <p>...</p> <p>d) provide scientific advice on identification issues, and on training and other capacity-building materials, tools and guides to promote their accuracy and availability.</p>
Conf. 18.3	<i>CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030</i>	<p>Goal 1 recognizes that only through ensuring compliance with CITES provisions will the aim of the Convention be achieved. This goal speaks to the performance of the Convention and how effectively it is resulting in the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed wild fauna and flora. It recognizes that the effectiveness of the Convention at achieving its Vision depends upon its full implementation by all Parties. Full implementation includes commitment by each Party to the Convention and its principles. Equally important is the commitment of each Party to embody the international co-operation essential for the success of the Convention. Actions to achieve the intent of this goal might include developing innovative tools for the identification and traceability of species in trade, the making of non-detriment findings, determining legal acquisition and for the sharing of trade information. It requires Parties to develop provisions for trade that are proportionate and that can be implemented without undue complexity.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Objective 2.5 Information gaps and needs for key species are identified and addressed.</p>
Conf. 18.7	<i>Legal acquisition findings</i>	<p>Annex 1 Guidance for making legal acquisition findings</p> <p>...</p> <p>2. Practical steps for the verification of legal acquisition by the State of export</p> <p>...</p> <p>b) To verify legal acquisition, the Management Authority should review all the documentary and other information presented by the applicant. The documentation should, to the extent practicable, provide information on the entire chain of custody back to the source of the specimen. Such information may include records demonstrating that the specimen or parental stock was removed</p>

		from the wild in accordance with relevant laws (licenses, collections permits, etc.), records identifying the specific specimen (band numbers or other marks, etc.) and documenting the history of transfers of ownership (sales, receipts, invoices, etc.), and records showing that the specimen was reared at a particular facility, for example. Where a Management Authority considers that the evidence is incomplete, it should provide the applicant with an opportunity to produce additional information.
Conf. 18.8	<i>Conservation of vicuña (Vicugna vicugna) and trade in its fibre and products</i>	... AWARE that the traceability of vicuña fibre is not occurring throughout the entire value chain because of the successive re-exports that turn fibre into fabric and manufactured products, with varying percentages of vicuña fibre content and different forms of identification – in some cases, even losing the identification of its country of origin;

SUMMARY OF REFERENCES FOUND IN COP DECISIONS IN EFFECT AFTER COP18

Number	Title	Directed to	Text
18.96	<i>Malagasy palisanders and rosewoods (Dalbergia spp.) and ebonies (Diospyros spp.)</i>	<i>Madagascar</i>	Madagascar shall: d) continue the production of identification materials for timber and timber products from species of the genera <i>Dalbergia</i> and <i>Diospyros</i> from Madagascar; ...
18.140	<i>Identification of timber and other wood products</i>	<i>Plants Committee</i>	The Plants Committee shall, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and building on information on existing initiatives: a) determine gaps and complementarities in various tools and knowledge sources for timber identification, such as existing field identification guidelines and keys, and on their availability and usefulness; b) develop standardized information templates and other tools that could be used by Parties to facilitate sharing information on the content and status of wood sample collections, and exchange with research institutions, law enforcement agencies, and other authorities; c) assist Parties to identify existing laboratory services for the identification of timber and wood products and to strengthen screening and forensic capacity to identify CITES-listed tree species in trade; d) determine methods to stimulate global, regional and national exchange of best practices in wood identification technologies between Parties; and e) update the Standing Committee, as appropriate, on progress made on the implementation of Decisions 18.140 to 18.142; and report its findings and recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.
18.141	<i>Identification of timber and other wood products</i>	<i>Parties</i>	Parties are encouraged to collaborate with the Plants Committee, with relevant stakeholders and with existing initiatives in the implementation of Decision 18.140, by: a) working with institutions having wood identification expertise, in order to share information related to timber identification methods, tools and protocols for enforcement and customs officers; b) identifying existing laboratory services for the identification of timber and wood products, and strengthening screening and forensic capacity to identify CITES-listed tree species in trade; c) identifying effective wood identification training methods, tools and protocols for enforcement and customs officers; d) prioritizing the species of rosewoods and palisanders that would most benefit from the development of timber identification tools, protocols and materials; and e) reporting information on existing laboratories, effective wood identification training methods, tools and protocols for enforcement and customs officers, and the priority species of rosewoods and palisanders to the Plants Committee.

18.142	<i>Identification of timber and other wood products</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	<p>The Secretariat shall:</p> <p>a) liaise with organizations having relevant expertise on timber identification, including the Global Timber Tracking Network (GTTN), the International Association of Wood Anatomists (IAWA), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Thünen Centre of Competence on the Origin of Timber, the European Forest Institute (EFI), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and the World Resources Institute (WRI) to identify shared priorities, in consultation with the Plants Committee, including priority species, emerging techniques, standardized procedures, and collection and sharing of wood samples applicable to timber tracking tools;</p> <p>b) make the currently available guidance on wood identification accessible to Parties through the CITES website; and</p> <p>c) report to the Plants Committee on progress with the implementation of this Decision.</p>
18.143	<i>Identification of timber and other wood products</i>	<i>Standing Committee</i>	<p>The Standing Committee shall review any updates received from the Plants Committee on the implementation of Decisions 18.140 to 18.142, and provide recommendations to the Plants Committee, as appropriate.</p>
16.58 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Identification of timber and other wood products</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	<p>The Secretariat shall:</p> <p>a) obtain information and materials from those Parties that have reported that they have developed tools and procedures for the identification and measurement of CITES-listed tree species, and the physical inspection of timber shipments;</p> <p>...</p>
16.136 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Identification and traceability of sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	<p>The Secretariat shall:</p> <p>a) subject to external funding and in consultation with the Animals Committee, organize a study to:</p> <p>i) provide an overview of molecular, DNA-based and other forensic methods that could assist in identifying the species and populations of Acipenseriformes specimens in trade, determining the origin or age of specimens, and differentiating wild from captive-bred or aquacultured specimens;</p> <p>ii) review relevant developments in this area, including the availability and reliability of uniform identification systems;</p> <p>iii) evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods (including practicality, costs, time-efficiency, reliability, technical requirements, etc.); and</p> <p>...</p>
16.137 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Identification and traceability of sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)</i>	<i>Animals Committee</i>	<p>The Animals Committee shall assist the Secretariat in determining the specifications for the study referred to in Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP18) and monitoring its conduct. It shall review the report of the study and make recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Standing Committee.</p>
16.138 (Rev. CoP18)	<i>Identification and traceability of sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)</i>	<i>Standing Committee</i>	<p>The Standing Committee shall review the study undertaken in accordance with Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP18) and the recommendations that the Animals Committee formulated in compliance with Decision 16.137 (Rev. CoP18), and make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to Parties concerned or for consideration at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.</p>
18.205	<i>Boswellia trees (Boswellia spp.)</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	<p>The Secretariat shall issue a Notification to the Parties and, as appropriate, liaise with relevant stakeholders of Boswellia trade, requesting the following information:</p> <p>a) biological data on Boswellia species, including population size, distribution, status and population trends, identification information, and its role in the ecosystem in which it occurs;</p> <p>...</p>

18.213	<i>Marine turtles (Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.)</i>	<i>Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations and other entities</i>	Parties, governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other entities are invited to provide financial or technical assistance for, inter alia: a) training and capacity building of relevant authorities at the national and regional level, including on the implementation and enforcement of national and international regulations that apply to marine turtles, and on identification, monitoring, reporting and wildlife enforcement capability; ...
18.220	<i>Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.)</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	The Secretariat shall: a) issue a Notification to the Parties, inviting Parties to: i) provide concise summaries of new information on their shark and ray conservation and management activities, in particular: ... C. the identification of CITES-listed shark-products in trade;
18.228	<i>Seahorses (Hippocampus spp.)</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	The Secretariat shall include available materials to support CITES implementation for seahorses (non-detriment findings guidance, identification materials, etc.) on the CITES website.
18.246	<i>African lions (Panthera leo) and the CITES Big Cats Task Force</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	The Secretariat shall, subject to external resources: ... c) develop guidance materials for the identification of lion and other big cat specimens in trade in consultation with relevant experts; d) develop and support, in consultation with relevant experts, the use of appropriate forensic-type techniques for identifying lions and other big cat species in trade; ...
18.249	<i>African lions (Panthera leo) and the CITES Big Cats Task Force</i>	<i>Parties</i>	Parties, including range States and consumer countries of African lion, as relevant, are encouraged to: ... b) use, where appropriate, South Africa's Barcode of Wildlife Project to help identify lion specimens in trade and, when importing lion specimens from South Africa, collaborate where necessary with relevant authorities in South Africa to improve the traceability of such specimens; ...
18.299	<i>Neotropical tree species</i>	<i>Plants Committee</i>	The Plants Committee shall: a) re-establish the intersessional neotropical tree species working group to work by electronic means to: ... iv) report on progress made in the management and conservation of, and trade in, priority neotropical tree species, as well as on lessons learned, including on the generation of studies on the status of their populations; implementation of traceability and chain of custody systems, which strengthen the transparency and sustainable trade in timber species; and creation of materials for identification and training in the different existing methods, with an emphasis on those that can be used easily by authorities; and ...

18.311	<i>Nomenclature and identification of corals</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	<p>The Secretariat shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) seek, if possible, a time-specific version of the WoRMS database; and b) report on progress to the Animals Committee.
18.312	<i>Nomenclature and identification of corals</i>	<i>Animals Committee</i>	<p>The Animals Committee shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) consider the report of the Secretariat and proceed towards recommending for adoption of a standard nomenclature reference for CITES-listed corals; b) update its list of coral taxa for which identification to genus level is acceptable, but which should be identified to species level where feasible, once a new standard nomenclature reference for CITES-listed coral species has been identified and provide the updated list to the Secretariat for dissemination; and c) report with recommendations to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.