

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



Nineteenth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 18-21 August 2003

Registration and monitoring of operations breeding
Appendix-I animal species for commercial purposes

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN *EX SITU* PRODUCTION AND *IN SITU* CONSERVATION
[DECISION 11.102 (REV. COP12)]

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12), directed to the Animals Committee (AC), states the following:

The Animals Committee shall continue to examine the complex issues related to the origin of founder breeding stock and the relationship between ex situ breeding operations and in situ conservation of the species and, in collaboration with the Plants Committee, the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, identify possible strategies and other mechanisms by which registered ex situ breeding operations may contribute to enhancing the recovery and/or conservation of the species within the countries of origin, and report its findings at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
3. At the 18th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC18), the Secretariat reported on the response to Notification to the Parties No. 2001/091 of 19 December 2001, inviting all Parties and organizations to provide information on the relationship between *ex situ* production systems and *in situ* conservation programmes for any CITES-listed species, noting that only one reply had been received (see document AC18 Doc. 10).
4. The lack of responses to the Notification was put down by several Parties to insufficient clarity on the issue and the emphasis on the possible negative effects of *ex situ* breeding operations. It was pointed out that Decision 11.102 also required the AC to examine mechanisms whereby such operations may contribute to enhancing recovery and/or conservation of the species in the country of origin.
5. The AC agreed to continue evaluating the relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation beyond the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP12), and provided several recommendations to the Secretariat in this regard (see AC18 Summary Record, Annex 6).
6. The recommendations from the Committee to the Secretariat included suggestions to:
 - a) develop a new Notification to the Parties in consultation with the AC, based on Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12), to request information regarding the potential negative and positive effects of *ex situ* production;
 - b) approach a number of specialized organizations (WAZA, AZA, EAZA) for input to the process;

- c) ask Parties and organizations to provide case studies (e.g. Conservation Force provided an interesting example of benefit sharing and will provide information about it to the Secretariat, and Project Seahorse mentioned aquaculture as an example of benefit sharing);
 - d) confine the considerations to the direct relationship between species bred *ex situ* and the same species in the wild (i.e. not involving projects in which benefits of *ex situ* breeding go towards an entire ecosystem);
 - e) recognize that although the origin of founder stock is a continuing worry for some countries, it is not realistic to believe this could be traced for all *ex situ* operations, especially those that have been functioning for a long time;
 - f) continue cooperation with IUCN to investigate the impact of commercial captive production/artificial propagation in relation to wild species conservation; and
 - g) inform Parties (preferably via the CITES website) when the results of the White Oak workshop on commercial captive production will be available on the IUCN website.
7. In response to these recommendations, the Secretariat has developed a draft notification to the Parties for review and comments by the AC (see the annex to this document). This Notification will again invite all Parties and organizations to provide information on the relationship between *ex situ* production systems and *in situ* conservation programmes for species listed in Appendix I, II or III.
 8. The Secretariat is prepared to contact IUCN, WAZA, AZA and EAZA on behalf of the AC for additional specialist input.
 9. The tasks in Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12) should be conducted in liaison with the Plants Committee (PC), and address broad issues related to captive breeding and conservation in the wild of CITES-listed species. The Secretariat recognizes however that the implementation of Decision 11.102 (Rev.CoP12) and Decision 12.78, paragraph c), may lead to some overlap (see document AC19 Doc. 11.1). To minimize duplication of efforts and streamline reporting on both Decisions at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the AC may consider grouping its assignments as follows:
 - a) evaluate how commercial captive breeding of Appendix-I animal species, and particularly the process for registration of breeding operations, contributes to the conservation of the Appendix-I species concerned, analyse why the registration process is not working as expected, and provide recommendations to address established problems and improve the process [Decision 12.78, paragraphs a), b) and c)];
 - b) continue to examine the relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation of CITES-listed species in conjunction with the PC and others [Decisions 11.102 (Rev. CoP12)];
 - c) in collaboration with WAZA, AZA, EAZA and others, and in liaison with the PC, identify possible strategies and other mechanisms by which (nationally or internationally) registered *ex situ* breeding operations may contribute to enhancing the recovery or conservation of CITES-listed species within the countries of origin [Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12)].
 10. The Secretariat recommends that the AC considers establishing a working group to implement Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12) that can work intersessionally and through correspondence and email. The working group could be the same as the one suggested for implementing Decision 12.78 (see document AC19 Doc. 11.1), or otherwise work closely with this working group.
 11. The following elements could be included in the terms of reference of the working group suggested in the previous paragraph:
 - a) Using the expertise of its members, responses to the Notification to the Parties and input from specialized organizations and the PC, evaluate the relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation by:
 - i) assessing the contribution of commercial and non-commercial captive breeding of CITES-listed animal species to the *in situ* conservation of those species;

- ii) consulting with the Convention on Biodiversity on issues of access and benefit sharing in relation to *ex situ* production;
 - iii) asking Parties and organizations to identify and provide information on potential case studies; and
 - iv) requesting organizations to provide information on the conservation costs and benefits of different captive-production systems.
- b) In collaboration with WAZA, AZA, EAZA and others, and in liaison with the PC, identify possible strategies and other mechanisms by which (nationally or internationally) registered *ex situ* breeding operations may contribute to enhancing the recovery or conservation of CITES-listed species within the countries of origin by:
- i) identifying examples of *in situ* recovery or conservation programmes for species produced in breeding operations, and examining in what form and under what conditions operations could usefully contribute to these programmes;
 - ii) examining means to facilitate the transfer of offspring or breeding stock so as to maintain the genetic diversity of the captive populations;
 - iii) proposing means to assess whether re-introduction of captive-bred specimens could be beneficial to species conservation and, if so, how to develop programmes where this would be the case;
 - iv) examining mechanisms to establish conservation funds that are linked to registered captive-breeding activities, for instance through applying a 'conservation' levy on the sales of captive-bred specimens entering international trade;
 - v) evaluating the capacity and need of range States to develop or manage *in situ* recovery and conservation programmes for species produced in registered *ex situ* breeding operations that can attract support from these operations; and
 - vi) encouraging the support to and establishment of conservation projects by consortia of *ex situ* production operations; and
- c) consider the development of a draft resolution for discussion at the 13th meeting of the Conference of Parties on tools for Scientific and Management Authorities to assist in monitoring and assessing the impacts of captive production systems, and to develop recommendations concerning *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation of CITES-listed species.
12. The Secretariat expects that a discussion document on the relationship between *ex situ* production systems for animals and *in situ* conservation programmes will be presented for information at AC19 to assist the AC in implementing the Decision. It also notes that the PC will address the issue of *in situ* conservation and *ex situ* production at its 13th meeting, scheduled for 11-15 August 2003, just before AC19, allowing the AC to take the recommendations of the PC into consideration (see document PC13 Doc. 19). The Secretariat hopes that the Committee can agree on a single notification on this issue. Finally, the Secretariat wishes to draw attention to the complementarity of this agenda item and item 14 on the Control of captive breeding, ranching and wild harvest production systems for Appendix-II species.

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NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

CONCERNING:

Relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation

1. Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12), directs the Animals Committee to
continue to examine the complex issues related to the origin of founder breeding stock and the relationship between ex situ breeding operations and in situ conservation of the species and, in collaboration with the Plants Committee, the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, identify possible strategies and other mechanisms by which registered ex situ breeding operations may contribute to enhancing the recovery and/or conservation of the species within the countries of origin, and report its findings at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
2. The Secretariat circulated Notification to the Parties No. 2001/91 of 19 December 2001, inviting all Parties and organizations to provide information on the relationship between *ex situ* production systems and *in situ* conservation programmes for CITES-listed species. The response to this Notification was limited, and this new request for information has been developed in collaboration with the Animals Committee.
3. As communicated in Notification to the Parties No. 2001/091, a range of different perspectives and critical views appear to exist on the relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation of the species concerned.
4. Some argue that captive breeding provides disincentives for *in situ* conservation by de-linking the production from wild habitats and wild populations, and thus reducing opportunities for the sale of wild specimens to generate economic incentives for conservation. Indeed many *ex situ* production systems are outside range States, and there may be direct market competition between wild produced and captive-bred specimens. In addition, *ex situ* production is associated with problems of disease introduction to wild populations, hybridization between captive and wild individuals, and introduction of alien species that may become invasive. There is also concern that inadequate controls and monitoring may lead to laundering specimens harvested illegally in the wild through *ex situ* production systems, and to the illegal off-take of breeding stock.
5. Article VII of the Convention provides various exemptions for specimens of species listed in Appendix I, II or III that make it easier to trade in specimens bred in captivity than in specimens harvested from the wild. This may encourage captive production rather than wild harvest for trade which, in the light of the concerns pointed out in paragraph 4 above, may raise questions about the conservation impacts of these exemptions.
6. In contrast, others argue that by producing specimens in captivity, the pressure on wild stocks may be reduced and that *in situ* conservation is thus enhanced. This may be particularly important for species for which the demand is higher than what can be sustainably harvested and traded, and where demand cannot be reduced or met through the use of alternatives. *Ex situ* production would also contribute to maintaining genetic diversity, and generally be a more reliable, controllable, and profitable production method than harvesting from the wild.
7. The Secretariat invites Parties and organizations to provide information and case studies that may assist the Animals Committee in examining the relationship between *ex situ* production and *in situ* conservation of CITES-listed species, and in identifying mechanisms by which (nationally or internationally) registered *ex situ* breeding operations may contribute to enhancing the *in situ* recovery or conservation of the CITES-listed species they breed. Such information might include:
 - a) evidence or indications showing that captive breeding does have positive conservation impacts such as reducing off-take from the wild, and can promote recovery of the wild populations;

- b) examples of captive-breeding operations that support *in situ* conservation of the species they breed, or are involved in benefit sharing to promote the conservation of these species;
 - c) evidence for the use of captive-breeding operations to launder wild-caught or illegally traded specimens, and suggestions or examples on how such problems might be prevented or addressed;
 - d) indications and examples that *ex situ* production for commercial trade may result in a shift in production and trade from range States to non-range States, and considerations regarding the related questions of ownership of genetic resources (i.e. the extent to which the countries of origin should benefit from trade in CITES-listed species) and whether CITES can contribute to addressing this issue in the forum of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
 - e) examples where captive breeding may have negative conservation impacts, such as reducing local incentives for conservation, disease introduction, hybridization between captive and wild stock, and introduction of alien invasive species, and of policies and management measures to contain these possible negative impacts; and
 - f) measures already in place to encourage captive-breeding operations to contribute to the conservation of the species in the wild.
8. The information received in response to this Notification will be presented to the Animals Committee to assist in its implementation of Decision 11.102 (Rev. CoP12) and its report for the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.