

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



Twenty-fourth meeting of the Animals Committee
Geneva, (Switzerland), 20-24 April 2009

Regional Reports

EUROPE

1. This document has been submitted by Carlos Ibero Solana (Spain) with the assistance for editorial purposes of Colmán Ó Críodáin (Ireland) as regional representative and alternate representative for Europe respectively.*

General information

2. Animals Committee members: Thomas Althaus (Switzerland) and Carlos Ibero Solana; Alternates: Colmán Ó Críodáin and Radu Suciú (Romania).
3. Number of Parties in the region: 47; countries non-Parties: 3

Communication with Parties in the region since AC23 (Geneva, April 2008)

4. Mr Solana addressed Parties in the region and sent the document *Update on tasks of the CITES Animals Committee* in September 2008. He later circulated the agenda of AC24 asking for comments; and finally requested information to elaborate the present report. 17 Parties answered: Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxemburg, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom.
5. Mr Solana participated in the European Union Scientific Review Group meetings and informed them about the work and decisions of the Animals Committee, and especially the involvement of European Parties in those works.

Follow up on selected agenda items of previous Animals Committee meetings

6. *Point 7.5 of AC24. Report on scientific information from the range States of *Huso huso*.* Several European countries are range States of *Huso huso*; four of them, namely Hungary, Montenegro, Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova answered the questionnaire sent by the Secretariat.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

7. *Point 8.1 of AC24. Review of the use of source code "R"*. The intersessional working group has been co-chaired by Chris Schurmann, from the Netherlands. Several European countries are members of this working group.
8. *Point 9 of AC24. International expert workshop on non-detriment findings*. Many European experts have participated in this very interesting event, either as part of the Steering Committee (SC), as co-chairs of the working groups (WG), or as experts in those working groups. Based on information supplied to this regional report, several experts from Spain participated in the SC and in the meeting (chairing WGs on Plants), the UK SA for fauna chaired the "Aquatic Invertebrates WG", while the European Commission provided funding to the organization and participated in the meeting and the SC. Other Europeans present at the meeting in various capacities related to fauna were the alternate members of the Animals Committee, IUCN, TRAFFIC, WWF and others.
9. *Points 10.1 and 10.2 of AC24. Periodic review of species selected before CoP 13, and Periodic review of species selected between CoP 13 and CoP 15*. Both points of the agenda have been addressed by the relevant working group intersessionally, and documents have been prepared for AC24. This working group is chaired by Carlos Ibero Solana, from Spain. Other European presence in the working group includes Philip McGowan, from IUCN, giving permanent assistance *inter alia* on English editing to the chair, which is very much acknowledged.
10. *Point 10.3 of the AC24. Periodic review of Felidae – Lynx spp. and look-alike issues (outcome of the workshop). The workshop was held in Brussels in October 2008, and featured participation by the following European Parties: Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden. The European Commission also took part in the workshop.*
11. *Point 11 of the AC24. Implementation and effectiveness of the universal tagging system in the trade in small crocodylian leather goods. Germany has supported the work of Dr. Dietrich Jelden, member of the German MA, as representative of the AC in the working group of the Standing Committee on this topic.*
12. *Point 13 of the AC24. Nomenclatural matters*. Germany supports the work of Dr. Ute Grimm, member of the German SA, as specialist in nomenclature in the Animals Committee.
13. *Point 14.1 of the AC24. Progress report on the activities concerning shark species of concern (Decision 14.107)*. Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom, as well as the European Commission, are members of the Shark working group involved intersessionally in the elaboration of this progress report.
14. On other activities related to sharks, the SA of Spain gave a presentation on "*Conservation and Management of shark populations. How to resolve finning*" in a course organized by the Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs, in the town of Vigo in September 2008.
15. Also in Spain, in December 2008, the Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of the Spanish Government, of which the CITES Scientific Authority is a part, edited 2008 a book entitled **SHARKS: CONSERVATION, FISHING AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**, a contribution from the Spanish Scientific Authority to the ongoing work in the Animals Committee on this subject. After a brief introduction to the biology and ecology of shark species, this publication reviews the management measures and fishing restrictions established by international organisations related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources. Within the CITES framework, the text reviews the history of shark species in the Convention. It focuses on the tasks of the Scientific Authorities related to elasmobranch species included in the CITES Appendices, offering a guide of useful resources and a model for the making of non-detriment findings for shark fisheries. This bilingual Spanish/English publication is currently being distributed to CITES authorities, and is also available to the general public in the Ministry's bookshop.

CITES activities in the region

Review of Significant Trade

16. The questionnaire to *Huso huso* range States has been mentioned lines above.

Review of the Appendices

17. **Hungary** is undertaking the review of *Gallus sonneratii* under the Periodic Review of the CITES Appendices, while **Spain** is chairing a WG (already mentioned lines above).

CITES projects

18. **Belgium**: the MA and the Federal Police collaborated in a pilot project on identification of young Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) in the country that was launched by the Royal Institute of Natural Sciences of Belgium in 2006. Young Peregrine Falcons are marked in the nest by the insertion into their breast muscle of a transponder INDEXEL that stores codified information relating to them. Feathers are also collected so as to enable a DNA analysis of the birds.
19. **Croatia**: The project entitled "Implementation of the Environmental *Acquis* related to the protection of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein" entered its second year of implementation. The project is financed by the Government of the Netherlands within the PPA-Environmental Facility (PPA/V), one of the Netherlands Pre-accession Programmes. The project started in January 2007 and is scheduled to end in March 2009. The project aims to contribute to the accession of Croatia to the European Union; in particular, it aims to assist Croatia with the implementation of its tasks with regard to the trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna, in conformity with Council Regulation (EC) no. 338/97. Beneficiaries of the project are: the Ministry of Culture; the Nature Protection Directorate (CITES MA) and the Nature Protection Inspection Directorate, the Ministry of Finance, Customs Directorate, and the Ministry of Interior, Police Directorate. Implementation of project and its outcomes are described under "Promotion of CITES in the region".
20. **Germany**: The German Scientific Authority is still financing and coordinating several research projects on the dispersal of wolves (*Canis lupus*) from the small population in Germany, development of measures to facilitate a permanent re-establishment of lynx (*Lynx lynx*) in Germany, and development of a management concept for the return of large carnivores, such as bear (*Ursus arctos*), wolf and lynx to Germany.
21. In addition another research programme has been started to promote the stabilization of the natural population of the Lesser Spotted Eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) in Germany.
22. **Italy**: The Italian Scientific Authority supported the Italian Management Authority in work on the conservation of *Vicugna vicugna*. In particular, the Italian Government is supporting a project developed made in collaboration with TRAFFIC Network. The project aims to contribute to the conservation of the species in Argentina, Peru, Chile and Bolivia improving vicuna management by local communities, as envisaged by the implementation of Vicuna Action Plan.
23. **Slovenia** has developed a project on brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) from May 2007 to October 2008. The title of the project is "Analiza medvedov, odvzetih iz narave in genetsko – molekularne raziskave populacije medveda v Sloveniji" (Investigation of bears removed from nature and molecular genetics research of the Slovenian population). The main objective is the estimation of the size of the brown bear population and analysis of the contents of the brown bear digestive apparatus.
24. **Turtles**: In the year 2008 (as in previous years), activities included mainly gathering of information on turtles caught by fishermen, their tagging and their release. The activities were carried out by the NGO Biocen in collaboration with the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation, Regional Unit Piran. The Sea Turtle Handling Guidebook for Fishermen (originally produced by RAC/SPA and translated into the Slovenian and Italian languages) was distributed to professional fishermen.

25. **Slovakia** is developing projects for conservation of the CITES species *Parnassius apollo*, *Aquila chrysaetos*, *Aquila pomarina*, *Falco cherrug* and *Falco peregrinus*.
26. **Switzerland**, in cooperation with the UK Management Authority and the CITES Secretariat, has initiated a bilateral Project with the aim of exchanging CITES permit data electronically. The standards and protocols developed within this project will help to fulfil the obligations of the SC Working Group on electronic permitting.
27. Two scientific projects on the development of sustainable Management of natural resources in Madagascar have been financially supported by the Swiss CITES Management Authority; one concerning Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) and one concerning hardwood species.
28. **Turkey** has completed the Twinning Project "Twinning Project TR-02-EN-01 "Capacity Building in the Field of Environment for Turkey, Component 3 Nature". This project started in March 2004 and finished in July 2006. The Twinning partner was the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of the Federal Republic of Germany. Subproject II was dedicated to the improvement of CITES implementation in Turkey in order to be well prepared to introduce related European Regulations later on. Turkey has now prepared a proposal for a project entitled "Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations in Turkey" to the E.U, and is waiting a response to the proposal.
29. **United Kingdom:** The UK SA (fauna) published the first report of a collaborative project to investigate the status and relative abundance of diurnal raptors in Guinea as a means of contributing to the future management of any exports from Guinea. The report is available, in English and French, at <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4314>. Further reports are in preparation from the work.
30. The UK SA (Fauna) also published the outcome of a project initiated to provide a checklist of the hard corals of Fiji with reference to the neighbouring island groups of Vanuatu, Tonga, Samoa and American Samoa. The checklist is available at <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4476>. It is hoped that it will make a contribution to the better understanding of CITES-listed corals in the region.
31. The UK SA (Fauna) has recently commissioned a project to look at means to permanently and uniquely mark juvenile tortoises which are too small to be marked with microchips. The project aims to develop novel methods to find a solution to mark such specimens and thus reduce any probability of illegal trade within the European Community.

Others

32. **Azerbaijan** has elaborated a Decision of the Government of Azerbaijan on the implementation mechanism for the Convention in Azerbaijan (*National legislation for the implementation of CITES*). This Decision of the Government of Azerbaijan, number 02, was issued in January 7, 2009. Azerbaijan will translate it to English and will send it to the CITES Secretariat as soon as it is ready.
33. **Slovenia: Information system (IS SIRENA):** Slovenia is in the process of developing an information system including different databases: a Register of marked animals, a CITES database, and a Register of endangered and protected species. The most recent, the Register of endangered and protected species (REPS), contains the information on species names, higher taxa, legal status, and administrative and legal measures. The database will include all species, protected by national legislation, ratified international agreements and common EU legislation. The REPS Database is accessible by the public on the web-site <http://sirena.arso.gov.si/>. It has been also made available to enforcement bodies.
34. **Rescue centre for wild animals:** A rescue centre for temporary care of seized and confiscated animals due to illegal keeping in captivity, illegal trade, export or import or other reasons specified by law has been provided for by a contract with the Management Authority.
35. **Italy:** the Italian Scientific Authority conducted an analysis on the imports directed to Italy of *Python* spp. and Corals from South East Asia.

36. **Sweden:** an Identification-Guide for European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) has been produced. This information will be available on Internet as a point-on-demand file.

Promotion of CITES in the region

Capacity building activities, awareness campaigns

37. **Belgium:** In June 2008 the MA launched a campaign to promote the awareness of tourists on CITES issues. In this framework a "tourists" folder in 4 different languages (FR, NL, DE, EN) was developed and is now distributed at national airport, as well as by different bodies in the country (travel agencies, nature reserves, WWF, local administrations, etc.).
38. In September 2008 the MA participated in the Naturaria Fair 2008, which is the biggest Belgian fair for reptiles, amphibians, insects and aquaria, to inform participants of the Belgian provisions related to the keeping and selling of CITES species belonging to these groups of animals.
39. The MA has also recently (December 08) developed a folder in French and Dutch to inform traders about the EC dispositions regarding the commercial activities pertaining to caviar.
40. **Croatia:** As part of the Project "Implementation of Environmental *Acquis* related to the protection of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein" a sustainable capacity building programme has been set up for enforcement agencies in Croatia (nature protection inspection, customs and crime and border police). 50 enforcement officers were trained as a part of "Train the Trainers Programme" in order to achieve a sustainable structure for passing on knowledge and information on CITES, and on transboundary movement and trade in protected species. The enforcement officers who participated in the Programme were selected based on the distribution of County and central regional enforcement offices across Croatia. To be able to test the sustainability of the Programme 3 pilot workshops were organized where regionally trained trainees used their newly acquired knowledge to train a further 150 enforcement officers. 3 new workshops are planned for 2009.
41. **Czech Republic:** In 2008 the CITES Scientific Authority of the Czech Republic organized several workshops. One of them was aimed to the identification of selected species of vertebrates (especially parrots, reptiles and primates) listed in CITES appendices and was intended primarily for the enforcement authorities. This workshop was held in September 2008 in cooperation with experts from the Prague Zoo.
42. A workshop directed at the welfare of the animals (especially in pet shops) was organized by RSPCA in November 2008 in cooperation with Czech CITES Enforcement and Scientific Authorities, and with the State Veterinary Administration of the Czech Republic. Numerous lectures on CITES were provided not only for the public during the year 2008 by Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities (e.g. the workshop "International Conventions in Nature Conservation", which took place in June 2008 in Prague).
43. New posters to raise awareness about CITES issues were designed and distributed to the public, particularly to schools.
44. **Germany:** As in past years members of the German SA to CITES participated in several national seminars for customs officers on the identification of live specimens and products of CITES-listed reptiles, birds, and tarantulas.
45. **Hungary:** activities on capacity building and awareness campaigns are regularly developed in Hungary. Detailed information will be sent to the Standing Committee.
46. **Slovakia:** a Training seminar for policemen was organized in April 2008.
47. **Slovenia:** Representatives of the Slovenian Management Authorities gave two lectures at the Museum of Natural History on the International trade in endangered animal and plant species, and made a presentation at the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce for pet shop owners and wildlife traders.

48. During the reporting period, Slovenian Customs carried out a considerable number of public awareness events. Exhibitions of seized and confiscated specimens were prepared, information on seizures was published in all main national newspapers, while articles, and TV and radio broadcasts were provided.
49. In November 2008 the Management Authority provided educational material including four thematic leaflets on the most popular exotic wildlife pets: tortoises, iguanas and parrots.
50. The publicity material was distributed in 2008 to Slovenian schools and museums. A CD-ROM that includes information on all public awareness material issued in Slovenia, as well as relevant EU and national legislation was upgraded.
51. In 2008 a new publication "*Report on the attempts of smuggling of wild birds into Republic of Slovenia*" was issued. All attempts of smuggling of dead wild birds that were detected in the period from 2002 to 2006 are described in this report. By prompt action of the prosecution bodies, a legal practice has been established in Slovenia for this particular field, which will contribute to a more effective enforcement of regulations on the protection of wild animal and plant species and trade therein.
52. At the web pages of the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning there is a special page dedicated to large carnivores (brown bear, wolf, lynx) which is regularly updated, and which makes relevant information on all activities related to large carnivores accessible to broader public (http://www.mop.gov.si/en/areas_of_work/environment_directorate/sektor_za_politiko_ohranjanja_nar_ave/large_carnivores_in_slovenia/)
53. *Training:* In November 2008 a 3-day training seminar on CITES for customs and environmental inspectors was attended by 31 customs officers and 8 inspectors. The seminar focused on EU Wildlife Trade Regulations and internal trade.
54. **Spain:** The Seventh Master's Degree and Ph Degree courses in "*Management, Access, Conservation and Trade of species: The International Framework*" were held at the International University of Andalusia from 7th April to 20th June 2008. This Master's degree course provided participants with the tools for understanding how CITES works. 25 participants from 16 Parties (Albania, Argentina, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Spain, Ukraine and Yemen) attended the courses. Numerous experts from European Authorities, Administrations and Universities, the European Commission, the CITES Secretariat, NGOs and others gave lectures at this Master's Course.
55. Along with European Union colleagues, the Spanish SA (Fauna) participated in a European Union mission to Indonesia to learn about Indonesian management and practices in relation to captive breeding of reptiles and the mariculture of corals.
56. **Switzerland:** Two workshops for Border inspection personnel were conducted on the following themes: "Knowledge and determination of various reptile skins in trade" and "Knowledge and determination of hunting trophies".
57. **United Kingdom:** The UK SA (Fauna) contributed to the training of the CITES authorities of the UK Overseas Territory of the Cayman Islands in February 2008, along with colleagues from the UK management Authority and Customs.
58. The UK SA (Fauna) also co-chaired a working group on aquatic invertebrates at the Non-Detriment Finding Workshop in Mexico in November 2008, contributed to the 7th Master's degree course in Baeza, Spain in May 2008 and organised in January 2009 an annual meeting in the UK to determine the priorities from a conservation perspective for the enforcement of wildlife crime, including considering priorities for enforcement of CITES offences.
59. Along with EC colleagues, the UK SA (Fauna) participated in an EC mission to Indonesia to learn about Indonesian management and practices in relation to captive breeding of reptiles and the mariculture of corals.

60. *The European Commission*: The Commission has adopted the 2008 Annual Action Programme implementing the Thematic Strategy Paper for the Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, including Energy (ENRTP). Funding has been provided to the CITES Secretariat for two large and important CITES projects:
61. 500.000 euro available for implementation of the CITES CoP14 decisions (all together ca. 18 actions): i.e. the NDF workshop, evaluation of the significant trade review process, giant clams, sharks, sturgeons, African elephants, Asian big cats, *Cedrela* and *Dalbergia* action plans, an enforcement meeting, an internet trade workshop, cites and livelihoods, etc.
62. 1.000.000 euro was provided for the first phase of a CITES capacity building project, focusing on capacity building to MA's, SA's and EA's in developing countries. This project will be implemented through regional workshops, including a focus on NDF implementation. Based of the assessment needs from countries, follow up implementation projects on e.g. NDF's and implementation/enforcement can be set up to support countries in CITES implementation. Additional funding for a second phase for in-country support is presently in preparation.

The scientific community in the region and CITES

63. **Slovenia**: The Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning has, in cooperation with the European Commission, the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE), the Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation and the Slovenia Forestry Service, organised Pan European Conference on Population level Management Plans for Large Carnivores in Postojna, Slovenia, 10-11 June 2008 (http://www.mop.gov.si/en/areas_of_work/environment_directorate/sektor_za_politiko_ohranjanja_nar_ave/large_carnivores_in_slovenia/pan_european_conference_on_population_level_management_plans_for_large_carnivores/)
64. **Spain**: the European Regional Representative from the Spanish SA has participated in representation of the AC in the workshop "Meeting the needs of those that use scientific names", held in Madrid 18-19 February 2009. He will report to AC24.
65. *The European Commission and the 27 member states of the European Union*: The Scientific Review Group of the European Union with the CITES Scientific Authorities of the 27 Member States meets regularly (usually 4 times a year) in order to discuss scientific aspects of the CITES implementation in the region, including the importation into the EU of several animal species. The Scientific Review Group has set up a special working group to prepare the implementation of the listing of *Anguilla anguilla* on CITES.
66. Following the recommendations of AC23 on the review of Felidae species, the USA and the European Commission organised a *Lynx* workshop on 29 October 2008 in Brussels with participants from Management and Enforcement Authorities from the North American and European Region.

Collaboration with other MEAs

67. **Hungary**: collaboration with other MEAs is regularly developed in Hungary. Detailed information will be sent to the Standing Committee.

Cooperation with stakeholders and NGOs

68. **Croatia**: In 2008 State implementation of the project "Protecting species through biodiversity communication - campaign regarding taking animals from nature and keeping wild animals in captivity" continued.
69. One of the main goals of the project was to raise public awareness on problems caused by taking animals from their natural habitat and improved information dissemination on rules and regulations regarding protected and strictly protected species, and their keeping and trading in order to enforce Nature Protection Act, the new regulation (in accordance with EU legislation) and international agreements (Bern Convention, CITES, etc.) with the goal to improve the conditions for the animals held in captivity. Different organizations participated in the project in order to reach wider public: Public Institutions for Nature Protection, Zoos, rescue centres, nature protection NGOs, and schools.

70. **Hungary:** cooperation with stakeholders and NGOs is regularly maintained in Hungary. Detailed information on this topic will be sent to the Standing Committee.
71. **Slovakia:** Cooperation with the Slovak NGO Raptor protection of Slovakia was undertaken, providing data from a central database.
72. **Switzerland:** The CITES Management Authority, in collaboration with WWF Switzerland, has initiated a project which has the aim to inform the public about the problems of Tourist Souvenirs and CITES listed specimens via the visiting of holiday fairs and the promotion of a flyer via diverse channels. The flyer informs the general public which types of souvenir are prohibited, which ones need permits and which ones are free.
73. *The European Commission:* Following a study on the effectiveness of the EU wildlife trade regulations, implementing CITES in the EU, the European Commission has organised a stakeholder meeting with NGO's and trade organisations to receive input for a possible revision of the implementing regulations and development of further guidance.

Others

74. **Croatia:** In 2008 CITES MA in Croatia worked on preparation of a CITES database used for electronic generation and printing CITES documents, as well as a reporting tool (generating annual reports) to the Secretariat. Additionally, the database has advanced search options to be used by enforcement officers in order to follow the CITES trade in Croatia (the database will be finished in first quarter of 2009)