

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

NORTH AMERICA

1. This report was prepared by Rodrigo A. Medellín, regional representative for North America, in collaboration with the CITES Authorities of Canada and the United States of America*.

General information

2. Contributors to the report (authors):

CANADA: Management and Scientific Authorities, Wildlife Trade and International Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada.

MEXICO: Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO), Scientific Authority; Dirección General de Vida Silvestre (DGVS-SEMARNAT), Management Authority; Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente (PROFEPA-SEMARNAT), Enforcement Authority; and Fishery Authorities (Instituto Nacional de la Pesca, INAPESCA; Comisión Nacional de Acuicultura y Pesca, CONAPESCA).

UNITED STATES: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Scientific Authority, Division of Management Authority and Office of Law Enforcement.

3. Number of Parties in the region: 3
4. Number of Parties responding to communications: 3
5. Names of other institutions or NGOs contacted for CITES work during the period:

MEXICO: Instituto de Ecología (IE-UNAM); TRAFFIC North America-Mexico

UNITED STATES: Too numerous to specifically address. However, we have worked with the following organizations this reporting period: White House Council on Environmental Quality, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Agency for International

* *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.*

Development, Smithsonian Institution, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Regional Associations of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resource Association, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Zoological Association of America, American Federation of Aviculture, Safari Club International, Exotic Wildlife Association, Species Survival Network, Defenders of Wildlife, WWF-US, TRAFFIC North America, the Ornithological Council, and IUCN/SSC Crocodile Specialist Group.

Regional directories and representatives

6. An updated version of the regional directories (including additional contact persons) of Canada, Mexico and the United States is presented as an Annex to this report.

Follow-up on AC23 agenda items

CANADA:

7. **Nomenclatural matters.** As the standard nomenclature reference for mammals agreed to in Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP14) does not recognize the subspecies of *Puma concolor* listed in Appendix I, it was decided at AC23 to submit a proposal for CoP15 recommending that *Puma concolor* be added to the list of species that are still treated according to the former mammal reference of 1993 (Notification No. 2008/51). In 2008, Canada conducted a survey of Canadian jurisdictions regarding *Puma concolor* and concluded that the standard nomenclature reference for mammals agreed to in Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP14) best represents current practice for *Puma concolor* in Canada. Canada is working on the development of a proposal to amend the Appendices to bring them into accordance with the standard nomenclature reference for mammals agreed to in Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP14).
8. Canada participated in the Working Group to review the use of source code 'R' (ranching).
9. Canada recognizes the importance of identifying and protecting species which may be at risk due to commercial overexploitation and as such is an active participant in the Shark Working Group which aims to identify shark species of concern as well as those that may benefit from a CITES listing.

MEXICO:

10. **International expert workshop on CITES non-detriment findings.** Pursuant to Decisions 14.49-14.52 an international committee, chaired by the Scientific Authority of Mexico, organized this workshop, which was held from 17 to 22 November 2008 in Cancún, Quintana Roo (Mexico). The workshop was attended by 103 participants from 35 countries in the six CITES regions. Mexico will present two papers on the event during the 24th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC24): the final report of the workshop (AC24 Doc. 9) and the final reports of the working groups on animal species. During the workshop, five working groups met to discuss case studies on 30 species: WG1 – Mammals, WG2 – Birds, WG3 – Reptiles and amphibians, WG4 – Fishes, WG5 – Aquatic invertebrates. In Mexico, the workshop results will be presented at courses for managers of Mexico's Wildlife Conservation and Management Units (UMAs).

UNITED STATES:

11. **Felidae Review.** The U.S. and the European Commission organized and convened a meeting for the management and law enforcement authorities of the United States, Canada, and Mexico to meet with range States of the Eurasian Lynx and Iberian Lynx to discuss possible problems of illegal trade in those species. Case studies of illegal trade in Eurasian and Iberian Lynx which have been undertaken were also discussed. A report from this meeting will be submitted to the 24th Meeting of the Animals Committee.

Periodic Review of the Appendices

MEXICO:

12. ***Ambystoma dumerilii***. During the 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee (AC22, Peru, 2006), amphibian and galliform species were selected for inclusion in the Periodic Review to take place between the 13th and 15th meetings of the Conference of the Parties (CoP13 and CoP15). Mexico offered to conduct the review of *A. dumerilii*, the species being endemic to Mexico, and the Mexican CITES Scientific Authority financed the study "Assessment of the status of the Lake Pátzcuaro salamander (*Ambystoma dumerilii*) in the CITES Appendices", led by Dr Dolores del Carmen Huacuz Elías, of the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo. Analysis of the information compiled on the species as part of the Periodic Review indicates that it meets the criteria for inclusion in Appendix I from a biological standpoint. However, international trade is not a risk factor for wild specimens. The situation of *Ambystoma dumerilii* is similar to that of *A. mexicanum*, a species listed in Appendix II. Accordingly, Mexico intends to submit for consideration at the present meeting, along with the results of the study, a proposal to maintain the Lake Pátzcuaro salamander in Appendix II.
13. **Felidae (*Lynx* spp.)**. With a view to contributing to the implementation of Decision 13.93 (Rev. CoP14), Mexico agreed to conduct the studies needed to obtain sufficient recent detailed information on the abundance and distribution of *Lynx rufus* in Mexico. Studies funded by the Scientific Authority and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) monitored six populations of the species within its range in Mexico during the period 2006-2008 and found densities similar to those of *Lynx rufus* in the United States. Details of the findings will be presented during AC24 as part of the report by the United States on the Periodic Review of Felidae (document AC24 Doc. 10.3).
14. **Felidae (*Panthera onca*)**. At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties decided to include the family Felidae in the Periodic Review of the Appendices [Decision 13.93 (Rev. CoP14)]. To further that process, at the 23rd meeting of the Animals Committee (Geneva, 2008), Mexico offered to conduct the Periodic Review of the jaguar. The process will include compilation of the results of the Second International Meeting on Jaguars, to be held in November 2009 at the former hacienda of Cocoyoc in Morelos, Mexico, with funding from the CITES Scientific Authority of Mexico and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). All range States will be surveyed by means of a questionnaire.

UNITED STATES:

15. The U.S. has the lead for review of *Crocodilurus lacertinus* (a whiptail lizard), *Colinus virginianus ridgwayi* (masked bobwhite) and *Tympanuchus cupido attwateri* (Attwater's prairie chicken). These reviews are ongoing and the U.S. expects to submit them for discussion at the 25th meeting of the Animals Committee.

Proposals to amend the Appendices

MEXICO:

16. ***Crocodylus moreletii***. During AC23 (Geneva, 2008), Mexico submitted its draft of a proposal to transfer the Mexican population of Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*) from Appendix I to Appendix II. Mexico has contacted Guatemala and Belize with a view to submitting a regional proposal and has also approached a consultant, a *C. moreletii* specialist, about designing the monitoring programme. Mexico intends to submit at the present meeting a proposal to transfer the entire species from Appendix I to Appendix II, with an initial zero quota for wild specimens.

UNITED STATES:

17. On 29 September 2008, the USFWS published its first CITES CoP15 Federal Register notice: Request for information and recommendations on species proposals, resolutions, decisions, and agenda items for consideration at CoP15. The deadline for receiving information and recommendations was 28 November 2008. We are currently evaluating these recommendations and will publish a second Federal Register Notice in Spring 2009 that will describe proposed resolutions,

decisions, agenda items and proposed amendments to the CITES Appendices (species proposals) the U.S. is likely, or unlikely to submit for consideration at CoP15 or remains undecided on pending additional information and range country consultation.

For specific details and the Federal Register publications, see:

http://www.fws.gov/international/newspubs/fedregnot_list.html

Species

MEXICO:

18. **Prioritization of Mexican species subject to international trade.** The prioritization exercise is at the end of the second stage, during which values were assigned to each criterion (biological, commercial and others) assessed. In the third stage, these values will be analysed and each species will be assigned a priority level, on the basis of which the list of species requiring studies will be drawn up (stage 4).

UNITED STATES:

19. The United States addressed a number of CITES-listed species under its stricter domestic legislation, the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) during this reporting period. These actions that resulted from a petition process included proposed listings and status reviews under the ESA. Some CITES-listed species actions include:
20. **Broad-snouted caiman** (*Caiman latirostris*) – We received a petition from the Government of Argentina requesting that we reclassify the broad-snouted caiman in Argentina from endangered to threatened under the ESA. The petition contained detailed information about the natural history and biology of the broad-snouted caiman, including the species' current status and distribution. On 16 June 2008, the USFWS published a 90-day finding that found that the petition presents substantial scientific and commercial information indicating that the petitioned action of reclassifying the broad-snouted caiman in Argentina from endangered to threatened status under the ESA may be warranted. Therefore, we initiated a status review of the broad-snouted caiman to determine if reclassification of the population in Argentina, as petitioned, is warranted under the ESA.
21. In addition, we proposed listing the following CITES-listed species as endangered under the ESA: the African penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*); the Black-breasted puffleg (*Eriocnemis nigrivestis*), the Chilean woodstar (*Eulidia yarrelli*), and the Andean flamingo (*Phoenicoparrus andinus*), and the Humboldt penguin (*Spheniscus humboldti*) as threatened. On 16 January 2008 we published a final rule to six foreign birds as endangered under the ESA, including the Gurney's Pitta (*Pitta gurneyi*), a CITES Appendix-I species.

For specific details and the Federal Register publications, see:

http://www.fws.gov/international/newspubs/fedregnot_list.html

Technical workshops

MEXICO:

22. **Workshop on the White Turtle.** Mexico's CITES Management Authority is organizing a workshop on the white turtle (*Dermatemys mawii*), to take place from 25 to 27 March 2009 in Catemaco, Veracruz (Mexico). The aim of the workshop is to provide training in the management and use of the species and to finalize the document on the National Strategy for Conservation and Sustainable Management of the White Turtle.
23. **Workshop on Conservation and Management of Sharks in the Eastern Pacific.** Representatives of the Mexican Fishery Authorities (INAPESCA and CONAPESCA) attended this workshop, held from 9 to 11 July 2008 in Manta, Ecuador, the purpose of which was to identify and assess progress in implementing national plans of action for the conservation and management of sharks. The shark identification guides developed by various fisheries organizations and NGOs to improve catch and

effort data were also presented. The need for workshops to standardize research methodologies and for regional assessments of shared priority species was highlighted.

24. **Interregional Workshop on Conservation and Management of Sharks.** This workshop, organized by Mexico's Fishery Authorities (INAPESCA and CONAPESCA), was held from 3 to 5 December 2008 in Mazatlán, Sinaloa (Mexico). The overall objective was to undertake a detailed examination of the available biological and fishing information on five shark species identified as priorities during the Ecuador workshop (*Isurus oxyrinchus*, *Prionace glauca*, *Carcharhinus falciformis*, *Sphyrna lewini*, *Alopias pelagicus*), with a view to discussing possible joint management measures.

Non-detriment findings (NDFs)

CANADA:

25. Canada served on the Steering Committee and attended the International Expert Workshop on CITES Non-Detriment Findings in Cancún, Mexico, from 17 to 22 November 2008. Scientific Authority representatives from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the province of British Columbia participated in the mammals working group. Participation included development and presentation of a case study on grizzly bear by Dave Fraser, Scientific Authority for British Columbia.
26. Fisheries and Oceans Canada held a scientific peer-review meeting in January 2009 to evaluate *Acipenser oxyrinchus* (Atlantic sturgeon) in regards to making a non-detriment finding for the export of wild specimens of this species from Canada. Participants included species experts from the Canadian federal government, academia, and industry. A sturgeon expert from the United States also participated.
27. Canada continues efforts to prepare standing non-detriment finding reports for key species identified through consultation with Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Scientific Authorities. The Scientific Authority led on the development of NDF reports for polar bear, cougar, and otter. These reports are scheduled for completion in 2009.

MEXICO:

28. International expert workshop on non-detriment findings. See the section on *Follow-up on AC23 agenda items*.

Captive-breeding operations

CANADA:

29. Currently, Canada has 10 CITES-registered captive-breeding operations breeding *Falco rusticolus*, *Falco peregrinus*, *Tragopan caboti*, or *Acipenser brevirostrum*.

Research

MEXICO:

30. ***Ambystoma dumerilii***. See the section on *Periodic Review of the Appendices*.
31. ***Lynx rufus***. See the section on *Periodic Review of the Appendices*.

Capacity-building

CANADA:

32. CITES Electronic Permitting System: In January 2007, a Web-based Permitting System was launched by the Conservation and Service Delivery and Permitting section of the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada. Work continues on expanding full access to the Web application to our federal, provincial and territorial CITES partners. The Web-based system increases the efficiency of permitting by compiling accurate and consistent information, and facilitates the production of annual reports on

international trade in wildlife in Canada. Next steps will include the development of an online CITES permit application which will allow for Canadians to apply online to obtain a CITES permit. Note that UNEP-WCMC kindly developed a tool to facilitate periodic downloading of the Checklist of CITES species in XML format on their website at:

<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/species/dbases/citesdownloads.htm#STR>.

33. **Strategic Plan for CITES in Canada:** Canada has developed a "Strategic Plan for CITES in Canada" in consultation with the Management and Scientific Authorities from Canadian jurisdictions. The Strategic Plan for CITES in Canada will be discussed and possibly adopted at the upcoming National CITES Scientific and Management Authority Meeting which will be held in Spring 2009.

MEXICO:

34. **Courses.** The CITES Authorities of Mexico (CONABIO, DGVS and PROFEPA) co-organized and participated in training courses on selected issues for the enforcement of wildlife law, which provided training and updating for staff environmental inspectors, Customs officers and other officials responsible for supervising, inspection and enforcement activities who enforce the provisions of CITES. In addition, an online course, *Experts in Environmental and Wildlife Crime*, was developed and carried out.
35. **Equipment.** As part of a collaboration agreement between PROFEPA and TRAFFIC North America, the latter donated animal handling equipment (valued at approximately USD 28,000), which was provided to inspectorates for Mexico's Seaports, Airports and Borders Inspection Programme.
36. **Infrastructure.** PROFEPA and the National Institute for the Management of National Assets (INDABIN) donated infrastructure (offices, inspection areas and warehouses) to enhance the operations of inspectorates located at regular border checkpoints. The first phase of this initiative will include the border checkpoints on Mexico's southern and south-eastern border, and a second phase will cover the border with the United States. The target date for completion of infrastructure construction, refurbishment and remodelling is 2012 and the projected useful life of the completed facilities is 50 years.
37. **Databases.** PROFEPA has developed an electronic system to streamline the required procedures for transboundary movements of wildlife goods and forestry products subject to non-tariff environmental regulations. An electronic permitting system (*Sistema Institucional del Registro de Verificación – SIREV*) will enable individuals to submit online permit applications, thereby reducing processing time at inspectorates and certifying the information supplied by the applicant. During 2008, the electronic system was developed, the inspectors were trained and pilot tests were conducted. In 2009, the inspectorates will receive the equipment needed to implement the system, the system will be put online and stress testing will be conducted in coordination with Customs agents. Data from this system will be fed into PROFEPA's Institutional Information System (SIIP) and will enable the agency to be fully integrated into the Government Interconnectivity Programme coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and operated by the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit. The aim of the latter programme is to enable the various federal government agencies that deal with foreign trade to exchange information in real time on goods in transit through Mexico.
38. **Cooperation along the southern border.** PROFEPA has established bilateral agreements with the Government of Guatemala with a view to implementing in the short-term mechanisms for the exchange of information on environmental crimes and for the control of transboundary movements of wildlife specimens. This collaboration will get under way shortly with the drafting of a binational transboundary operating manual for the control of legal and illegal trade in plants and animals with Guatemala and Belize. These manuals will facilitate the enforcement of CITES provisions at the local level in the region in order to achieve compliance with bilateral agreements between the competent authorities of Belize, Guatemala and Mexico.

UNITED STATES:

39. **CAFTA-DR grants.** The Division of Management Authority (DMA) continues to be involved as a technical advisor to the Department of the Interior, International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP)

as it executes CITES and wildlife trade capacity building, training, and technical assistance projects in the Dominican Republic-Central American-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) countries, including Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. ITAP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the CITES Secretariat and the *Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo* (CCAD) to facilitate the delivery of this assistance, and is actively working with the U.S. Department of State to coordinate the provision of similar support through funding provided to the Humane Society International (HSI) and TRAFFIC North America-Mexico. ITAP, along with TRAFFIC and HSI, are engaged in delivering a wide array of project activities, including legislation development assistance, biological field studies, enforcement training, education and outreach, enhancement of rescue centre capacity, and a number of other focal areas.

40. **Middle East-North Africa grants.** DMA is also working with ITAP to execute a similar series of projects in four countries covered under the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), including Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, and Oman. ITAP is engaged with the CITES Secretariat to deliver its first Management Authority training programs in Oman in the Spring of 2009, and expects to deliver additional training programs (on Management and Scientific Authority duties and the role of civil society in CITES) in 2009 in the other MEPI countries. Non-governmental cooperators will be engaged in some of the programs, and Arabic-language training materials will be produced and provided.
41. **Multinational Species Conservation Funds.** The Multinational Species Conservation Funds, administered by USFWS, consist of six programs created to fulfil direct U.S. Congressional mandates to conserve populations of and habitats for neotropical migratory birds, African and Asian elephants, great apes, rhinoceroses, tigers, and marine turtles. Information on these grants programs and how to apply for funding can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/international/grants/grants.html>.
42. **International Assistance.** The USFWS helped build CITES enforcement capacity in other countries through law enforcement training programs and technical assistance. USFWS officers conducted criminal investigation training for wildlife officers from eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa and provided presentations on queen conch trade and CITES enforcement at workshops and meetings in Colombia. A USFWS special agent completed a 10-month assignment as an on-site technical advisor to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Wildlife Enforcement Network; efforts included training development, investigative consultation, and intelligence liaison as well as the presentation of multiple in-country training programs throughout the region.

Enforcement Authority

CANADA:

43. In 2008, Environment Canada's Wildlife Enforcement Directorate conducted a significant number of inspections under CITES, a large proportion (20%) of these pertaining to commercial shipments. This category was identified as an inspections priority for 2008. The year 2008 saw the continuation of a joint investigation with the USFWS involving the illegal importation of *Strombus gigas* (queen conch) meat. Canadian and U.S. federal wildlife officials announced on 26 September 2007 that the smuggling ring had been dismantled and subsequent convictions and fines were announced in Halifax on 8 November 2007; in Vancouver on 4 January 2008; and in Miami, Florida on 25 January 2008. This importation was part of a large organized trafficking scheme which trafficked 120 metric tonnes of *S. gigas* meat in total. An important seizure of elephant ivory was also reported to INTERPOL. In 2008, the Wildlife Enforcement Directorate increased its capacity by 28 new enforcement officers for a total of more than 84 officers. The capacity-building included putting together a six week training course offered in 2009. This course includes CITES related training on legislation and occupational health and safety during inspections. The Wildlife Enforcement Directorate also worked towards compiling data and organizing the logistics for the CITES E-commerce workshop that will take place in February of 2009, in Vancouver, British Columbia (Canada). The topic of the workshop is illegal trade of wildlife on the Internet; about 80 participants from 20 countries are expected to attend.

MEXICO:

44. The following figures on inspections of transboundary imports, exports and re-exports of wildlife specimens at the country's principal entry and exit points were reported for the period 2006-2008:

	2006	2007	2008
Inspections of transboundary movements of regulated wildlife species	5,071	6,083	5,337

45. As to figures on seizures and forfeitures, first a distinction should be made between the two terms. Seizure occurs when an irregularity is detected in the course of an inspection and, as a preventive measure, an interim order is issued for the confiscation of specimens, products, by-products, tools, etc. while administrative proceedings are instituted in accordance with the applicable law. Forfeiture occurs when, as a result of such administrative proceedings, the goods previously seized are permanently confiscated.

46. Consequently, the figures for preventive seizure will generally be higher than those for permanent forfeiture.

	2006	2007	2008
Seizure of wildlife species in actions occurring within the national territory	1,457	2,050	33,422

47. With regard to significant taxa forfeited, whether because they are internationally regulated, or are of biological and ecological importance, or have been the subject of recent reforms in national legislation, the figures on forfeitures of psittacids and primates as a result of inspection and monitoring activities within the national territory are: 1,385 psittacid specimens during the period 1996-2008 and 68 primates during the period 1999-2006.

UNITED STATES:

48. **Trade Monitoring.** The USFWS wildlife inspection programme remained the United States' front-line defence against illegal wildlife trafficking. USFWS wildlife inspectors examine imports and exports at 38 ports of entry and border crossings, processing more than 180,000 shipments per year. During the reporting period, inspectors worked to interdict smuggling of protected species by coordinating and conducting targeted inspection blitzes of passenger flights, air and ocean cargo, and mail facilities at Los Angeles, New York, Newark, Boston, Atlanta, Miami, and other locations. Special intensified inspection operations were also conducted at ports of entry along the Mexican and Canadian borders. Efforts to improve CITES compliance focused on training sessions and one-on-one outreach for brokers, company officials, and others engaged in wildlife trade. Wildlife seized for CITES violations included live reptiles; live parrots, conures, and other wild birds; live sea horses; sea turtle and iguana eggs and meat; African elephant ivory (including a shipment containing over 480 ivory items intercepted in Houston); Asian medicinals made from CITES-listed species; primate meat; coral and coral rock; queen conch meat and shells; giant clam; whale meat; seal skin products; stuffed sea turtles and "tortoiseshell" products; and shipments of caiman, alligator and other reptilian leather goods.

49. **Smuggling Investigations.** During the reporting period, USFWS special agents and wildlife inspectors upheld the CITES treaty by investigating illegal trade in CITES-protected species. Significant accomplishments include securing a 5-year U.S. prison sentence and USD 100,000 fine for a Canadian resident who orchestrated a complex elephant ivory smuggling conspiracy based in Cameroon; arresting six individuals to break up an ivory trafficking network dealing in ivory from

three African countries; bringing Federal charges against two Minnesota women for conspiracy to smuggle medicinal items made from Asian elephant, leopard cat, gibbon, and other protected species; and securing a guilty verdict for a Florida caviar dealer and his company in a case involving the illegal export of falsely labelled American paddlefish roe. Other key cases secured prison sentences and/or significant fines for seven businessmen for large-scale trafficking in sea turtle skins and products from Mexico and sea turtle shell from China; U.S., Canadian, and Haitian seafood dealers involved in large-scale trafficking in queen conch meat from several Caribbean and South American countries; an Internet-based caviar dealer and his company for facilitating the smuggling of roe from former Soviet countries; and individuals smuggling commodities that ranged from leopard skins and Asian arowanas to ivory carvings and exotic leathers.

50. **U.S. CITES Enforcement Capacity-Building.** The USFWS improved U.S. CITES enforcement capacity by hiring 27 criminal investigators to fill positions left vacant by retirements and attrition; expanding basic training for new wildlife inspectors to enhance CITES enforcement and smuggling interdiction skills; and training new U.S. Customs and agriculture inspectors on CITES requirements and enforcement. Work also continued on a new interagency trade data system that will centralize the policing and processing of trade and provide access to intelligence information and shipment targeting mechanisms.

Meetings, workshops and communication within the region

CANADA:

51. The Management and Scientific Authorities have collaborated with Provincial and Territorial Management and Scientific Authorities, Canada Border Services Agency, TRAFFIC North America, Canadian Polar Bear Administrative Committee, Canadian Furbearer Management Committee, Canadian Fur Institute, and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

MEXICO:

52. **XIII Meeting of the Canada/Mexico/United States Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management.** Mexico hosted the 13th Annual Meeting of the Trilateral Committee in Veracruz, from 12 to 16 May 2008, co-chairing the CITES Working Table and focusing its efforts on reviewing the commitments made earlier with respect to the three-year Action Plan, the outcomes of the 23rd meeting of the Animals Committee and the preparations for the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee.
53. **Cooperation with NGOs.** Capacity-building and strengthening activities, such as courses, workshops, and equipment and materials donations, were carried out during the period 2006-2008 in the framework of the aforementioned collaboration agreement between PROFEPA and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF)/TRAFFIC North America. The first phase of the project concluded in 2008 and the planning of activities for the second phase is currently under way.

UNITED STATES:

54. During the reporting period, the Division of Scientific Authority, the Division of Management Authority and the Office of Law Enforcement engaged in many meetings, and collaborations with CITES stakeholders. Meetings attended include: the national convention of Safari Club International, the Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Interstate Cooperative Resources Association (MICRA) Paddlefish and Sturgeon Committee, Annual Meeting of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign, Annual Meeting of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, North American Wildlife Conference, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting, the International Andean Bear Symposium, Festival of Pacific Arts in American Samoa, the international conference of the Animal Transport Association, Exotic Wildlife Symposium at Tufts University, a forum on international conservation work at George Mason University; and numerous outreach events focused on CITES compliance. General public outreach on wildlife trafficking included participation in and exhibits at such events as the North Carolina and Kentucky State Fairs and various Earth Day celebrations; and support for the production of a series of public service announcements featuring actor Harrison Ford.

Other matters

MEXICO:

55. **Directory of CITES specialists in Mexico.** In early 2009, CONABIO will publish on its website (www.conabio.gob.mx) a directory of experts who serve as advisors to Mexico's CITES Scientific Authority.

56. **CITES species data sheets.** The Scientific Authority is continuing its review and validation of approximately 130 data sheets on animal species. So far, 77 data sheets on corals (Scleractinia) and marine mammals have been completed. The data sheets published to date are posted on the CONABIO website at:

<http://www.conabio.gob.mx/conocimiento/ise/fichas/doctos/introduccion.html>.

57. In 2008, an analysis was conducted of the "verification registers", i.e. of the records of permits issued to individuals after goods subject to environmental regulation have been inspected by PROFEPA, which serve as confirmation that the requirements for the movement of wildlife across borders have been met. The analysis showed that 82 % of the transboundary movements occurring in Mexico are imports and only 18 % are exports. The main animal imports are reptiles, which are imported for various purposes, followed by mammals. The main animal exports are birds and tarantulas.

UNITED STATES:

58. **Updated CITES Regulations.** USFWS updated U.S. CITES regulations, effective 15 September 2008, by incorporating changes to the requirements for international trade in sturgeon caviar that were agreed at CoP15. We have also prepared a proposed rule to amend the regulations to include other relevant changes adopted at CoP15.

Difficulties in implementing CITES in the countries in the region

Technical aspects

CANADA:

59. The new taxonomic reference for mammals adopted at CoP14 recognizes six subspecies of *Puma concolor*. All cougar in North America are now recognized as the subspecies *Puma concolor cougar*, commonly called the North American cougar. The use of the same scientific name to refer to both the Eastern cougar and the North American cougar is creating difficulties with permit applications. Consultation with the CITES Secretariat confirmed that the adoption of a new nomenclature reference was not intended to change the listing of a species. The public uses the Internet to determine the scientific names for specimens when applying for a CITES permit and the name for cougar most readily available to the public is the North American cougar *Puma concolor cougar*. Some Management Authorities, receiving applications intended by the applicant to refer to specimens from Appendix II populations of the North American cougar are treating the applications as if they are for Appendix I, applying restrictions accordingly.

MEXICO:

60. PROFEPA has detected inconsistencies in the use of tariff codes by individuals, which, coupled with inconsistent systematization of information by the Authority, leads to regulatory gaps and inadequate implementation of public policies. Mexico's Management Authority and Law Enforcement Authority are working in coordination with the Ministry of Economic Affairs to resolve the tariff code problems. To address the other difficulties, PROFEPA is currently systematizing, analysing and evaluating the information contained in institutional subsystems.

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