

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



Twenty-eighth meeting of the Animals Committee
Tel Aviv (Israel), 30 August-3 September 2015

Strategic matters

Capacity-building

REPORT OF THE JOINT WORKING GROUP ON
CAPACITY-BUILDING (DECISION 16.29)¹

1. This document has been submitted by the co-Chairs of the joint Animals and Plants Committee working group on capacity-building.²
2. The Conference of the Parties, at its 16th meeting (Bangkok, 2013), adopted Decision 16.29, directed to the CITES Secretariat, as follows:

The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external funding, where needed:

- a) undertake a review of capacity-building activities found in Resolutions and Decisions to assess whether and how they could be rationalized and consolidated, and report its findings and recommendations at the 66th meeting of the Standing Committee, and report on proposed revisions to Resolutions and Decisions, and, if considered appropriate, present a draft resolution on capacity-building at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;*
- b) collaborate with the Animals and Plants Committees on relevant capacity-building activities, inter alia to improve and expand the Secretariat's training materials on the making of non-detriment findings, including those available through the CITES Virtual College;*
- c) within the mandate of Goals 1 and 3 of the CITES Strategic Vision, provide targeted capacity-building support to CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, Customs and law enforcement entities, the judiciary, legislators and other stakeholders, particularly in new Parties and Small Island Developing States;*
- d) assist and support the Parties' own capacity-building efforts to implement the Convention at the national level;*
- e) deliver general and specialized training through regional workshops and the CITES Virtual College;*

¹ This agenda item is addressed to the Animals and Plants Committees.

² 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.

- f) *develop and further enhance partnerships with institutions and organizations providing Parties with capacity-building assistance of relevance to CITES, for example through the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime, the International Tropical Timber Organization and the International University of Andalusia;*
- g) *provide guidance to Parties on accessing financial resources to support the implementation of CITES (such as the Global Environment Facility and the African Elephant Fund); and*
- h) *undertake needs assessments and gap analyses to improve CITES capacity-building efforts.*

4. The Animals and Plants Committees established an intersessional working group on capacity-building at their last joint session (Veracruz, May 2014). The composition of the working group is as follows, comprising at least one representative from each region of both Committees:

Co-Chairs: PC Chair (Ms. Clemente) and AC representative of Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ouboter);

Members: AC representative of Oceania (Mr. Robertson), PC representatives of Africa (Ms. Khayota), Asia (Mr. Fernando) and North America (Mr. Benítez), AC acting representatives of Africa (Mr. Fouda), North America (Ms. Gnam) and Asia (Mr. Ishii);

Parties: Chile, China, Germany, Mexico, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), Conservation International, Humane Society International, TRAFFIC and WWF.

5. The mandate of the intersessional working group is to:

- a) provide guidance to the Secretariat on its relevant capacity-building activities;
- b) review the Secretariat's training materials used in capacity-building, such as those on the making of non-detriment findings; and
- c) advise on updating, expanding or improving these materials as necessary.

The mandate furthermore requires the working group to:

- d) report on progress with these activities at the next meetings of the Committees.

6. The working group has virtually discussed its mandated tasks and agreed to a number of activities it intends to undertake for the period up to the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in September 2016. The proposed workplan, which is included as an Annex to this document, provides a roadmap to guide the working group on relevant priority actions, with an indicative timetable.

7. As part of its first activities, the intersessional working group on capacity-building has reviewed the draft revision of the CITES web page on non-detriment findings (the NDF portal) and provided inputs on additional information, tools and services that may also be included in the portal. Discussion is underway on improving the existing training materials on the CITES Virtual College, as well as on considering how to better link the information currently contained in the NDF section of the CITES Virtual College with that of the future NDF portal on the CITES website.

8. The co-Chairs would like to express their deepest acknowledgement to Mr. Marcos Silva and Ms. Haruko Okusu for their help and support.

Recommendation

9. The Animals Committee is invited to note this document.

**Work plan of the intersessional working group on capacity-building
to review the Secretariat's training materials used in capacity-building activities
relevant to Scientific Authorities and the Scientific Committees**

May 2015

The working group's mandate is to provide guidance to the Secretariat on its relevant capacity-building activities; review the Secretariat's training materials used in capacity-building, such as those on the making of non-detriment findings; and advise on updating, expanding or improving these materials as necessary [AC27/PC21 Sum. 1 (Rev. 1)], bearing in mind the overall context of the working group's role. The working group:

- cooperates with the Secretariat on the implementation of its programme of work to assist Scientific Authorities and provide scientific advice on training materials used in capacity-building [Resolution Conf. 11.1 d)];
- collaborates with the Secretariat on relevant capacity-building activities, inter alia to improve and expand the Secretariat's training materials on the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs), including those available through the CITES Virtual College (Decision 16.29 b); and
- provides guidance on the development of new targeted capacity-building activities concerning the making of NDFs, the improvement and expansion of the Secretariat's NDF training materials, the development of a prominent NDF section on the CITES website and of a user-friendly system to exchange NDF-related information, and the identification of funding sources (AC27/PC21 Doc. 9.1).

The working group will cooperate with the AC/PC working group on the review of identification and guidance materials and will contribute to the development of capacity-building materials on introduction from the sea (under the European Union-CITES (EU-CITES) marine species project).

While recognizing that the mandate for the working group is broader than NDFs, it will start its work with a focus on issues related to improving and expand the NDF-related capacity-building materials for the 2015-2016 period.

1. Advice on the NDF web portal development

The Secretariat is currently working on a major revision of the NDF web portal on the CITES website in order to make it more up-to-date and dynamic, and to help it fulfil the needs of Parties in exchanging relevant information. The initial work on the NDF portal began in April-May 2015, with the aim to have the finalized NDF web portal launched at AC28.

The Secretariat staff from the Scientific Support Team (SST) and the Knowledge Management and Outreach Services (KMOS) met and agreed on a number of draft contents of the portal:

- Archive of relevant Convention text, Resolutions and Decisions, and any other relevant background materials
- Database on NDFs case studies and guidance(s), e.g., outputs from the NDF Expert Workshop (Cancun, 2008)
- Links to relevant pages within the CITES website (species page, Virtual College, etc.)
- Links to external web pages highlighting Parties' effort on developing NDFs and NDF guidance

Inputs requested from the working group:

- 1(a) Provide comments and inputs to the Secretariat on information, tools and services for the initial preparation of the NDF web portal (May-June 2015)
- 1(b) Review the NDF web portal once ready, and provide inputs to further populate the site (July-August 2015)

2. Updating the CITES Virtual College

One of the main sources of capacity-building tools provided by the CITES Secretariat is the CITES Virtual College. The two main training materials therein, namely the CITES courses¹ and the “CITES train the trainers PowerPoint presentations”² are now more than four years old, and are in urgent need of review and revision in order to ensure that the information and accompanying reading materials are up-to-date.

As the revision for PowerPoint presentations can be implemented mostly in-house, this can be a relatively low-cost, although time-consuming, endeavour. However, small funds for hiring a dedicated person to coordinate the review would greatly accelerate the work. Since there are 19 PowerPoint files, some prioritization is necessary (as well as identification of additional subject areas to create new PowerPoint presentations). The Secretariat would also like to seek any volunteers from the working group to lead the revision of any given PowerPoint.

The revision of the online course materials will use funds from the EU-CITES CoP16 Decisions project to redevelop the course functions both substantively and technically.

Inputs requested from the working group:

- 2(a) Provide inputs on the review process as well as suggestions on additional subject areas to create a PowerPoint presentation or a course (June-August 2015)
- 2(b) Volunteer for leading the review of any given PowerPoint presentation or the NDF course and agree on the work timetable (September 2015)
- 2(c) Review and provide comments during each revision process (October 2015 – July 2016)

3. Development of “frequently asked questions” (FAQs) on NDF

Based on a number of queries and communications received by the Secretariat, there may be a continued need to raise awareness on what NDFs are, and explain what making an NDF means and does not mean. In order to address this issue, the Secretariat suggests developing a list of answers through FAQs about NDFs to be placed on the NDF web portal, and with available funding, prepare one or more factsheets on NDFs.

If the preparation of such factsheets proves to be useful to Parties, the Secretariat may consider preparing factsheets on other key CITES concepts and topics.

¹ <https://cites.unia.es/>

² <https://cites.unia.es/cites/mod/resource/view.php?id=58>

Inputs requested from the working group:

- 3(a) Discuss whether or not FAQs and factsheets might be useful (November-December 2015)**
- 3(b) Send suggestions of FAQs to be included in the list to the Secretariat (January-March 2016)**
- 3(c) Review and comment on the list of draft FAQs, to be finalized and placed on the CITES NDF web portal (April-May 2016)**
- 3(d) Review and comment on the draft factsheet on NDFs, to be finalized and placed on the NDF portal (June-July 2016)**
- 3(e) Consider whether it would be useful to print physical copies, whether further factsheets should be developed, and if so, identify other key concepts/topics (August 2016 onwards – to develop a new work plan thereafter)**

4. Review of the 2015-2016 work and planning for the 2017-2019 period

If the 17th Conference of the Parties (CoP17) decides to re-establish the working group on capacity-building, the workplan for the 2017-2019 period will be developed as necessary, based on the review of outputs and achievements at CoP17.