

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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade controls and marking

IDENTIFICATION OF STURGEONS AND PADDLEFISH SPECIMENS IN TRADE
(DECISION 16.137)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 16th meeting (Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted interrelated Decisions on *Sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)* as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

16.136 *The Secretariat shall:*

- a) *subject to external funding and in consultation with the Animals Committee, organize a study to:*
 - i) *provide an overview of molecular, DNA-based and other forensic methods that could assist in identifying the species and populations of Acipenseriformes specimens in trade, determining the origin or age of specimens, and differentiating wild from captive-bred or aquacultured specimens;*
 - ii) *review relevant developments in this area, including the availability and reliability of uniform identification systems;*
 - iii) *evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods (including practicality, costs, time-efficiency, reliability, technical requirements, etc.); and*
 - iv) *formulate relevant guidance for CITES Parties, enforcement agencies, the private sector and other stakeholders;*
- b) *ensure consultation with Parties that authorize trade in specimens of sturgeons and paddlefish, appropriate experts, institutions and organizations, and the private sector in the conduct of the study;*
- c) *make the results of the study available to the Animals Committee at its 27th or 28th meeting for its consideration; and*
- d) *disseminate the recommendations formulated by the Standing Committee pursuant to Decision 16.138 in a Notification to the Parties.*

Directed to the Animals Committee

- 16.137 *The Animals Committee shall assist the Secretariat in determining the specifications for the study referred to in Decision 16.136 and monitoring its conduct. It shall review the report of the study at its 27th or 28th meeting, and make recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Standing Committee.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 16.138 *The Standing Committee shall review the study undertaken in accordance with Decision 16.136 and the recommendations that the Animals Committee formulated in compliance with Decision 16.137, and make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to Parties concerned or for consideration at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

3. At the 27th meeting of the Animals Committee (Veracruz, April 2014), the Secretariat reported that the Secretariat had identified possible experts to undertake the study requested in Decision 16.136, but that the necessary external funds had not been secured to complete the study (see document [AC27 Doc. 15](#)). The Committee took note of this announcement. At the time of writing (June 2015), no external funds have been secured to conduct the study.
4. In the light of the above, the Secretariat approached the co-authors of the study “Identification of Acipenseriformes species in trade” conducted for the Secretariat in 2008, regarding an update of the original study. An oral report will be provided by the Secretariat at the Animals Committee on the current status of this effort.
5. For a comprehensive study, donor Parties and stakeholders are invited to contribute the requisite financial support.
6. Any such study can take into consideration the work conducted in the centres of molecular genetic studies created by the Russian Federation and the generous offer that they may be used by the Animals Committee through the Scientific Authority of the Russian Federation responsible for sturgeons (the Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography), as communicated in the Russian Federation’s submission on this agenda item (AC28 Doc 16.3).

Recommendation

7. The Committee is invited to note this document.