

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

Species trade and conservation

Sturgeons and paddlefish [Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16)]

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. In Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish*, the Conference of the Parties:

DIRECTS the Secretariat to provide at each meeting of the Animals Committee a written report, based on information submitted by the range States concerned as requested in subparagraph a) iv) above, including references to relevant documents, on its activities related to the conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish.

3. In Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16), the Conference of the Parties further recommends,¹ with regard to catch and export quotas, that Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States² unless export quotas have been set in accordance with a procedure outlined in paragraph a) of the second RECOMMENDS. As part of this procedure, subparagraph a) iv) requires that:

Range States [provide] to the Secretariat by 31 December of the previous year, the export quota referred to in subparagraph i) as well as the scientific data used to establish the catch and export quotas under subparagraphs ii) and iii);

and subparagraph a) v) provides that:

If the quotas have not been communicated to the Secretariat by the deadline of 31 December, the relevant range States have a zero quota until such time as they communicate their quotas in writing to the Secretariat and the Secretariat in turn informs the Parties.

¹ At the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP13, Bangkok, 2004), it was agreed that this recommendation would not apply to those range States where there is no commercial caviar harvest or export from shared stocks. It was also agreed, however, that the Secretariat or any Party would bring to the attention of the Standing Committee or Conference of the Parties any significant changes in the harvest or export of sturgeon products from such stocks.

² Quotas do not have to be established for specimens from endemic stocks, i.e. stocks not shared with other countries, and captive-breeding or aquaculture operations. Quotas communicated for such specimens are voluntary quotas.

4. By 31 December 2014, none of the range States of *Acipenseriformes* that are concerned by the provisions outlined in paragraph 3 above had communicated export quotas for caviar or meat from stocks shared with other range States, and none of the related information and data that such range States would be required to produce had been submitted to the Secretariat.
5. Consequently, the Secretariat has published zero export quotas for caviar and meat of wild origin from *Acipenseriformes* species of all shared stocks. The shared stocks, range States and species concerned are shown in the table below. In accordance with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16), these zero export quotas are applicable for the period between 1 March 2015 and 29 February 2016.

Shared stock	Range States	Species
Caspian Sea	Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Turkmenistan	<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i> <i>Acipenser nudiiventris</i> <i>Acipenser persicus</i> <i>Acipenser ruthenus</i> <i>Acipenser stellatus</i> <i>Huso huso</i>
North-West Black Sea and Lower Danube River	Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine	<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i> <i>Acipenser nudiiventris</i> <i>Acipenser ruthenus</i> <i>Acipenser stellatus</i> <i>Huso huso</i>
Saint John River/Bay of Fundy	Canada, United States of America	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus</i>
Amur/Heilongjian River	China, Russian Federation	<i>Acipenser schrenckii</i> <i>Huso dauricus</i>
Azov Sea	Russian Federation, Ukraine	<i>Acipenser gueldenstaedtii</i> <i>Acipenser nudiiventris</i> <i>Acipenser ruthenus</i> <i>Acipenser stellatus</i> <i>Huso huso</i>

6. For similar reasons as indicated in paragraph 4 above, the Secretariat already published zero export quotas for caviar and meat of wild origin from *Acipenseriformes* species of all shared stocks in 2014 (for the period between 1 March 2014 and 28 February 2015), 2013 (1 March 2013 - 28 February 2014); 2012 (1 March 2012 - 28 February 2013); and 2011 (1 March 2011 - 29 February 2012).
7. The Russian Federation submitted a document for consideration at the 28th meeting of the Animals Committee (see document AC28 Doc. 16.3), in which as Chair of the Commission on aquatic bioresources of the Caspian Sea, it informs that the sturgeon range States of the Caspian Sea:
 - a) did not conduct commercial fishing of sturgeon species or establish an export quota in 2014; and
 - b) will not commercially fish sturgeon species or establish quotas in 2015-2016.
8. The table in paragraph 5 shows range States where no commercial caviar harvest or export from shared stocks has taken place for at least six years. Under the given circumstances, all the joint stocks indicated in paragraph 5 may therefore qualify for the exemption indicated in the relevant footnote in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP16). The recommendations in the Resolution shown in paragraph 3 above would thus no longer be applicable to the range States concerned, and the Secretariat would be able to stop publishing zero quotas for caviar and meat of *Acipenseriformes* species from stocks shared between these range States. The Secretariat or any Party could bring to the attention of the Standing Committee or Conference of the Parties any significant changes in the harvest or export of sturgeon products from such stocks. The Secretariat notes that the recommendations in the Resolution that are directed to the Animals Committee concerning three-year cycle evaluations of stocks of *Acipenseriformes* species subject to the provisions under RECOMMENDS further, paragraph a), would not apply to these exempted stocks.

Recommendation

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