

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



Twenty-ninth meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 18-22 July 2017

Species specific matters

Aquatic species

Sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)

IDENTIFICATION OF STURGEONS AND PADDLEFISH SPECIMENS IN TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties renewed a series of Decisions on *Sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)* that had originally been adopted at its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), as follows:

***Directed to the Secretariat***

16.136 (Rev. CoP17)

*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 for its consideration; and*

- d) disseminate the recommendations formulated by the Standing Committee pursuant to Decision 16.138 (Rev.CoP17) in a Notification to the Parties.

**Directed to the Animals Committee**

16.137 (Rev. CoP17)

*The Animals Committee shall assist the Secretariat in determining the specifications for the study referred to in Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP17) and monitoring its conduct. It shall review the report of the study, and make recommendations as appropriate for consideration by the Standing Committee.*

**Directed to the Standing Committee**

16.138 (Rev. CoP17)

*The Standing Committee shall review the study undertaken in accordance with Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP17) and the recommendations that the Animals Committee formulated in compliance with Decision 16.137 (Rev. CoP17), and make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to Parties concerned or for consideration at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

3. The Secretariat recalls that prior to the 28th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC28, Tel Aviv, August 2015) the Secretariat had obtained initial views on possible elements of the study from Dr. Arne Ludwig, which are summarised in document [AC28 Inf. 18](#).
4. The Secretariat also recalls that at the same meeting, the Russian Federation submitted document [AC28 Doc 16.3](#), offering the Animals Committee to make use of the work conducted in its centres of molecular genetic studies through the Scientific Authority of the Russian Federation responsible for sturgeons (the Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries and Oceanography).
5. At the time of writing this document (May 2017), no external funding to conduct the study requested in Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP17) has been identified. The cost of the study is estimated at USD 10,000.

Recommendation

6. The Animals Committee is invited to comment on this document, and make suggestions to the Secretariat as to how best to proceed to implement Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP17).