

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

EELS (*ANGUILLA* SPP.)

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted the interrelated Decisions 17.186 to 17.189 on *Eels* (*Anguilla* spp.) as follows:

Directed to the Secretariat

17.186 *The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding:*

- a) *contract independent consultants to undertake a study compiling information on challenges and lessons learnt with regards to implementation of the Appendix II listing of European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) and its effectiveness. This includes in particular the making of non-detriment findings, enforcement and identification challenges, as well as illegal trade. This study should notably take account of the data compiled and advice issued by the ICES/GFCM/EIFAAC Working Group Eel;*
- b) *contract independent consultants to undertake a study on non-CITES listed *Anguilla* species:*
 - i) *documenting trade levels and possible changes in trade patterns following the entry into force of the listing of the European Eel in CITES Appendix II in 2009;*
 - ii) *compiling available data and information on the biology, population status, use and trade in each species, as well as identifying gaps in such data and information, based on the latest available data and taking account inter alia of the Red List assessments by the IUCN Anguillid Eel Specialist Group; and*
 - iii) *providing recommendations for priority topics for technical workshops based on gaps and challenges identified under i)-ii);*
- c) *make the reports from the studies above available to the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC29) for their consideration; and*
- d) *organize, where appropriate, international technical workshops, inviting cooperation with and participation by the relevant range States, trading countries, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the IUCN Anguillid Eel Specialist Group, the ICES/GFCM/EIFAAC Working Group Eel, industry and other experts appointed by Parties as appropriate. Such workshops should in particular cover the topics identified by the*

reports described in subparagraphs a) and b) of this Decision and could focus on challenges specific to the various eel species, such as

- i) *in relation to European eel, the realization of and guidance available for non-detriment findings, as well as enforcement of the Appendix II listing including identification challenges; and*
- ii) *in relation to the other eel species, to enable a better understanding of the effects of international trade, including trade in their various life stages, and possible measures to ensure sustainable trade in such species;*
- e) *make any workshop report available to the 30th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC30) for their consideration; and*
- f) *make available to the Standing Committee relevant information on illegal trade in European eels gathered from the study and the workshop report mentioned in paragraphs a) and e).*

Directed to range States and Parties involved in trade in *Anguilla* spp.

17.187 *Range States and Parties involved in trade in Anguilla species, in collaboration with the Secretariat and FAO, are encouraged to:*

- a) *promote international or regional cooperation on a species-by-species basis, including the convening of regional meetings to discuss how to fill the information gaps and ensure long-term sustainability in the face of increasing demand from international trade;*
- b) *provide the Secretariat and their consultants with specific information needed for the purposes of completing Decision 17.186 a) and b) as well as the results of the regional meetings; and*
- c) *participate, where appropriate, in the technical workshops and share expertise and knowledge on the priority topics identified [examples provided under in Decision 17.186 paragraph d)].*

Directed to the Animals Committee

17.188 *The Animals Committee shall:*

- a) *consider, at its 29th and 30th meetings, the reports produced under Decision 17.186, as well as the information submitted by European Eel range States and other eel range States pursuant to Decision 17.187, and any other relevant information on conservation of and trade in Anguilla species; and*
- b) *provide recommendations to ensure the sustainable trade in Anguilla species, to Parties for consideration at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

17.189 *The Standing Committee shall consider information relating to illegal trade in European eel at its 69th and 70th meetings and adopt recommendations as appropriate.*

Implementation of the Decisions on *Eels* (*Anguilla* spp.)

3. The Secretariat has not been able to implement Decision 17.186 within the timeframe envisaged because the necessary external funding could not be secured in time. At the time of writing of this document (May 2017), the Secretariat is pleased to announce that the European Union has confirmed its financial support for implementing this Decision as part of a project entitled "Implementation of CITES CoP17 Resolutions and Decisions", for which the Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude. An oral update on the status of funding for the implementation of this Decision will be given at the present meeting of the Animals Committee.

4. Due to this delay, the studies mentioned in paragraphs a) and b) of Decision 17.186 cannot be made available at the present meeting of the Animals Committee. However, the Secretariat is of the opinion that the Animals Committee will need to have access to as much pertinent information on eel management, conservation and trade as possible at its next meeting in order to fulfil its mandate in Decision 17.188 to formulate recommendations on sustainable trade in *Anguilla* species for consideration at CoP18. The Secretariat therefore will do its utmost to organize the two studies mentioned in paragraphs a) and b) and, where appropriate, international technical workshops, as requested in paragraph d) in such a way that the respective outputs will be available for consideration at the 30th meeting of the Animals Committee.
5. When considering the best options for undertaking the two studies mentioned in paragraphs a) and b) of Decision 17.186, the Secretariat notes that although studies are clearly connected, the scope and expertise required seem quite different. Conducting the two studies in parallel may also be necessary to meet this deadline.
6. In support of the approach outlined above, the Animals Committee may wish to consider how it can best organize itself intersessionally to allow consideration of the two studies when drafts are produced or when they are finalized (possibly by the end of the year), and provide provisional recommendations and views that could be reflected in the technical workshops
7. The Secretariat would like to remind range States and Parties involved in trade in *Anguilla* species of the elements of Decision 17.187 directed to them. Once the implementation of Decision 17.186 has sufficiently advanced, the Secretariat intends to send an invitation to submit information needed for the purposes of completing Decision 17.186, paragraphs a) and b), as well as the results of any regional meeting they have organized.

Recommendation

8. The Animals Committee is invited to consider the suggestions made in paragraph 4, 5 and 6 above concerning the implementation of Decision 17.186. It may wish to consider how it can organise the intersessional review of the studies on European eels and on other eel species, and formulate provisional recommendations and views that could be reflected in technical workshops.