

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

Regional matters

Regional reports

EUROPE

1. This document has been prepared by Vincent Fleming (United Kingdom), Mathias Loertscher (Switzerland) and Simon Nemptsov (Israel).^{*} This document reports on activities undertaken in the Region since the 17th Conference of the Parties (24 September–4 October 2016).

General information

2. Animal Committee (AC) members: Mathias Loertscher (Switzerland) and Vincent Fleming (United Kingdom). Alternate members: Simon Nemptsov (Israel); the other alternate member position is vacant after Karen Gaynor (Ireland) resigned from the role following her appointment to the Secretariat.
3. The representatives divide their duties as follows: Vincent Fleming (VF) represents those Parties in the European Union (29 Parties consisting of the 28 EU Member States and the European Union itself); as Mathias Loertscher has been elected as Chair of the Animals Committee, Simon Nemptsov, as alternate, represents the 21 Parties in the region that are not in the European Union.
4. Number of Parties in European region: 49; number of non-Parties: 2.

Overview of major developments

5. Review of Significant Trade

No significant new issues to report.

6. Periodic Review of the Appendices

7. Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes

No significant new issues to report.

8. Non-detriment findings

Snake trade and non-detriment findings. Mathias Loertscher chaired, and Vincent Fleming participated in, an *Expert workshop on the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs) for trade in CITES-listed snakes* in

^{*} *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.*

Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) from 3-4 May 2017. The workshop was funded by the government of Switzerland in support of Decision 17.284.

European Union. With respect to the implementation of the Appendix II listing of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), the European Union has established measures aimed at achieving the recovery of the species (see Annex 1). The status of, and trade in, the species has also been reviewed frequently by members of the EU CITES Scientific Review Group (SRG; see paragraph 17 below). The SRG has concluded that it is not possible at present to make a non-detriment finding for the export from, or import into, the EU of specimens of European eel. EU Member States have notified the CITES Secretariat of a zero annual export quota for European eel since 2011.

The EU and its Member States has also committed €1.3m EUR to support capacity building in developing countries for sustainable wildlife management with a focus on commercially exploited aquatic species. Amongst other things, this project will support developing countries in making non-detriment findings for those sharks and rays included in Appendix II at CoP16 & 17 (see Annex 1 for details).

9. Other issues

None to report

Activities of regional representatives

10. All Parties in the region were contacted by the European regional representatives in April 2017 to invite their contributions to this report. Reports received by May 20, 2017, from non-EU Parties appear in Annex 2
11. Vincent Fleming regularly attends all meetings of the EU CITES Scientific Review Group (see Annex 1) enabling him to keep in touch with all the other Scientific Authorities of the 28 EU Member States. By the time of this meeting, the Scientific Review Group will have met three times since the 17th Conference of the Parties.
12. Vincent Fleming also participated, as a member of the UK delegation, in the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cancun, Mexico 4-17 December 2016) and so was able to follow developments there relevant to CITES.
13. Simon Nemtzov, participated as a delegate from Israel, in various regional meetings in Europe and in the Mediterranean and north-African area for the Barcelona Convention (for protection of the Mediterranean Sea) and for meetings of daughter agreements of the Convention of Migratory Species (such as Eurobats, Raptors-MOU and ACCOBAMS), and is thus able to keep abreast of regional conservation issues and also maintain personal contact with regional colleagues on CITES-related issues too.

Regional cooperation and priorities

14. European Union. The European Union (EU) has been providing significant funding to support a range of initiatives in support of CITES implementation and which are relevant to the work of the Animals Committee (see some examples of funded activities in Annex I).
15. First Range States Workshop on the European Eel. Vincent Fleming participated in this range State meeting organized by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the Sargasso Sea Commission and which was held in Galway, Ireland on 13-14 October 2016. Documents for, and a report of, the meeting are available [here](#).

Meetings and workshops

16. European Union. The Scientific Review Group (SRG) of the European Union, which comprises the Scientific Authorities of the EU Member States and the European Commission, meets regularly (c4 times a year) in order to discuss scientific aspects of CITES and the implementation of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations. More information about opinions formed by the SRG and reports considered by it are detailed in Annex 1.

European Regional Report – contribution of the European Union to the implementation of CITES relevant to the work of the Animals Committee

The European Union (EU) participated, for the first time, as a Party to CITES in the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Capacity building activities and/or funding

The following projects, of direct relevance to CITES Animals Committee, are currently being funded by the EU:

- strengthening capacity in developing countries for sustainable wildlife management and enhanced implementation of CITES wildlife trade regulations, with particular focus on commercially-exploited aquatic species (August 2013 - March 2017, €1.3 million EUR granted to the CITES Secretariat) (http://www.cites.org/eng/news/pr/2013/20130914_shark_ray.php);
- combating wildlife crime (2013-2016, €1.7 million EUR granted to ICCWC through Interpol) (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1428_en.htm);
- “Minimising the Illegal Killing of Elephants and other Endangered Species (MIKES)” (successor of MIKE, more focused on enforcement and with larger scope); the programme will run in the period 2014-2018 (€12.3 million EUR granted to the CITES Secretariat) (http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1193_en.htm);
- support to the Secretariat for the implementation of CoP16 decisions (August 2013 – March 2017, €0.7 million EUR)
- Species+ and monitoring of the status of several CITES-listed species (€0.65 million EUR granted to UNEP-WCMC)
- the Commission approved in 2015 a project to finance a programme jointly carried out by CITES and UNODC to strengthen law enforcement and reduce the demand for illegal wildlife products in South East Asia (through a €5 million EUR grant).
- support to the Secretariat for the implementation of CoP17 decisions and further capacity building for developing countries – the European Commission approved in March 2017 an allocation of €2.25 million EUR for which CITES Secretariat still needs to develop the detailed project document for 3 years (envisaged starting date around June 2017).

The EU is also providing large volume of bilateral support to developing countries and regions to protect biodiversity and manage protected areas.

Revision of EU rules governing trade in Appendix II specimens

Revision of EU Wildlife Trade Regulations

- The European Commission is currently reviewing the "Suspension Regulation" (Commission Regulation (EU) No 2015/736 on 7 May 2015 (Official Journal L 117 of 8 May 2015 (p. 25)). The adoption of the new Commission Regulation is expected for mid-2017.
- In the last year, the European Commission has undertaken two revisions of the Annexes to Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97, namely:
 - i. Commission Regulation (EU) 2016/2029 of 10 November 2016 (Official Journal L 316 of 23.11.2016) incorporated changes to CITES Appendix III as well as the deletion of some squirrel species, based on the entry into force of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/1141 of 13 July 2016 adopting a list of invasive alien species of Union concern.
 - ii. Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/160 of 20 January 2017 (Official Journal L 27 of 1.2.2017) reflects the decisions taken at CoP17.

- The Commission is in the process of reviewing the Implementing Regulations (Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 792/2012) in order to reflect decisions taken at CoP17.

Intra-EU Guidance documents

After COP 17, the European Commission has published two Guidance documents on the implementation of the listings of species in CITES (namely a) on the EU regime governing intra-EU trade and re-export of ivory and b) guidance on worked specimens under the EU Wildlife Trade regulations) <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C:2017:154:TOC>

These guidance documents, as well as other pieces of EU legislation, can be accessed at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/legislation_en.htm

Other activities

UNEP-WCMC has been contracted to provide reports on the biological and trade data for a large number of species traded under CITES as well as a number of additional scientific matters relating to CITES implementation. A number of reviews, carried out by UNEP-WCMC as a basis for SRG work, are available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/reports_en.htm

TRAFFIC has been contracted to monitor the implementation and enforcement of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations, and to provide studies and assessments on particular topics.

More information on the EU wildlife trade rules can be obtained via the specific webpage of the European Commission: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/home_en.htm

Regional cooperation and priorities - Meetings and workshops

The European Union Scientific Review Group

The Scientific Review Group of the European Union with the CITES Scientific Authorities of the 28 Member States meets regularly (usually four times a year) in order to discuss scientific aspects of the CITES and EU Wildlife Trade Regulations implementation, including the importation into the EU of animal species listed in the Annexes to the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations. In particular, the SRG monitors non-detriment findings (NDFs) regarding imports into the EU of species from several exporting countries, as well as exports from the EU of CITES-listed species. The Group also works inter-sessionally to provide advice on scientific issues.

Further information on work done by the SRG can be found under the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/srg_en.htm

A number of reviews carried out by UNEP-WCMC as a basis for SRG work can be found on the European Commission website (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/reports_en.htm). These include the following.

- Review of the risk posed by importing Asiatic species of Caudata amphibians (salamanders and newts) into the EU (2016)
- Review of selected species subject to long-standing no opinions - Part I: Plants (2017)
- Review of species selected on the basis of the Analysis of the European Union and candidate countries' annual reports to CITES 2014 (2017)
- Analysis of the European Union and candidate countries' annual reports to CITES 2014 (2016)
- Review of species selected on the basis of the Analysis of 2016 CITES export quotas (2016)
- Review of selected species subject to long-standing import suspensions - Part IV (2016)
- Taxon/country combinations subject to long-standing no opinions (2016)
- Comparison of EU decisions and CITES suspensions – identification of any outstanding potential discrepancies (2016)

- Review of selected species subject to long-standing import suspensions - Part III: Europe, North America, and Central and South America and the Caribbean (2016)
- Analysis of 2016 CITES export quotas (2016)
- Review of selected species subject to long-standing import suspensions - Part II: Asia and Oceania (2016)

Reports from European non-EU Parties

Albania

For the period since the last CoP the Directorate of Biodiversity and Protected Areas of Albania in its function as CITES Management Authority has issued 17 CITES permits in total of which 14 export permits all of which for brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) individuals, that were kept in captivity in several locations across the country and confiscated by the State Inspectorate of Environment and Forests in the light of a campaign initiated in 2015 in the country to tackle this issue. As Albania does not have a Bear Sanctuary or Rescue Center yet, negotiations took place with Four Paws International, ARCTUROS and other NGO-s to find permanent shelter for these bears in several locations such as: bear sanctuaries in Florina (Greece), Prishtina, Bad Fussen near Munchen, Abruzzo and Piemonte (Italy).

During this process we faced the reaction of the Serbian Management Authority on the placement of three brown bears at the bear sanctuary in Prishtina run by Four Paws, regarding the import state in the CITES export permits issued by Albania. They pretend Serbia to be the hosting country and the permits also to go through the respective Ministry in Serbia. As placed in the permits issued by MoE Albania the host country is Kosovo (as Albania has known the independence of Kosovo).

In such conditions the placement of other individuals of brown bears is suspended.

Instead the last transfer of 3 other brown bears from Albania was carried out last month respectively two at the Four Paws center in Sofia (Bulgaria) and one at the Four Paws center in Stuer (Germany).

Albania is in the process of amending the Law on Hunting and of the Wild Fauna in collaboration with UNDP Albania. Based on this process we have done a gap analysis which also have covered the CITES. This gap analysis is available as an information document.

Apart from this we have also been working on removal of bears that have been kept in captivity for tourist attractions, while in the same time looking to fund raising to establish a bear sanctuary in Albania.

Israel

The previous meeting of the Animals Committee (AC28) was held in Tel Aviv, Israel in August 2015, with over 200 participants. The Israel Nature and Parks Authority, which houses the Israeli CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, hosted the meeting at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel and also provided all participants with an evening tour to the Old City of Jerusalem and a full day tour to the Dead Sea and the Golan Heights.

The government of Israel passed new regulations in early 2017 establishing a reform of commercial fisheries in the Mediterranean Sea which includes CITES-listed as well as non-listed species.

Israeli scientists have been very active in international projects within the Convention of Migratory Species and its daughter agreements (such as Eurobats, Raptors-MOU and ACCOBAMS) for international conservation of wildlife, most of which are also CITES-listed species, such as raptors, bats, cetaceans and water-birds.

At CoP17 in Johannesburg (2016), Israel was elected as a regional representative for Europe to the CITES Standing Committee and

Russian Federation

The Standing Committee at its 68th meeting (4 October 2016, Johannesburg, South Africa) established, among others, a Working Group on sturgeon, where Russian Federation leads (Doc. SC68 SR). The Standing Committee also agreed that the leads for each topic would work with the Secretariat to prepare any necessary documents in time for the submission of documents for SC69

The subject of the discussion of Working Group on sturgeon is two uncoordinated amendments to Resolution 12.7 «Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish». The first amendment concerns the

term «country of origin of caviar». The second is the table in the new Annex 3 to Resolution 12.7 «Stock of Acipenseriformes Species Shared between Range States».

Participants of the temporary Sturgeon Working Group at the CoP17th in Johannesburg agreed that these issues should be discussed in collaboration with the Animal Committee and submitted to the Animal Committee for further consideration (Doc. CoP17 Com. II Rec. 13 (Rev. 2)).

The position of the Russian Federation on these two issues is set out in CoP17 Inf.82 (https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/InfDocs/E-CoP_17-Inf-82.pdf). On the first issue, we offer two definitions: «country of origin of the roe» and the country of origin actually of caviar. «Country of origin of roe: country in which the unfertilized eggs (roe) of Acipenseriformes species were harvested, as well as in which the gravid female sturgeon was caught or grown for further sale not alive to a processing plant» and «country of origin of caviar: country in which a registered processing plant harvests roe of Acipenseriformes species to process caviar» as was agreed by the majority of the Standing Committee Working Group.

On the issue of Annex 3 to Resolution 12.7, opinions were divided on the regionalization of the Black Sea in accordance with the population boundaries of sturgeon species. The countries of the European Union and Ukraine isolate in the table the North-West Black Sea and Lower Danube River as a separate area, leaving not covered the rest of the Black Sea, as if there were absolutely no sturgeon, or other sturgeons belonged specifically to each country - Russia, Georgia, Abkhazia, Turkey - as endemic stock. However, anadromous sturgeon species are far migratory fish. The Russian Federation proposes to consider the Black Sea as a common area for shared sturgeon stock, separate from the Danube river, until relevant scientific information allowing to divide the sea into segments corresponding to the sturgeon population areas is available.

The decision of COP17 on this issue was to invite all Range States of Acipenseriformes to submit data relating to the content of the table contained in Annex 3 of Resolution 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) to the Secretariat to be considered at the next meeting of the Animals Committee.

The Russian Federation annually releases over 5 million sturgeon fingerlings to the rivers of the Azov-Black Sea basin (38 million to the Caspian Sea). Russia has extensive experience in genetic tagging and identification of sturgeon and other fish stocks. All brood-stocks of Russian sturgeon hatcheries have genetic passports. The Scientific Body of CITES has a national collection of more than 35,000 genetic specimen. Russia cooperates in the field of genetic tagging of sturgeons with the Caspian countries and has on-going joint projects with the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan. But there is no project with the European range State of shared sturgeon stock. In this regard, Russia proposes to carry out joint research with the Black Sea countries on the genetic identification of sturgeons in the Black Sea in order to determine the real population boundaries of sturgeon.

Concerning the protection of sturgeons, if necessary. Commercial catch of sturgeon species from wild shared populations within the Russian jurisdiction is prohibited since 2005 years (the Caspian countries also maintain a zero quota of commercial sturgeon catch for several years). The catch of sturgeon is allowed only for scientific research and for artificial reproduction. When research after the measurements and in vivo screening of genetic tissue sample, all samples of sturgeons released into the natural environment.

The Russian Government Decree (№ 978 of October 31, 2013) classified sturgeons as especially valuable water resources. Illegal production and trade of these species, their derivatives and products entail criminal punishment of up to three years in prison. The illegal movement across the customs border of these products is equal to the smuggling of explosives and weapons, and is punishable by imprisonment up to seven years and a fine of up to one million rubles (about US\$16,000), and in the case of such acts by an organized group - up to 12 years in prison and a fine.

Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU-fishing) is carried out by both a specialized fisheries protection organizations and the Border Service of the Federal Security Service (FSB), Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia and, if necessary, the Ministry of Defense.

On behalf of the Head of the Scientific Authorities of CITES in the Russian Federation for Acipenseriformes, Mikhail Glubokovskiy, Deputy Head of the Scientific Authorities of CITES in the Russian Federation for Acipenseriformes,

Report submitted by Olga Vilko ovilk@mail.ru

Turkey

Turkey has a very rich biodiversity because of its geographical location on the world and also because of its geological and morphological structure. This diversity is also valid for game and wildlife. The game and wildlife in Turkey are managed by General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks under the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs. Sustainability is our essential principle for the management of game and wildlife. Sustainable management, therefore, is only possible with the establishment of protection and exploitation balance.

Sustainable management of wildlife resources depends on successful conservation. For the successful implementation of conservation measures an efficient inspection and control mechanisms has been developed. Within the frame of this policy, wildlife rangers working in 15 regional and 81 provincial offices of the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs have been trained in inspection procedures and a handbook is prepared, published, and distributed to all provincial and regional offices in order to provide standardization. In addition, to develop an efficient control mechanism, necessary equipment such as guns, radios, binoculars, cameras, sleeping bags, tents, and field vehicles have been provided to all the rangers in the provincial and regional offices.

There are 20 wildlife breeding stations in Turkey for raising species of birds such as Bald Ibis, (*Geronticus eremita*), pheasants, partridges, and species of big mammals such as Anatolian Mouflon, red deer, roe deer, fallow deer, and gazelles. Wild animals raised in captivity are released into wild at selected sites according to IUCN guidelines for re-introduction and restocking purposes.

Turkey has been Party of the CITES Convention since 1996. International trade of Appendix I species is restricted by the Turkish National Law. It is only allowed for artificial propagation and scientific research purposes. Stopping or suspending the international trade or not giving quotas for endangered species may occur in cases of population decrease.

“Strengthening of Institutional Capacity on CITES Implementations EU Project” has been completed in 2013. Project Partner was Spain. The aim of the project was to strengthen the technical and institutional capacity of CITES implementation of all the authorities involved. Also, to increase the public awareness about what CITES is, its rules and conditions for the international trade of the specimens of the species regulated under the Convention. In this Project; a very complete and complex electronic permitting system was given to Turkey. Preparing of Central CITES Database program was one of the project’s main benchmarks. The trade monitoring and database system was established to issue the CITES permits and certificates electronically. CITES Database program has been working to issue CITES Permits since January 1, 2016.

The Canadian Guidebook was taken as a model; 10 Identification Guides and 543 identification sheets have been translated into Turkish and 300 copies of each one have been published and distributed among Customs, CITES Local Offices and related CITES institutions. 10.000 informative brochures, 1.000 posters and 5.000 booklets have been performed, published and distributed. A Website has been designed and established.

Hirudo medicinalis and *Galanthus elwesii* from Turkey were selected for inclusion within the Review of Significant Trade process following CoP16. The report was prepared by the Scientific and related Management Authorities. These reports are available as information documents.

Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes

CITES Management Authority has registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species (*Crossoptilon crossoptilon*, *Lophura edwardsi*, *Syrmaticus ellioti*, *Branta sandvicensis*, *Lophophorus impeianus*, *Syrmaticus humiae*, *Tragopan caboti*, *Crossoptilon mantchuricum*, *Callipepla californica*, *Branta canadensis*, *Syrmaticus mikado*, *Catreus wallichii*, *Polyplectron napoleonis*, *Lophura swinhoii*, *Anas platyrhynchos*) in captivity for commercial purposes. None of these species are subject to international trade.

Non-detriment findings. Scientific Authority evaluated the subject of “non detriment findings” before make a final decision. Export quotas of the natural flower bulbs and Medicinal Leeches are determined and approved by the Scientific Authority.

Activities of regional representatives/ Regional cooperation and priorities/ Meetings and workshops

Main Management Authority provides regional cooperation. CITES Authorities participate to the meetings or workshops about species. They prepare some projects and arrange meetings etc. Ministry of Forestry and

Water Affairs continues to prepare on a new EU Project on CITES implementations. CITES Authorities collaborate with relevant stakeholders and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs cooperate with WWF-Turkey to prepare on a new Project on CITES.

Turkey participates in Interpol operations for wild species and specimens. Main Management Authority (Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs) organized a National Interpol Plan and provide coordination with Interpol and related Authorities. The aim of the operation was to increase the public awareness about what CITES is, its rules and conditions for the international trade of the specimens of the species regulated under the Convention and to control of CITES trade to prevent illegal trade and provide the sustainability of biodiversity. After the operation; Main Management Authority send the Final Report to Interpol. Participating Authorities are; The Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (Center and Provincial Staff), The Ministry of Interior (Interpol, Police and Gendarmerie) and Ministry of Customs and Trade.