

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



Thirty-first meeting of the Animals Committee  
Online, 31 May, 1, 4, 21 and 22 June 2021

Regional matters

Regional report

EUROPE

1. This document has been submitted by the regional representatives for Europe, Dagmar Zíková (Czech Republic) and Mathias Lörtscher (Switzerland). This document reports only on activities undertaken in the Region since the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (Geneva, 17 – 28 August 2019).\*

General information

2. Animal Committee (AC) members: Mathias Lörtscher (Switzerland) and Dagmar Zíková (Czech Republic). Alternate members: Gerald Benyr (Austria) and Ruslan Novitsky (Belarus).
3. The representatives divide their duties as follows: Dagmar Zíková represents those Parties in the European Union (28 Parties consisting of the 27 Member States and the European Union itself); as Mathias Lörtscher has been elected as Chair of the Animals Committee, Ruslan Novitsky, as alternate, represents the remainder of Parties in the region that are not in the European Union (EU).

Activities of regional representatives

4. Dagmar Zíková as the Scientific Officer of the European Commission for CITES chaired the meetings of the EU CITES Scientific Review Group (see Annex 1) in the given period enabling her to keep close contact with all Scientific Authorities of the 27 EU Member States. Between September 2019 and December 2020, the Scientific Review Group has met five times.

Regional cooperation and priorities

5. 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).

Meetings and workshops

6. The Scientific Review Group (SRG) of the European Union, which comprises of representatives of the Scientific Authorities of the EU Member States and the European Commission, meets regularly in order to

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\* *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.*

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 EU is providing a large volume of bilateral support to developing countries and regions to protect biodiversity and manage protected areas. Since the adoption of the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking in 2016, significant new EU funds have been mobilised under the EU development and cooperation policy to support regional and international projects contributing to fight against wildlife crime.

This includes regional programmes against cross-border wildlife crime in Central and Eastern Africa, as well as in support of conservation for ACP countries<sup>1</sup> and support to specific countries (for example Guinea).

The EU global programme is designed to reinforce law enforcement and combatting wildlife and forest crime through financial support amounting to €43.5 million. The first component of this programme consists of reinforcing the operational capacities of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) against wildlife trafficking, through grants to Interpol and UNODC<sup>2</sup>, which are members of the Consortium alongside the CITES Secretariat, the World Customs Organisation and the World Bank. This component (amounting to €13.5 million) should improve wildlife and forest law enforcement in targeted countries as well as international coordination. The second component of this programme (amounting to €30 million) consists of support to civil society organisations active against wildlife trafficking in Asia, Africa and Latin America. €43 million have been allocated (under GPGC global and Intra ACP) to reduce illegal wildlife trafficking in 2018 and 2020: CSOs and CITES (e.g. support to MIKES+ hereafter) are the implementing agencies recipients.

The European Commission allocated €7 million for the period 2017 - 2020 to the CITES Tree Species Programme for direct financial assistance to Parties in taking conservation and management measures to ensure that their trade in timber, bark, extracts and other products from CITES-listed tree species is sustainable, legal and traceable.

The EU provides financial support to the project “Minimising the Illegal Killing of Elephants and other Endangered Species (MIKES)”. The programme is running in the period 2014-2018 (€12.3 million granted to the CITES Secretariat) ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-1193\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1193_en.htm)) followed by Intra-ACP Wildlife Trafficking MIKES+ since 2019, focusing on the protection of elephants and other CITES-listed African mammals throughout the continent (2019-2024, €9.9 million to CITES secretariat).

The EU provided financial support (€ 1.1 million) to the project "LIFE for Danube Sturgeons"<sup>3</sup> (2016-2020) aiming at improving enforcement of laws and regulations against sturgeon poaching and illegal caviar trade in Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine. The LIFE programme has also been providing considerable support to projects against the illegal killing of birds throughout the EU.

In November 2017, a call for proposals<sup>4</sup> for projects aiming to boost operational activities of the Member States on environmental crime including wildlife crime was launched under the EU **Internal Security Fund - Police programme**, with an overall budget of €2.5 million. It funded the EU Wildlife Cybercrime project<sup>5</sup> (863 000€ EU grant – 2019-2021) led by WWF and TRAFFIC. The project aims to disrupt and deter criminals and their networks trafficking wildlife in, or via, the EU using the internet and parcel delivery services. The project contributed to CITES COP18 decisions on wildlife crime linked to the internet.

Several projects have been funded to support directly the functioning of CITES:

- Strengthening participation and implementation of developing countries in multilateral environmental decision-making
- Species+ and monitoring of the status of several CITES-listed species

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<sup>1</sup> **African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States**

<sup>2</sup> **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**

<sup>3</sup> <https://danube-sturgeons.org/the-project/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/isfp/topics/isfp-2017-ag-env.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://wwf.be/fr/a-propos-wwf-belgique/resultats-activites/wildlife-cybercrime-EN>

- Support to the Secretariat for the implementation of CoP 17 and CoP 18 decisions and further capacity building for developing countries – an allocation of €2.5 million was made available for the triennium 2017 - 2019, and additional €2,5 million have been made available for 2020-2022.

## **Revision of EU rules governing trade in Appendix II specimens**

### **Revision of EU Wildlife Trade Regulations**

- The Commission is currently reviewing Commission Implementing Regulation (Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 of 4 May 2006 ([Official Journal OJ L 166, 19.6.2006](#), p.1) to reflect specific changes to CITES resolutions adopted by CoP 18. The adoption of the new Commission Regulation is expected for the second half of 2021.
- Decisions taken by CoP 18 on listing proposals have been reflected in [Commission Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2117 of 29 November 2019](#) amending Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 of 9 December 1996.
- Decisions taken by SC 69 were reflected in [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1587 of 24 September 2019](#) (so called Suspension Regulation).

### **Other activities**

UNEP-WCMC has been contracted to provide reports on the biological and trade data regarding 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 can be accessed on the European Commission website: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/reports\\_en.htm](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. Report on illegal trade are also available at the above European Commission website.

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](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/home_en.htm)

[The Commission organised several public stakeholder meetings \(28/01/2019, 08/12/2019 and 28/10/2020\) to consult stakeholders on their views in regard future trade in ivory. A public consultation ran from 25/01 to 25/02/2021 to request input from relevant stakeholders on the last proposal from the Commission on ivory trade, which would ban trade into, in and from the EU in ivory, save for some exceptions that would be strictly monitored. The input received from this last consultation is still being processed before a final proposal will be published for adoption in 2021.](#)

## **Regional cooperation and priorities - Meetings and workshops**

### **The European Union Scientific Review Group (SRG)**

The Scientific Review Group of the European Union with the CITES Scientific Authorities of the 27 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 several animal species. 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, including through working groups for specific taxa, to deliver advice on scientific issues. During the first half of 2021 the SRG did not hold any meetings as the position of the scientific officer in the European Commission has remained vacant.

The agendas and meeting documents of the SRG, including reviews carried out by UNEP-WCMC as a basis for the SRG work can be found on the European Commission register of expert groups website <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=365&NewSearch=1&NewSearch=1>

Further information on work done by the SRG can be found under the following link: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/srg\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/cites/srg_en.htm)