

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

SUMMARY RECORD

Opening of the meeting

Opening remarks of the Chair and the Secretary-General..... *No document*

The Chair of the Animals Committee and the Secretary-General gave opening addresses for this first online meeting of the Animals Committee.

The AC Chair (Mr. Mathias Lörtscher) explained the procedure of the online meeting and reminded participants that there is only one meeting before the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19). The Secretary-General (Ms. Ivonne Higuero) provided an update on the Secretariat's activities, noting all the challenges overcome during the COVID-19 pandemic. A minute of silence was held to commemorate colleagues and Animal Committee members that passed away recently.

Administrative and financial matters

1. Confirmation of the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair..... *No document*

The Committee noted that, through intersessional decision-making, the Animals Committee had confirmed the election of its Chair (Mr. Mathias Lörtscher, representative for Europe) and Vice-Chair (Mr. Hugh Robertson, representative for Oceania).

2. Declaration of conflict of interest *No document*

The Secretariat invited the members of the Animals Committee to declare any conflict of interest. No conflict of interest was declared.

The Committee noted that no Member declared a financial interest that he or she considers calls into question his or her impartiality, objectivity or independence regarding any subject on the agenda for the meeting.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

3. Rules of Procedure..... AC31 Doc. 3

The AC Chair introduced the Rules of Procedure of the Committee in document AC31 Doc. 3 as amended at its 30th meeting (Geneva, July 2018). These Rules of Procedure remain valid for this meeting. He drew attention to information document AC31/PC25 Inf. 1 that provides guidance on the application of Rules of Procedure in an online meeting.

The Committee noted that its Rules of Procedure, as amended at its 30th meeting (Geneva, July 2018) and set out in the Annex to document AC31 Doc. 3, remain valid for this meeting.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

4. Agenda

4.1 Adoption of the agenda..... AC31 Doc. 4.1 (Rev. 1)

The AC Chair introduced the agenda for this meeting, presented in document AC31 Doc. 4.1 (Rev. 1).

The Committee adopted its agenda as set out in document AC31 Doc. 4.1 (Rev. 1).

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

4.2 Annotated agenda..... AC31 Doc. 4.2

The AC Chair introduced the annotated agenda for this meeting, presented in document AC31 Doc. 4.2.

The Committee noted the annotated agenda as set out in document AC31 Doc. 4.2.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

5. Working programme AC31 Doc. 5

The AC Chair introduced the working programme as set out in document AC31 Doc. 5.

The Committee adopted its working programme as set out in document AC31 Doc. 5.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

6. Admission of observers AC31 Doc. 6

The AC Chair invited the Committee to note the list of observer organizations that have been invited to participate in the meeting, as presented in document AC31 Doc. 6.

The Committee noted the list of observer organizations that had been invited to participate in the meeting as set out in document AC31 Doc. 6.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

Strategic matters

7. Animals Committee strategic planning for 2020-2022 (CoP18-CoP19)

7.1 Resolutions and Decisions directed to the Animals Committee..... AC31 Doc. 7.1

The AC Chair introduced the two Annexes on Resolutions and Decisions directed to the Animals Committee, of document AC31 Doc. 7.1. Annex 1 provides an overview of the Resolutions in effect containing instructions that are directed or relevant to the Animals Committee. Annex 2 provides a list of all Decisions in effect directed to the Animals Committee that might require its inputs or assistance.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 7.1.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

7.2 Animals Committee workplan..... AC31 Doc. 7.2

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 7.2 that presents a list of instructions directed to the Animals Committee, or that may require that it be consulted or informed. The document also identifies a lead or co-lead among the members of the Animals Committee for each of the instructions that were agreed upon through its intersessional decision-making. The Committee had formally established six intersessional working groups and had also agreed that several items in the work plan could benefit from informal discussions between members and invited experts prior to the meeting. However, none of these informal discussion groups were required in the end.

The Committee noted the 2020-2022 workplan, including the identified leads or co-leads among the members of the Animals Committee, as shown in Annexes 1 and 2 to document AC31 Doc. 7.2.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

7.3 Preparation of the report of the Chair of the Animals Committee for the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties..... *No document*

The AC Chair informed the Committee of his intention to contact the leads or co-leads to provide an update on the progress made, which the Chair will then use to produce the report.

The Committee noted the oral update by the Chair of the Animals Committee.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

Strategic matters

8. CITES Strategic Vision* [Decision 18.25] AC31 Doc. 8

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 8/PC25 Doc. 9 that contains a mapping of the CITES Strategic Vision's objectives against valid CITES Resolutions and Decisions in Annex 1 and a list of reporting requirements in Annex 2. The document also provides an overview of the process used and the results of the mapping exercise.

The PC representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Ms. Núñez), Brazil, China and the United States of America noted the importance of this work and agreed that the mapping captured the CITES policies that support the Strategic Vision. They supported the onward submission of this mapping exercise to the Standing Committee to support its work on the drafting of new indicators for the Strategic Vision. China suggested specific edits to the mapping that were endorsed by the Committees. China and the United States highlighted the importance of objective 3.7 and noted that the mapping showed a gap there that Parties would need to focus on. Brazil noted that the list of reporting requirements in Annex 2 was more than 20 pages long and queried whether Parties could indeed comply to all these requirements and whether they all contributed to the Strategic Vision.

The Committees endorsed the mapping of the *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030 objectives* against the CITES Resolutions and Decisions, as presented in Annex 1 to document AC31 Doc. 8/ PC25 Doc. 9 with the addition of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on *Identification Manual* and Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings* under objectives 2.2 and 2.3, and in particular the placement of the species-specific Resolutions and Decisions under objective 2.5 and objective 3.5. The Committees requested the Secretariat to submit Annex 1 as revised above and Annex 2 to document AC31 Doc. 8/PC25 Doc. 9 to the Standing Committee for its consideration.

9. Appendix-I listed species* [Decision 18.29] AC31 Doc. 9 and Addendum

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 9/PC25 Doc. 10 that provides updates on the implementation of Decision 18.28. The Annex to the document presents a technical report by the United Nations Environment Programme-Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) on the criteria and methodology used for the *Rapid assessment of the conservation status of, and legal and illegal trade in, species and subspecies included in Appendix I*. The addendum by the Secretariat presents the results of the rapid assessment conducted by UNEP-WCMC, in the form of a list of 31 Appendix-I listed species that are proposed to be selected for further assessment.

The AC representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), echoed by China, Israel and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, supported the creation of an in-session working group that should focus on examining the criteria and methodology for the rapid assessment. Canada, China, Mexico and Conservation Analytics supported the proposed working group's focus and noted that it was premature at this stage to establish a list of priority taxa based on information document AC31 Inf. 6/PC25 Inf. 8.

The AC representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) noted that the work for the Appendix-I assessment should not simply focus on trade restrictions but should include active work to improve the conservation status of the species. She also raised the issue of including non-wild sources in the study, while the United Kingdom suggested further work on the criterion of scale of trade vs. population. The AC representative for North

America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) noted that the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees should consult their members when they prepare their report to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on this issue.

The Committees established an in-session working group on Appendix-I listed species with the mandate to:

- a) review the criteria and methodology used for the rapid assessment presented in information document AC31 Inf. 6/PC25 Inf. 8 and its Annexes 1 and 2, together with the additional criterion mentioned in paragraph 9 to the addendum of document AC31 Doc. 9/PC25 Doc. 10; and
- b) provide guidance to the Secretariat on its further implementation of Decision 18.28, as outlined in paragraphs 7 to 9 of document AC31 Doc. 9/PC25 Doc. 10 and its addendum.

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Africa of the Plants Committee (Mr. Mahamane), representative for Asia of the Plants Committee (Ms. Atikah), alternate representative of the Plants Committee for Asia (Ms. Zeng) (**co-Chair**), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Ms. Núñez Neyra), representatives for Europe of the Animals Committee [Mr. Loertscher (**co-Chair**) and Ms. Zíková], alternate representative for Asia of the Animals Committee (Ms. Terada), nomenclature specialist of the Animals Committee (Mr. van Dijk);

Parties: Argentina, Austria, Canada, China, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, and Zimbabwe; and

Observers: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), International Union for Conservation of Nature; Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Center for Biological Diversity, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Conservation Analytics, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation, German Society of Herpetology, Humane Society International, Natural Resources Defense Council, Parrot Breeders Association of Southern Africa, Safari Club International, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Parrot Trust, and World Wide Fund for Nature.

Later in the meeting, the Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document AC31/PC25 Com. 1. The Secretariat proposed two edits that were endorsed by the Committees: the replacement of “request” with “invite” in the chapeau of the recommendations and the replacement of “the Conference of the Parties” with “CITES” in paragraph a). The AC representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) and the PC representative for North America (Ms. Gnam) proposed different texts to replace “including the possible development of an ongoing Appendix-I assessment process to validate the efficacy of listings” in paragraph b) ii). Humane Society International and the Wildlife Conservation Society noted that it would indeed be useful to delete the reference to the “efficacy of listings”. After discussion between the two representatives, Israel and the Cheetah Conservation Fund, Humane Society International and the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Committees agreed on the compromise text of “including the possible development of an ongoing assessment for Appendix-I listings under the CITES provisions”.

The Committees adopted the recommendations in document AC31/PC25 Com. 1 amended as follows.

The Committees agreed to invite the Secretariat to undertake the following:

- a) to continue the collaboration with the University of Applied Sciences Van Hall Larenstein (Netherlands) in carrying out the analysis of a selection of Appendix-I species and use these case studies to compile possible measures that CITES could adopt within its mandate to improve the conservation status of potential species of concern; and
- b) in consultation with the Plants and Animals Committees, through their chairs, and invited experts to:
 - i) further refine the methodology and its criteria for carrying out an assessment of species listed in Appendix I that might benefit from measures adopted by the Conference of the Parties, taking into account the suggestions from the working group; and

- ii) draft decisions for submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to ensure the further advancement of this work, including the possible development of an ongoing assessment for Appendix-I listings under the CITES provisions.

10. Capacity-building* [Decision 18.40] AC31 Doc. 10 and Addendum (Rev. 1)

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 10/PC25 Doc. 11 that provides an overview of the implementation of the Decisions on capacity-building and updates on the *Master's course on Management and Conservation of Species in Trade: The International Framework*; the CITES website; the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP); and the work of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on capacity-building, where the Animals and Plants Committees are represented by four members.

The addendum by the Secretariat presents an analysis of the information collected in support of the implementation of Decision 18.46, which includes information from other Multilateral Environmental Agreements and their capacity-building efforts, the responses to the questionnaire in Notification to the Parties No. 2020/027, and information on capacity-building needs provided by Parties.

The PC representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Ms. Nuñez) agreed with the proposed recommendations and stated that the implementation of a conceptual framework for capacity-building was fundamental for the Convention.

Mexico noted that Parties should be able to do their own assessment of their capacity-building needs to avoid increasing the reporting burden of Parties. It proposed the following edits to paragraph 6 b) of the revised addendum AC31 Doc. 10/PC25 Doc. 11 Add. (Rev. 1): "6. b) *A CITES capacity-building conceptual framework or strategy encompassing a wide variety of elements and developed with wide stakeholder consultation is needed. The framework or strategy should consist mainly in a simple needs-gathering system, consider elements for both face-to-face and online means of capacity building delivery and take into account the concerns raised by Parties in the Annexes of AC31 Doc. 10/PC32 Doc. 11.*"

The United States of America highlighted that Parties supported the establishment of a capacity-building framework and announced that they would financially support a workshop. The United States proposed the following edits to the revised recommendation in paragraph 6 b) of the revised recommendations in the Addendum (Rev. 1) to document AC31 Doc. 10/PC25 Doc. 11 (new text is underlined; text to be deleted is shown in ~~strike-through~~): "*The CITES Parties, collectively and individually, face a significant and diverse set of capacity-building challenges. In order to meet the goals of the CITES Strategic Vision (2021-2030), there is great need for coordination, transparency, and accountability in capacity building activities which can be achieved through the development and use of a CITES capacity-building conceptual framework to prioritize and guide capacity building efforts or and from which targeted capacity building strategies can be developed strategy. The conceptual framework should encompass encompassing a wide variety of elements enabling conditions that are prerequisite for the functioning of CITES, and which should be collaboratively developed by Parties, and with additional stakeholder consultation asis-needed. The framework or strategy implementation strategies should consider elements for both face-to-face and online means of capacity building delivery. must be considered in the framework.*"

The Committees noted the edits to paragraph 6 b) of the revised addendum AC31 Doc. 10/PC25 Doc. 11 Add. (Rev. 1) proposed by Mexico and the United States of America:

The Committees agreed that:

- a) some form of CITES capacity-building conceptual framework (strategy) is needed;
- b) a wide variety of elements must be considered when developing the capacity-building conceptual framework;
- c) wide stakeholder consultation is needed for the development of the capacity-building framework; and
- d) elements for both face-to-face and online means of capacity building delivery must be considered in the framework.

The Committees invited the Standing Committee to consider the views of the Animals and Plants Committees in its discussions through the continued participation of their four representatives in the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on capacity-building.

Cooperation with organizations and Multilateral Environmental Agreements

11. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)* [Resolution Conf. 18.4] *No document*

Drawing attention to information document AC31 Inf. 4/PC25 Inf. 5, the Chair of the Animals Committee provided an update on recent activities by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) that have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic since no plenary meeting could be held in 2020. The next IPBES plenary meeting (IPBES-8 Plenary) is scheduled to take place online in June 2021 and will be attended by the Secretariat. Concerning the IPBES Assessment of the sustainable use of wild species, the AC Chair noted that a draft of the Assessment had been made available for external review from 16 April to 10 June 2021. This was drawn to the attention of Parties in Notification No. 2021/036 and the AC Chair reminded Parties that the CITES community needed to comment on this draft. However, due to the nature and timing of the review, it was noted that it would not be possible to provide a substantive collective CITES input to this process, but that the Secretariat, in cooperation with the SC, AC & PC Chairs, will ensure that comments are made to try and ensure that all references to CITES are accurate.

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation noted that, while some faults and inaccuracies remained, the IPBES assessment was an impressive report with many success stories mentioning CITES.

The Committees noted the oral report of the Chair of the Animals Committee.

12. Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative [Decision 18.58] AC31 Doc. 12

The Secretariat introduced document AC31 Doc. 12 that provides updates on the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI) and the development of a dedicated Programme of Work (POW) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The document also presents CMS/Resolution 13.4 on Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative in Annex 2.

The Secretariat provided an oral update on the outcomes of the discussion of the ACI POW by the Standing Committee at its 73rd meeting, referring to documents SC73 Doc. 14 and SC73 SR, and informed the Animals Committee what has been accomplished in fulfilment of Decision 18.56.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 12 and the oral update of the Secretariat.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

Interpretation and implementation matters

General compliance and enforcement

13. Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species [Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18)]

- 13.1 Overview of the Review of Significant Trade AC31 Doc. 13.1 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 13.1 that provides an update on the status of the Review of Significant Trade (RST). An updated overview of all cases since the 30th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC30) is set out in Annex 1 with notes on reviews that were completed since AC30. A summary of all range State/species combinations for fauna subject to a recommendation to suspend trade under RST or for which the review process is currently ongoing is included in Annex 2. The document and its addendum provide an overview on the implementation of Decisions 17.108 (Rev. CoP18) to 17.110 (Rev. CoP18) on the development of an RST Tracking and Management database, a user-friendly guide to RST and a comprehensive training module on RST respectively. The

RST Tracking Management database was finalized in October 2020 and will be made public when all the documents have been added to the database along with the guide and training module on RST.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 13.1 and its addendum and welcomed the progress made in the implementation of Decision 17.108 on the development of the tracking and management database for the Review of Significant Trade.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

13.2 Species selected following CoP15 and CoP16 *No document*

and

13.3 Species selection following CoP17 *No document*

The AC Chair provided an oral report regarding agenda items 13.2 and 13.3. In November 2020, the Secretariat produced information document SC2020 Inf. 11 which provided details of the 77 species/country combinations from a total of 33 Parties that are currently in the Review of Significant Trade, of which 62 cases related to fauna and 14 to flora. The Secretariat indicated that all ongoing cases have now been subject to recommendations by the Animals and Plants Committees. To date, new information has been submitted by the following Parties: Algeria, Benin, Ghana, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Morocco, Mozambique, Togo, and Tunisia. The Secretariat is currently evaluating all ongoing cases to determine whether the RST recommendations have been implemented by the range State concerned, and will consult with the members of the Animals Committee so that all of these cases can be considered at the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

The Committee noted the oral report by its Chair in relation to agenda items 13.2 and 13.3, as well as the contents of information document SC2020 Inf. 11.

No other intervention was made during discussion of this item.

13.4 Species selection following CoP18 AC31 Doc. 13.4

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 13.4 that presents reports by the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in accordance with paragraph 1 a) of Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species*. The reports provide a summary from the CITES Trade Database of annual report statistics available in Annex 1 and an extended analysis of trade to inform the preliminary selection of species/country combinations in Annex 2. Annexes 1 and Annex 2 were produced early in 2020, based on trade data for the period 2014-2018.

The AC representatives for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson), and Israel expressed concern that having the Committee Chair doing a pre-selection process could end up with a bias towards taxonomic groups that the Chair is particularly interested in and advocated for having a pre-selection process during the first regular meeting of the Committee after each meeting of the Conference of the Parties as set out in the RST Resolution. Humane Society International (HSI), also on behalf of Born Free Foundation, Born Free USA, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Investigation Agency US, Environmental Investigation Agency UK, Eurogroup for Animals, Natural Resources Defense Council, ProWildlife, Sea Shepherd Legal, Species Survival Network, and Wildlife Impact, echoed those concerns. The AC representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) indicated that transparency of the RST process was essential and could be done online if necessary.

The AC Chair explained that the pre-selection in document AC31 Doc. 13.4 was no longer relevant and that the selection process will take place as described in Resolution Conf. 12.8 (Rev. CoP18) after the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc 13.4 and further noted that the selection of new species/country combinations for review will be postponed until the first regular meeting of the Committee after the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

13.5 Country-wide Significant Trade Reviews* AC31 Doc. 13.5

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 13.5/PC25 Doc. 15.6 that presents parallels between the work on country-wide Significant Trade Reviews, capacity-building (Decisions 18.38 to 18.46) and the Compliance Assistance Programme (Decisions 18.68 to 18.70).

The PC representative for North America (Ms. Gnam) supported the Secretariat's recommendations in the document but stressed that the Chairs needed to consult with their members prior to reporting on this issue. The Wildlife Conservation Society, speaking also on behalf of the Animal Welfare Institute, Cheetah Conservation Fund, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, Environment Investigation Agency, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Natural Resources Defense Council, Pro Wildlife, Sea Shepherd Legal, Species Survival Network and the World Wide Fund for Nature expressed their strong support for the Review of Significant Trade process and concern that only the Committees would draft recommendations without input from Parties and observers.

The Committees requested the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees to consult their Members and the leads on Decision 18.72 as per their respective workplans (AC31 Doc. 7.2 and PC25 Doc. 7.2) to represent the views of the Committees on these issues through the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on capacity-building and at the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee and to work with the Secretariat to develop recommendations on country-wide Significant Trade Reviews and present the outcomes of this work to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

Regulation of trade

14. Non-detriment findings

14.1 Report of the Secretariat*

[Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17)

and Decisions 18.132 and 18.133] AC31 Doc. 14.1 and Addendum

The Secretariat introduced document AC31 Doc. 14.1/PC25 Doc. 17 and its addendum that provide updates on the implementation of Decisions 18.132 to 18.134 on guidance for making non-detriment findings (NDF). The addendum presents the terms of references for a Technical Advisory Committee and draft decisions to extend the work beyond the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Annex to the addendum presents a summary of responses to consultations with the Animals and Plants Committees and with Parties, a synthesis of gaps and weaknesses in existing NDF guidance, and workstreams to address these gaps. The Animals and Plants Committees were invited to review the Secretariat's suggestions regarding priority gaps and weaknesses, and corresponding workstreams, as proposed in the Annex to the addendum; review the draft terms of reference of the Technical Advisory Committee; and consider the adoption of the draft decisions proposed in paragraph 9 of the addendum.

The AC representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), the PC representative for North America (Ms. Gnam), and Germany supported the work on NDFs, the convening of an NDF workshop and the establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee, and stated that efforts should be led by Parties and Committee Members. The PC representative for North America (Ms. Gnam) referred to information document AC31 Inf. 22/PC25 Inf. 20. China also supported the work on NDFs and proposed another thematic group on geographical and language coverage and further referred to information document AC31 Inf. 21/PC25 Inf. 19.

The document and its addendum by the Secretariat provide updates on the implementation of Decisions 18.132 to 18.134. The addendum presents draft terms of reference for a Technical Advisory Committee and draft decisions to extend the work beyond CoP19. The Annex to the addendum presents a summary of responses to consultations with the Animals and Plants Committees and with Parties, a synthesis of gaps and weaknesses, and workstreams to address these gaps. The Animals and Plants Committees will be invited to review the Secretariat's suggestions regarding priority gaps and weaknesses, and corresponding workstreams, as proposed in the Annex to the addendum; review the draft terms of reference of the Technical Advisory Committee; and consider the adoption of the draft decisions proposed in paragraph 9 of the addendum.

The Committees established an in-session working group on non-detriment findings with the mandate to:

- a) review the Secretariat's suggestions regarding priority gaps and weaknesses and corresponding workstreams, as presented in the Annex to the Addendum of document AC31 Doc. 14.1/PC25 Doc. 17;
- b) review the terms of reference of the Technical Advisory Committee in paragraph 8 of the Addendum;
- c) consider the draft decisions in paragraph 9 of the Addendum for submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) formulate recommendations for consideration by the Animals and Plants Committees later in this meeting.

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Africa for the Plants Committee (Ms. Khayota), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean of the Animals Committee (Mr. Ramadori), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean of the Plants Committee (Ms. Núñez Neyra), representative for Europe of the Animals Committee (Ms. Zíková), alternate representative for Europe of the Plants Committee (Mr. Wolf) (**co-Chair**), representative for North America of the Plants Committee (Ms. Gnam), alternate representative for North America of the Animals Committee (Ms. Lougheed) (**co-Chair**), alternate representative for Oceania of the Animals Committee (Ms. McIntyre), nomenclature specialist for the Animals Committee (Mr. van Dijk);

Parties: Argentina, Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, South Africa, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, and Zimbabwe; and

Observers: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), International Union for Conservation of Nature; Animal Welfare Institute, Blue Resources Trust, Born Free USA, Center for Biological Diversity, CIC – International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, Cheetah Conservation Fund, Dallas Safari Club, Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Investigation Agency US, European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation, ForestBased Solutions, Forest Trends, German Society of Herpetology, Humane Society International, International Wood Products Association, Safari Club International, Sea Shepherd Legal, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Parrot Trust, World Wide Fund for Nature, and Zoological Society of London.

Later in the meeting, the AC alternate representative for North America (Ms. Lougheed) introduced document AC31/PC25 Com. 3. The discussion between the AC Chair, the AC representatives for Europe (Ms. Zíková), North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson), the AC nomenclature specialist (Mr. van Dijk), the PC representatives for Europe (Mr. Carmo) and North America (Ms. Gnam), Canada, China and the United States of America focused on the draft decisions and specifically on the establishment and reporting lines of the Technical Advisory Committee. IWMC-World Conservation Trust noted that the term "Committee" was probably incorrect since, within the context of CITES, Committees refer to the Standing, Animals and Plants Committees.

Germany announced that it was providing funding for an international expert workshop on non-detriment findings.

The Committees agreed the recommendations in document AC31/PC25 Com. 3 with the following amendments.

The Committees agreed to recommend that an ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee be established to advise the Secretariat on the implementation of Decision 18.132. The Committees further agreed

that the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees will advise the Secretariat on the modalities, terms of reference (ToR) and timing for the establishment of the ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee. The Committees recommended that the additional priorities and workstreams suggested in document AC31/PC25 Com. 3, as well as the proposed prioritization, be considered when establishing final priorities and workstreams for implementing Decision 18.132.

The Committees invited the Secretariat to verify whether the term “Committee” or “Group” should be used in the context of the establishment of an advisory body and amend the name of the ad hoc technical advisory body accordingly, if necessary.

The Committees agreed to submit the following draft decisions on non-detriment findings guidance to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as proposed in document AC31/PC25 Com. 3 and amended by the Chair of the Animals Committee, the Plants Committee representative for the North American region (Ms. Gnam), and China:

19.AA Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) subject to external funding, address priorities in capacity-building related to non-detriment findings (NDF) agreed by the Secretariat and the ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), in consultation with the Animals and Plants Committees and Parties, by:
 - i) continuing to support the ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee through which the Animals and Plants Committees provided support and advice for implementing Decisions 18.132 to 18.134;
 - ii) organizing in consultation with the ad hoc TAC an international expert workshop on non-detriment findings to review, advance or complete draft guidance materials on NDFs; and
 - iii) undertaking targeted research in support of the development of new or updated NDF guidance materials in close collaboration with the ad hoc TAC, relevant experts, Parties and organizations;
- b) compile and present the results of the work under paragraph a) to the Animals and Plants Committees for their review and make suggestions on how best to use the outputs to assist Scientific Authorities in the making of NDFs;
- c) make available to Parties on the CITES website the NDF guidance materials resulting from the implementation of the present Decision;
- d) develop a strategy and feedback mechanism for Parties and the wider CITES community to share experiences with using NDF guidance materials, which should allow the Animals and Plants Committees to make recommendations pertaining to review and update the NDF materials as may be needed; and
- e) consult the Animals and Plants Committees on the implementation of the present Decision and make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties as appropriate.

19.BB Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

The Animals and Plants Committees shall:

- a) continue the ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) established under the recommendations in document AC31/PC25 Com. 3 through which the Animals and Plants Committees provided support and advice for implementing Decisions 18.132 to 18.134, review the functioning of the ad hoc TAC, and make any appropriate decisions to ensure continued advice and assistance for the implementation of Decisions 19.AA to 19.CC;

- b) participate as appropriate in the international expert workshop on NDFs where draft guidance materials are to be reviewed, advanced or completed;
- c) review and make recommendations concerning: the outcomes of the international expert workshop on NDFs; the use of its outputs in support of the making of NDFs by Scientific Authorities; and their publication on the CITES website;
- d) based on the strategy and feedback from Parties and the wider CITES community on experiences with using NDF guidance materials, review and update NDF materials as may be needed; and
- e) report on these activities at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19.CC Directed to Parties

Parties are encouraged to:

- a) provide any help and information regarding methodologies, tools, scientific information, expertise and any other resources used to formulate NDFs in order to contribute to such a workshop;
- b) make use of the guidance materials on NDFs resulting from the implementation of Decisions 19.AA and 19.BB and participate as appropriate in the feedback mechanism on NDF guidance, to be developed by the Secretariat as referred to in Decision 19.AA, paragraph d); and
- c) provide financial and technical support for the implementation of Decision 19.AA, including for an international expert workshop on non-detriment findings.

14.2 Publication of a management report for common water monitors (*Varanus salvator*) in peninsular Malaysia AC31 Doc. 14.2

and

14.3 Publication of a management report for reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*) in peninsular Malaysia AC31 Doc. 14.3

Malaysia introduced document AC31 Doc. 14.2 that presents a management report for common water monitors (*Varanus salvator*) in peninsular Malaysia with information on the biological attributes of *V. salvator*, population size and dynamics, and the monitoring and management systems used to ensure sustainable trade. Malaysia noted information documents AC31 Inf. 13 and Inf. 14 submitted by the European Union and acknowledged that additional scientific information for the species is necessary and will continue to improve the data collection.

Malaysia then introduced document AC31 Doc. 14.3 that presents a management report for reticulated pythons (*Python reticulatus*) in peninsular Malaysia with information on the biological attributes of *P. reticulatus*, results of different monitoring methodologies, and an adaptive management plan to ensure sustainable trade.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) suggested either an in-depth review of the documents in an in-session working group or using these management reports as case studies for the NDF workshop envisaged under agenda item 14.1. Canada proposed comments and feedback be provided to Malaysia, instead of an in-depth review of the documents in an in session working group. Canada, Germany, Indonesia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America aligned themselves with the comment made regarding using these reports as case studies for the NDF workshop referred to under item 14.1.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) and the alternate representative for Europe (Mr. Benyr), echoed by Germany, further expressed concern about the level of quotas and whether they are not set too high. With regards to the reticulated python, Germany felt it necessary to combine the slaughterhouse monitoring data with field data to detect local population changes.

Canada, Indonesia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) supported the proposed quotas for *V. salvator* and *P. reticulatus*, and the publication of these reports on the CITES website by the Secretariat. Switzerland supported the continuous harvest and field monitoring of *V. salvator*, stating it was a sustainable and practical approach involving local harvesters. IUCN offered to support Malaysia in making NDFs by facilitating technical assistance, and providing detailed feedback, suggestions and follow up studies by IUCN experts.

The Committee noted documents AC31 Doc. 14.2 and AC31 Doc. 14.3 and encouraged Malaysia to submit these management reports at the upcoming international expert workshop on non-detriment findings (NDF) as case studies.

15. Identification materials* [Decision 18.137] AC31 Doc. 15 and Addendum

The co-chairs of the joint intersessional working group of the Animals and Plants Committees on identification materials (the AC representative for Oceania, Mr. Robertson, and the PC representative for North America, Ms. Gnam) introduced document AC31 Doc. 15/PC25 Doc. 18 and its addendum and provided information on the implementation of Decision 17.161, paragraph c) and progress on Decision 18.135. They drew attention to new and additional species identification guides from Parties that have been added to the CITES Virtual College. They presented to the Committees a new proposed draft resolution on *Materials for the identification of specimens of CITES-listed species* as set out in the Annex to the addendum.

The AC representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) and China supported the draft resolution and suggested some edits. The AC representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and the PC representatives for Africa (Mr. Mahamane) and for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Ms. Nuñez Neyra) also supported the draft resolution and the establishment of an in-session working group.

The Committees established an in-session working group on identification materials with the mandate to:

- a) review the proposed draft resolution contained in the Annex to document AC31 Doc. 15/PC25 Doc. 18, Addendum and, if needed, revise it for consideration of the Animals and Plants Committee and onward submission to the Standing Committee; and
- b) draft or revise decisions on identification materials for submission to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Europe of the Animals Committee (Ms. Zíková), representative for North America of the Plants Committee (Ms. Gnam) (**co-Chair**), representative for Oceania of the Animals Committee (Mr. Robertson) (**co-Chair**);

Parties: China, Singapore, and United States of America; and

Observers: International Union for Conservation of Nature; Animal Welfare Institute, Humane Society International, and World Resources Institute.

Later in the meeting, the PC representative for North America (Ms. Gnam) introduced document AC31/PC25 Com. 2 and proposed an additional edit to the draft resolution. The AC representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson) pointed out that some of the bracketed text in the draft decisions may not be necessary if the Conference of the Parties adopts the draft resolution.

The Committees agreed to submit to the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting the draft resolution and draft decisions in document AC31/PC25 Com. 2 with the following amendment:

- insert “to the extent possible” in paragraph 4 a) of the draft resolution that should read: “provide identification information to the extent possible in the proposals for amendment of Appendices including information as outlined in paragraphs C 1. “taxonomy”, 3. “species characteristics”, and 9 “information on similar species” in Annex 6 to Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17) and the Annex to this Resolution;”

The Committees further agreed to, if necessary, mandate their Chairs, with the assistance of the in-session working group members, to continue to draft the proposed new resolution on identification materials, and submit it to the Standing Committee for inputs and onward submission to the Conference of the Parties.

16. Identification and traceability of sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.) [Decision 16.137 (Rev. CoP18)] AC31 Doc. 16 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 16 that presents the terms of reference for the study called for in Decision 16.136 (Rev. CoP18). The terms of reference for the study were revised by the Animals Committee by postal procedure and finalized in consultation with the Chair. The addendum contains the draft study by WWF entitled *Identification of species and hybrids, source and geographical origin of sturgeon and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.) specimens and products in trade*.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), the representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomed the study that met the terms of reference set up by the Animals Committee. The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) had two minor comments on the text, regarding points i) and ii) under 5.1 of the document.

Switzerland suggested the publication of a Notification asking Parties to identify laboratories within their country that are able and willing to do fatty acid profiling and stable isotope analysis. The Secretariat could then publish a list of these laboratories on the secure part of the CITES website. The World Wide Fund for Nature highlighted its recently published report that discusses the continued illegal trade in Acipenseriformes spp. that poses both a conservation risk and often defrauds consumers.

The Committee endorsed the study on *Identification of species and hybrids, source and geographical origin of sturgeon and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.) specimens and products in trade* in the Annex to addendum of document AC31 Doc. 16 with the following changes: under 5.1 “Suggested adjustment of current labelling in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17)”, points i) and ii) should read as follows:

- i) That marking should be ~~more~~ standardized and particular specifications for the design of labels are given [as already noted in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17)];
- ii) That labels are ~~centrally~~ produced by companies authorized by the national CITES Management Authority.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to make the study available to the intersessional working group of the Standing Committee on labelling system for trade in caviar. The Committee further requested the Secretariat to publish a Notification that asks Parties to reach out to laboratories within their country and inform the Secretariat about capacities to conduct forensic analysis such as “fatty acid profiling” and “stable isotope analysis”, as well as to collect information on readiness to analyse samples and then publish this list on the secure part of the CITES webpage.

17. Specimens produced through biotechnology* [Decision 18.148] AC31 Doc. 17

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 17/PC25 Doc. 20 that presents the study *Wildlife products produced from synthetic or cultured DNA* in its Annex. Work on specimens produced through biotechnology is ongoing through an intersessional working group of the Standing Committee and any matters that require scientific advice will be brought to the Animals and Plants Committees, as appropriate, when the working group concludes its work.

The AC representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) supported the original recommendation of having the intersessional working group review the study. China, as the Chair of the Standing Committee’s intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology, noted that the working group was keen to receive feedback and input from the Animals and Plants Committees.

The Wildlife Conservation Society, speaking also on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity and the Natural Resources Defense Council, noted with concern that CITES was not providing guidance to Parties and advised that CITES should go beyond the learning phase and should start working on regulation of specimens produced through biotechnology.

The Committees noted document AC31 Doc. 17/PC25 Doc. 20 and agreed that the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committee, in consultation with their members, would represent the views of the scientific

committees at the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee and provide input to the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on specimens produced through biotechnology.

18. Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'

18.1 Report of the Secretariat [Decision 18.155] AC31 Doc. 18.1 and Addenda 1 and 2

and

18.2 International trade in live African elephants AC31 Doc. 18.2

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 18.1 and its addendum 1 that provides updates on progress on the implementation of Decisions 18.152 and 18.154. Addendum 1 also presents draft decisions to extend the work of Decision 18.152 beyond CoP19 and provides information on the implementation of Decision 18.153 in paragraphs 7 to 9, including an NDF received from Zimbabwe as Annex 3.

The co-chair of the intersessional working group on appropriate and acceptable destinations (Ms. Zíková) introduced addendum 2 of document AC31 Doc. 18.1 that presents a compilation of a range of possible forms of benefits for *in situ* conservation and *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it.*

Germany stated that benefits listed in addendum 2 should not be understood as constituting "exceptional circumstances" to justify trade in wild elephants and suggested that this be clarified in the document. The Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), also on behalf of the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums (EAZA), the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Zoological Society London (ZSL), and International Elephant Foundation, supported the possible forms of benefits for *in situ* conservation and the non-binding guidance but did not support developing minimum values for some or all items included in the guidance.

The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free, EuroGroup for Animals, Fondation Franz Weber, Future for Elephants, Humane Society International, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Pro Wildlife and Species Survival Network, expressed concern that the working group had strayed from its mandate, questioned Namibia's trading of elephants, and urged the Committee to refer these issues to the Standing Committee. They then suggested a revision to the mandate of the in-session working group to include the information provided in document AC31 Doc. 18.2.

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 18.2 prepared by Burkina Faso and Niger, which provides information on exports from four Parties involved in the trade in live African elephants since 2010, i.e. Eswatini, Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

Nigeria, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America supported including the information presented in document AC31 Doc. 18.2 as part of the mandate of the in-session working group. China did not support the information in document AC31 Doc. 18.2 and considered that the data was exaggerated and incorrect. Botswana drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that it made a reservation concerning amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) adopted at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee agreed to propose the draft decisions in paragraph 5 of addendum 1 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1 for consideration of the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting.

The Committee established an in-session working group on appropriate and acceptable destinations with the mandate to:

- a) concerning Decision 18.153, consider the scientific aspects of the responses in paragraphs 7 to 9 of addendum 1, document AC31 Doc. 18.2 and Annex 3 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1, and draft recommendations for the Animals Committee's consideration as appropriate; and
- b) concerning Decision 18.155, review Annexes 1 and 2 to addendum 2 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1 and any updates provided to the meeting by the co-chairs of the working group, and draft recommendations as appropriate for the Animals Committee's consideration.

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Asia (Mr. Mobaraki), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori), representatives for Europe (Mr. Lörtscher and Ms. Zíková) (co-Chairs);

Parties: Argentina, Botswana, Canada, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Namibia, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, United Republic of Tanzania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Zimbabwe; and

Observers: International Union for Conservation of Nature; Animal Welfare Institute, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Born Free Foundation, Conservation Analytics, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, European Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Fondation Franz Weber, German Society of Herpetology, Humane Society International, International Elephant Foundation, International Association for Wildlife, International Fund for Animal Welfare, ProWildlife, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, and Zoological Society of London.

Later in the meeting, the AC Chair introduced document AC31 Com. 2.

Fondation Franz Weber stated that the working group did not consider paragraph 1 of Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'* in their discussions, and requested that this be included in the final working group report.

Based on document AC31 Com. 2, the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a) The Committee agreed to submit the *Non-binding guidance for determining whether a proposed recipient of a living specimen of African elephant and/or southern white rhinoceros is suitably equipped to house and care for it*, as amended in Annex 2 to document AC31 Com. 2, to the Standing Committee for consideration and possible endorsement.
- b) The Committee agreed to submit the *Non-binding best practice guidance on how to determine whether "the trade would promote in situ conservation"*, as amended in Annex 1 to document AC31 Com. 2, to the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting for further discussion and, if appropriate, modification and onward submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- c) The Committee further agreed to refer the following concerns to the Standing Committee for its advice and recommendations, as appropriate:
 - i) Namibia's interpretation of its exports of live African elephants to non-range States outlined in paragraph 7 of document AC31 Doc. 18.1, Addendum 1, and
 - ii) Zimbabwe's reservation submitted following the changes adopted at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Resolution Conf. 11.20 (Rev. CoP18) on *Definition of the term 'appropriate and acceptable destinations'* and the export of live elephants occurring in 2019 as outlined in paragraph 9 of document AC31 Doc. 18.1, Addendum 1, while noting discrepancies between document AC31 Doc. 18.2 and the response provided by Zimbabwe in Annex 3 to document AC31 Doc. 18.1.

19. Captive-bred and ranched specimens

19.1 Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity [Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP18) and Decision 17.102] AC31 Doc. 19.1 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 19.1 that provides updates on the ongoing cases under Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity*. An analysis of species for possible inclusion in the review following CoP18 is presented in Annex 1 to the document. The addendum presents information on the implementation of Decision 17.102, including a capacity building workshop, the development of a mobile and tablet

application tool for determination of CITES source codes and for inspection of captive-breeding facilities, and a proposal for a workshop to review the provisions of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP18).

ProWildlife, on behalf of the Animal Welfare Institute, Defenders of Wildlife, Humane Society International, Fondation Franz Weber, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Robin des Bois, Species Survival Network, drew the attention of the Committee on the sustainability of trade in amphibians, and expressed concern regarding amphibian exports from Nicaragua, specifically *Agalychnis callidryas*.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 19.1 and further noted that the selection of new species/country combinations for review will be postponed until the first regular meeting of the Committee after the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee welcomed developments on the implementation of Decision 17.102 and encouraged Parties and observers to actively participate in the workshop on the review of Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity* to support the implementation of Decision 18.176.

19.2 Captive breeding Sri Lankan agamids [Decision 18.175] AC31 Doc. 19.2

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc.19.2 that provides information on the breeding biology of *Ceratophora stoddartii*, *C. aspera* and *Lyriocephalus scutatus*, feasibility of breeding in captivity, and prevalence of specimens in zoos and evidence of commercial breeding.

The United States of America raised questions as to when the three species were first bred in captivity, and how long adults live in captivity, noting that obtaining more responses from a questionnaire could provide a clear picture before the selection of new species country combinations at AC32. Although unable to attend the meeting, Sri Lanka conveyed through the United States that any agamid exports from Sri Lanka were only authorized for zoos and scientific purposes.

ProWildlife, also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free Foundation, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Eurogroup for Animals, Fondation Franz Weber, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, Species Survival Network and the Wildlife Conservation Society, expressed concern that the report in document AC31 Doc. 19.2 does not include the most recent national assessment by the International Union for Conservation of Nature of the species and urged the Committee to seek confirmation of legal acquisition of specimens in trade originating from non-range States.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 19.2 and the report contained in the Annex. The Committee further noted that the selection of new species/country combinations for review will be postponed until the first regular meeting of the Committee after the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Committee agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting the renewal of Decision 18.175 as follows:

18.175 Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall review the report of the Secretariat and consider whether to select species-country combinations of *Ceratophora stoddartii*, *Ceratophora aspera* and *Lyriocephalus scutatus* for review under Resolution Conf. 17.7 (Rev. CoP18) on *Review of trade in animal specimens reported as produced in captivity*.

19.3 Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source* [Decision 18.172] AC31 Doc. 19.3

The Chair of the Animals Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 19.3/PC25 Doc. 21 that provides an overview of work implemented under Decision 18.172 and the ongoing work by the intersessional working group of the Standing Committee under Decision 18.173. Implementation of "Review of CITES provisions related to trade in specimens of animals and plants not of wild source" is ongoing through an intersessional working group of the Standing Committee and will be brought to the attention of the Animals and Plants Committees, as appropriate, when the working group concludes its work.

The AC representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) stated that the Committees had not implemented Decision 18.172 and had not identified key scientific issues and challenges in the

application of the Convention to non-wild specimens. He thus proposed the postponement of the work until after the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties with the renewal of Decision 18.172. The AC representatives for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) and for Europe (Ms. Zíková) and the PC representative for North America (Ms. Gnam) supported the renewal of Decision 18.172.

The Committees noted document AC31 Doc. 19.3/PC25 Doc. 21 and agreed to propose to the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting the extension of Decision 18.172 for further work beyond the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Species specific matters

20. West African vultures (Accipitridae spp.)

[Decisions 18.190 and 18.191] AC31 Doc. 20 and Addenda 1 and 2

The co-chair of the intersessional working group on West African vultures (Mr. Mobaraki) introduced document AC31 Doc. 20 that presents the Multi-species Action Plan to Conserve African Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP) developed under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and a report by the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) on the six vulture species referred to in Decision 18.188. Addendum 1 by the co-chairs of the working group provides recommendations for consideration by the Committee and addendum 2, produced by the Secretariat, revised recommendations, including draft decisions, for the implementation of Decision 18.191.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) supported the suggested way forward by the Chair with the establishment of an in-session working group but noted that some recommendations went beyond the scope of CITES.

Humane Society International, also on the behalf of Species Survival Network, supported the recommendations made by the intersessional working group and recommended that range States be encouraged to adopt zero export quotas for wild specimens of critically endangered and endangered West African vultures.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 20 and its addenda 1 and 2 and agreed to consider that Decision 18.190 had been implemented. The Committee requested the Secretariat to inform the range States of West African vultures that improved non-detriment finding (NDF) guidance is expected to be developed and to share relevant NDF materials with the range States when available.

The Committee established an in-session working group on West African vultures with the mandate to:

- a) comment and review the draft recommendations in addendum 1;
- b) review the draft decisions in the Annex to addendum 2; and
- c) report its findings for consideration by the Animals Committee later in this meeting.

The membership* was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Mensah), representative for Asia (Mr. Mobaraki) (Chair), alternate representative for Africa (Ms. Maha),

Parties: **Benin**, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

Observers: Convention on Migratory Species, United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), International Union for Conservation of Nature; Animal Welfare Institute, Humane Society International, **Species Survival Network** and TRAFFIC.

* The working group members indicated in bold were added on 1 June 2021 since they were not able to express an interest for technical reasons on 31 May 2021.

Later in the meeting, the AC Chair introduced document AC31 Com. 5.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) expressed concern about draft decision 19.AA that would create a separate parallel process to that of the Review of Significant Trade and proposed edits to paragraph d) of that draft decision so that range States are urged to “consider submitting non-detriment findings” instead of “submit”, thus allowing Parties to choose whether to share their non-detriment findings with the secretariat or request the advice of the Animals Committee.

Based on document AC31 Com. 5 as amended by the representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

The Committee agreed to submit to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties the following draft decisions:

19.AA Directed to West African range States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo)

West African range States for *Gyps africanus* (Whitebacked vulture), *Gyps fulvus* (Griffon vulture), *Gyps rueppelli* (Rüppell's vulture), *Necrosyrtes monachus* (Hooded vulture), *Neophron percnopterus* (Egyptian vulture), *Torgos tracheliotos* (Lappet-faced vulture), and *Trigonoceps occipitalis* (White-headed vulture) are urged to:

- a) integrate illegal vulture trade considerations into their implementation of the *West Africa Strategy on Combatting Wildlife Crime (WASCWC)* and any decisions relating to *Wildlife crime enforcement support in West and Central Africa* adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting;
- b) ensure that national laws to protect vultures and control trade in vulture parts and derivatives are effectively implemented, and ensure that penalties for non-compliance are sufficient to deter illegal trade;
- c) ensure that any international trade in West African vultures is not allowed except in accordance with CITES requirements, and if international trade is found not to be in accordance with CITES requirements, consider implementing a zero export quota;
- d) follow Resolution Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Non-detriment findings*, and, in cases where there is an interest in exporting globally threatened vulture species, consider submitting non-detriment findings for the export of vulture specimens to the Secretariat for inclusion on the CITES website and review by the Animals Committee;
- e) identify any trade-related issues associated with the implementation of the Vulture Multispecies Action Plan of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS);
- f) work with relevant experts and organizations for implementing demand reduction strategies for vultures and their parts and derivatives including for belief-based use and consumption and, where appropriate, expand the implementation of strategies that have been successful;
- g) work with relevant organizations to initiate wide-scale public awareness campaigns at regional, national and local levels about the impacts of trade in these species, including the importance of vulture species to ecology and human health, the negative impacts of belief-based use of vulture body parts, and existing national and international legislation that protects vultures; and
- h) provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Decision to assist it in reporting to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.BB Directed to Parties, West African range States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

Parties, West African range States and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged, subject to resources, to:

- a) collaborate in the conservation and restoration of West African vultures and support the implementation of the Vulture Multispecies Action Plan of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) to conserve African-Eurasian Vultures; and
- b) gather and exchange scientific knowledge and expertise on West African vultures, with a particular focus on:
 - i) documenting the scale of vulture trade by surveying markets in and outside West Africa, and identifying inter-regional and international trade routes;
 - ii) characterizing links between poisoning and trade in vultures, and contributing to the African Wildlife Poison Database; and
 - iii) updating the conservation and population status information of West African vultures, and *Gyps africanus* (white-backed vultures), *Gyps rueppellii* (Rüppell's vultures) and *Torgos tracheliotus* (lappet-faced vultures) in particular.

19.CC Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) cooperate with the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) partner organizations, regional and subregional wildlife enforcement networks, and competent national authorities, where relevant and feasible, to consider vultures in the context of ICWC's enforcement and capacity-building efforts in West Africa;
- b) subject to external funding, support the production of identification materials focusing on parts and derivatives of vulture species for use by law enforcement officials;
- c) liaise with the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) to assist in the implementation of the trade-related aspects of the Vulture Multispecies Action Plan (MsAP) subject to external funding, and share information based on the work of the Animals Committee;
- d) subject to external funding, support the implementation of capacity-building activities aimed at providing support to the West African range States in implementing the trade-related aspects of the Vulture MsAP;
- e) in collaboration with the CMS Secretariat, consider available trade data and conservation status information from the whole geographic range of the vulture species concerned for inclusion in its reporting to the Animals and Standing Committees; and
- f) collect information from West African vulture range States on their implementation of Decision 19.AA, and report as appropriate this and other information on the implementation of Decisions 19.AA to 19.CC a), b), c), d) and e) to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, at their first regular meetings following the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties with conclusions and recommendations for their consideration.

19.DD Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) encourage West African range States to undertake a Periodic Review of the vulture species referred to in Decision 19.AA pursuant to Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP17) on *Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II*, taking note of the offer of the

Vulture Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature to assist range States in such an effort;

- b) consider any reports or requests for advice submitted by Parties with respect to the making of non-detriment findings for trade in CITES-listed West African vulture species;
- c) consider the reports and recommendations of the Secretariat submitted in accordance with Decision 19.CC, paragraph e): and
- d) make recommendations as appropriate for consideration by range States, Parties, the Standing Committee and the Secretariat.

19.EE Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall review the implementation of Decisions 19.AA to 19.DD and make recommendations as appropriate to West African vulture range States, Parties and the Secretariat, and for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 20th meeting.

19.FF Directed to Parties, donor organizations and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

Donor Parties and other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to provide support for implementing Decisions 19.AA to 19.CC and ensuring the survival of West African vultures.

21. Conservation of amphibians (Amphibia spp.)

[Decision 18.192] AC31 Doc. 21 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 21 and its addendum that provide an overview of the progress on the implementation of Decision 18.194, specifically on the preparation of background documents for a proposed interdisciplinary workshop. As Decisions 18.194 to 18.196 could not be fully implemented, the Secretariat proposed draft decisions to extend the work beyond CoP19.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), Costa Rica, Defenders of Wildlife (also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Eurogroup for Animals, Fondation Franz Weber, Humane Society International, Pan-African Sanctuary Alliance, ProWildlife, Robin de Bois, and Species Survival Network) supported the three revised draft decisions to continue the work on conservation of amphibians. Wildlife Conservation Society proposed edits to draft decision 19AA paragraph v) so that the Secretariat explores the threat of the spread of diseases “from” (rather than “to”) traded amphibians.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 21 and its addendum and agreed to submit the following draft decisions as amended by Wildlife Conservation Society for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting.

19.AA Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to availability of external resources and in close consultation with the Animals Committee:

- a) conduct one or more interdisciplinary workshops for CITES Authorities and other relevant authorities and stakeholders about amphibian species in international trade, including but not limited to the following objectives:
 - i) identify amphibian species that are in international trade and evaluate whether certain species or groups should be recommended for possible listing in the Appendices;
 - ii) share existing national legislation relevant to the trade in amphibians;
 - iii) evaluate whether current levels of trade are compatible with the conservation of these species in the wild;

- iv) compile further data on harvesting levels of amphibians subject to high volumes of international trade;
 - v) explore the emerging threat of diseases from traded amphibians, including amphibian chytrid fungus and rana viruses; and
 - vi) examine current enforcement efforts to deter and detect illegal and unreported trade and identify additional actions needed; and
- b) explore modalities to implement this Decision in a cost-effective manner, including through the organization of online events; and
 - c) report on the progress in the implementation of paragraph a) and b) above to the Animals Committee, including any relevant recommendations.

19.BB Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) consider the report submitted by the Secretariat as per Decision 19.AA; and
- b) make recommendations to the Standing Committee and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

19.CC Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consider any report submitted by the Animals Committee as per Decision 19.BB and develop recommendations for consideration of the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

22. Eels (*Anguilla* spp.) [Decisions 18.197 to 18.200] AC31 Doc. 22 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc.22 that reports on the implementation of the Decisions on *Eels* (*Anguilla* spp.). The addendum summarises the responses to the questionnaire on current management plans, monitoring programmes, stock assessments, and national/international traceability of anguillid eels. Parties also reported on NDFs for *Anguilla anguilla* and the restrictions in place for harvest and trade of glass eels.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), echoed by the representative for Europe (Ms. Ziková) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, supported the Secretariat's proposal to submit draft decisions for consideration at CoP19 and the establishment of an in-session working group. He further requested that the mandate of the working group be narrowed since there was insufficient time to review the 70 pages of responses to the questionnaire. The working group would focus on the drafting of the decisions and initiate a discussion to consider the potential use of source code R, ranching, for specimens on *Anguilla anguilla* from aquacultural production systems. Canada suggested that it was premature for the Committee to draft recommendations to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee established an in-session working group on eels (*Anguilla* spp.) with the mandate to:

- a) initiate a discussion to consider the potential use of source code R (ranching) for specimens of *A. anguilla* from aquaculture production systems and make recommendations to the Animals Committee as appropriate;
- b) consider the Secretariat's draft decisions in paragraph 17 of the addendum and identify other parts of Decisions 18.197 to 18.202 that may merit a renewal or extension;
- c) review available information relating to the potential risks and benefits of reintroducing seized, live European eels (*Anguilla Anguilla*) to the wild and, if appropriate, provide advice on suitable protocols taking into account existing guidance and practices; and

- d) as appropriate, draft recommendations directed to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties for the Animals Committee to consider.

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Kasoma), representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) (Chair);

Parties: Algeria, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

Observers: Convention on Migratory Species, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Animal Welfare Institute, Association of Northeast Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Global Guardian Trust, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, Zoological Society of London.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) introduced document AC31 Com. 1 and suggested adding a new paragraph after paragraph e) of draft decision 19.AA as follows: “share with the Secretariat, where available, protocols and guidelines for reintroduction of seized live European eels to the wild; and”.

Based on document AC31 Com. 1 as amended by the regional representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a) The Committee agreed to reconsider the issues of the potential use of source code R (ranching) for specimens of European eel (*A. anguilla*) from aquaculture production systems and the potential risks and benefits of reintroducing seized, live European eels to the wild, when making recommendations on the study on levels of trade and trade patterns, especially in live eels for aquaculture, that is currently being prepared in the implementation of Decision 18.199, paragraph d), which will be reviewed by the Animals Committee following the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- b) The Committee noted that the European eel could be a good case study for consideration at the planned workshop on non-detriment findings under Decision 18.132.
- c) The Committee agreed to submit the following four draft decisions for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting:

19.AA Directed to range States of European eels (*Anguilla anguilla*)

Range States of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) are encouraged to:

- a) submit any non-detriment finding studies on European eel they have undertaken to the Secretariat for inclusion on the CITES website; explore the different approaches that might be taken for making non-detriment findings for European eels traded as fingerlings (FIG) compared with those traded as other live eels (LIV); collaborate and share information with other Parties regarding such studies and their outcome, especially where the Parties share catchments or water bodies; seek review and advice from the Animals Committee or other suitable body on any non-detriment findings for European eels, where appropriate;
- b) develop and/or implement adaptive European eel management plans at national or sub-national (or catchment) level, with defined and time-bound goals, and enhance collaboration within countries between authorities and other stakeholders with responsibilities for eel management, and between countries where water bodies or catchments are shared;
- c) share information on stock assessments, harvests, the results of monitoring and other relevant data with the Joint Working Group on Eels (WGEEL) of the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission, the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas and the Central Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (EIFAAC/ICES/GFCM), so that a full and complete picture of the state of the European eel stock can be established;

- d) develop measures or implement more effectively existing measures to improve the traceability of eels in trade (both live and dead);
- e) provide the Secretariat with information regarding any changes to measures they have in place to restrict the trade in live 'glass' or fingerling European eels;
- f) share with the Secretariat, where available, protocols and guidelines for reintroduction of seized live European eels to the wild; and
- g) provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this Decision or any updates to the information previously submitted in response to Notification to the Parties No. 2021/018 on eels, to allow it to report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.BB Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a notification within 90 days of the close of the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, inviting range States of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) to submit to the Secretariat information on the implementation of Decision 19.AA or any updates to the information previously submitted in response to Notification to the Parties No. 2021/018 on eels;
- b) prepare and submit a summary of the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2021/018 on eels, including any updates provided under Decision 19.AA, with draft recommendations to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate, for their consideration; and
- c) submit the study prepared in the implementation of Decision 18.199, paragraph d), on levels of trade and trade patterns, especially in live eels for aquaculture, and sources of supply, identify any disparities between these, and draft recommendations for the more effective future management of harvests and trade for consideration by the Animals Committee and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.CC Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) if requested, consider any reports submitted by Parties with respect to the making of non-detriment findings for trade in European eel and provide advice and guidance as needed; and
- b) consider the study referred to in paragraph c) of Decision 19.BB, the report produced by the Secretariat under paragraph b) of Decision 19.BB and make recommendations as appropriate, for consideration by the Standing Committee and the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19.DD Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall review any advice and recommendations coming from the Animals Committee concerning Decision 19.CC and make recommendations as appropriate.

23. Precious corals (Order Scleractinia and family Scleractinidae)
[Decision 17.192 (Rev. CoP18)]..... AC31 Doc. 23 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 23 that draws attention to the study *Global Report on the Biology, Fishery and Trade of Precious Corals* published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The addendum by the co-chairs of the intersessional working group on precious corals presents updated recommendations.

The representatives for Central South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori and Mr. Gongora), the representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), and the representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) supported the recommendations made by the intersessional working group in paragraph 9 of the addendum to document AC31 Doc. 23. The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) expressed concern regarding the workload on the Secretariat and suggested that the tasks in paragraph B 2 d), Annex 1 and 2 to the addendum to document AC31 Doc. 23 be undertaken by an external entity.

The Committee noted the information provided in document AC31 Doc. 23 and its addendum and agreed to the recommendations in Annex 2 to this addendum. The Committee noted that the work directed to the Secretariat in the recommendations under B 2 d) could be implemented by an external entity depending on the workload of the Secretariat.

The Committee encouraged the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to consider the information presented in paragraph 6 of the addendum to document AC31 Doc. 23 in the production of any future reports. The Committee agreed that Decision 17.192 (Rev. CoP18) has been fully implemented.

24. Marine turtles (Cheloniidae spp. and Dermochelyidae spp.)
[Decision 18.216] AC31 Doc. 24 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 24 that presents the study *Status, scope and trends of the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles, its conservation impact, management options, and mitigation priorities*. The addendum provides a summary of the scientific information in the responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2020/035 and draft amendments to the recommendations set out in Annex 2 to the document to incorporate the changes in meeting schedules.

The representatives for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson), Argentina and Costa Rica, supported the establishment of an in-session working group to draft recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.

The Committee established an in-session working group on marine turtles with a mandate to:

- a) consider the review of the marine turtle study and draft recommendations by the co-lead of the agenda item presented in Annex 1 to the addendum of document AC31 Doc. 24, and any scientific information in the responses from Parties to Notification No. 2020/035 in Annex 2 to the addendum; and
- b) revise the draft recommendations in Annex 1 to the addendum of document AC31 Doc. 24.

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representatives for Asia [Mr. Diesmos (co-Chair) and Mr. Mobaraki], representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) (co-Chair), representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson), nomenclature specialist (Mr. van Dijk);

Parties: Argentina, Australia, Cambodia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Peru, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

Observers: Convention on Migratory Species, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Fauna & Flora International, Global Guardian Trust, Humane Society International, Sea Shepherd Legal, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, and World Wide Fund for Nature.

Later in the meeting, the alternate representative for Asia (Mr. Diesmos) introduced document AC31 Com. 3.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) recommended the deletion of paragraph b) of the recommendations and of paragraph d) of draft decision 19.AA. The representative for Central South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) confirmed that the working group had agreed to the deletion of these paragraphs. The World Wide Fund for Nature agreed that it was preferable to see action taken to address the information and recommendations rather than conduct the further assessments requested in the deleted paragraphs.

Based on document AC31 Com. 3 as amended by the representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a) The Committee noted that the study entitled *Status, scope and trends of the legal and illegal international trade in marine turtles, its conservation impacts, management options and mitigation priorities*, identified key issues where CITES and other actors can help with the conservation of marine turtles.
- b) The Committee reminded Parties to include marine turtle confiscation and seizure data in their annual illegal trade report.
- c) The Committee agreed to submit the following four draft decisions to the Standing Committee for its consideration.

19.AA Directed to the Parties

Parties are encouraged to:

- a) develop robust and standardized frameworks for determining sustainable use of marine turtles that are science-based, integrate a determination of suitable offtake levels, take into account the needs of traditional subsistence users, account for existing use in other States sharing the marine turtle(s) stocks, and account for national enforcement capacity taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;
- b) work with their fisheries communities to ensure that there is effective documentation at the national level of marine turtle fisheries by-catch and mortality that can inform conservation and management measures taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;
- c) where marine turtles hatchery establishments exist, develop science-based operational protocols for marine turtle hatchery establishments to ensure that they provide conservation value to marine turtle populations;
- d) share holistic regional marine turtle survival probability models and their output and other information to assess sustainability of current harvest and by-catch levels while taking into account other threats to the population across their range (number of turtles of different age classes taken from populations), limitations of source rookeries (number of turtles recruited per year), natural survival probabilities, and marine turtle biology taking into consideration the advice, resolutions, conservation and management measures of relevant bodies including competent fisheries authorities and experts, as appropriate;
- e) undertake as appropriate research that can support the development of protection and conservation measures for marine turtle foraging, nesting and migratory areas; and
- f) report on the implementation of paragraphs a) to f) to the Secretariat, for subsequent reporting to the Animals and Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.BB Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) based on analysis of the annual illegal trade reports, bring to the attention of the Animals and Standing Committee, as appropriate, any significant changes in the illegal trade of marine turtles;
- b) liaise with the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), its Indian Ocean and South-East Asia Marine Turtle

Memorandum of Understanding (IOSEA) on the conservation and management of marine turtles, as outlined in the CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2021-2025; and

- c) report on the implementation of paragraphs a) to f) of Decision 19.AA to the Animals and Standing Committees, as appropriate.

19.CC Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall consider any reports from Decision 19.AA and 19.BB paragraph a) brought to its attention by the Secretariat, and make recommendations, as appropriate, including on the possible need for incorporation of the substantive content of Decision 19.AA and 19.BB and any other relevant measures into a new resolution on marine turtles which should also incorporate any relevant provisions of Resolution Conf 9.20 (Rev.) on *Guidelines for evaluating marine turtle ranching proposals submitted pursuant to Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15)*.

19.DD Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consider any reports from Decision 19.AA and 19.BB paragraph a) brought to its attention by the Secretariat and any recommendations from the Animals Committee, and make recommendations, as appropriate.

- 25. Sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.) [Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP18); Decisions 18.223 and 18.225]..... AC31 Doc. 25 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 25 that presents an analysis of CITES trade data on sharks and rays and provides information on reports, identification materials and publications that may be relevant for the implementation of Resolution Conf. 12.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation and management of sharks*. The addendum provides updates on the analysis of CITES trade data and information that have become available since document AC31 Doc. 25 was published.

The representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson) and Costa Rica welcomed the analysis of the commercial trade in sharks and rays. The representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson) further noted that several of the current Decisions will need to be rolled over or revised and updated to incorporate some of the information in information documents AC31 Inf. 9, Inf. 15 and Inf. 18. The representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson) and China noted a mismatch in shark trade data.

The representatives for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson) and China expressed the need to continue collating information on sharks and rays for future guidance on NDFs and suggested using Sharks and Rays as a case study for any future NDF workshop under agenda item 14.1.

The Committee established an in-session working group on sharks and rays (Elasmobranchii spp.) with a mandate to:

- a) taking into consideration the following:
 - i) the CITES trade data analysis in document AC31 Doc. 25 and its addendum;
 - ii) the responses from Parties to Notification No. 2020/016 and its summary presented in information document AC31 Inf. 9 to questions A (new information on shark and ray conservation and management activities), B (the making of non-detriment findings), and D (the identification of CITES-listed shark-products in trade);
 - iii) the non-detriment findings (NDF) provided by Parties to the Notification; and
 - iv) new information on sharks and rays presented in document AC31 Doc. 25 and its addendum as well as any other relevant information;
- b) identify Decisions on sharks and rays (Decisions 18.218 to 18.225) that may merit revisions or renewal to extend the work beyond CoP19; and

- c) draft recommendations to integrate the development of NDF guidance, in particular in data-poor, multi-species, small-scale/artisanal, migratory/shared regional stocks, and non-target (bycatch) situations for CITES-listed shark species, with the NDF workshop envisaged under Decisions 18.132 paragraph c) ii).

The membership was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Asia (Mr. Mobaraki), representative for Central and South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori), representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson) (Chair);

Parties: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, France, Gabon, Guatemala, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America; and

Observers: Convention on Migratory Species, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Bloom Association, Blue Resources Trust, Born Free USA, Conservation Analytics, Defenders of Wildlife, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, Florida International University, Global Guardian Trust, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Japan NUS Co. Ltd., Natural Resources Defense Council, OCEANA Inc., Save Our Seas Foundation, Sea Shepherd Legal, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, Zoological Society of London.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson) introduced document AC31 Com. 7 and suggested including "TRAFFIC" to paragraph h) of the recommendation and reinstating a paragraph in the decision. The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) suggested keeping in the proposed deleted text in draft decisions 19.DD and 19.EE.

Based on document AC31 Com. 7 as amended by the representatives of North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson), the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a) The Committee invited the Standing Committee to review the results of the Secretariat's study on the apparent mismatch between trade in shark products, especially regarding introduction from the sea, if available, in fulfilment of Decision 18.221, paragraph a), at the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee.
- b) The Committee invited the organizers of the workshop on non-detriment findings (NDF) to consider including a focus on sharks within the marine or aquatic species work stream to support the making of NDFs, in particular for data-poor, multi-species, shared and migratory stocks, small-scale artisanal, introduction from the sea and non-target (bycatch), recognising that sharks and rays are good examples of the challenges faced by Parties when preparing NDFs in these situations.
- c) The Committee invited the Standing Committee to consider the inclusion of a new three letter code form (FFN) for registering trade in wet (fresh, chilled, frozen) fins of sharks in the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports*.
- d) The Committee recommended that available national conversion factors used when estimating live catch weight by species, fishery, and product form be collated for more accurate reporting of shark and ray trade data by Parties.
- e) The Committee invited the Secretariat to encourage the regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) representatives to attend future meetings of the Animals Committee, in light of the recommendation from the meeting of the joint tuna RFMO (tRFMO) by-catch working group on sharks in December 2019 to improve communication and cooperation between CITES and tRFMOs to provide guidance and advice for the CITES-listed species caught within the jurisdiction of each tRFMO.
- f) The Committee noted that the 34th Session of the Committee on Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), held in February 2021, adopted the recommendation that FAO will continue cooperating with CITES and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), including in the provision of scientific and technical advice on proposals and issues relating to the listing and implementation of such listing of commercially-exploited aquatic species.

- g) The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to continue close collaboration with FAO and undertake joint activities according to the Memorandum of Understanding between CITES and FAO signed in 2006.
- h) The Committee noted the benefits of close collaboration with FAO, and other relevant organizations and experts including TRAFFIC and the IUCN Species Survival Commission Shark Specialist Group (SSG) to assist the Secretariat in the study called for in Decision 18.221 paragraph a), and if necessary, Decision 19. DD, to understand trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays.
- i) The Committee noted that a compilation of the shark AC31 in-session working group contributions is available as information document AC31 Inf. 24.
- j) The Committee further agreed to submit the following eight draft decisions to the Standing Committee for its consideration.

19.AA Directed to Parties

Parties are encouraged to:

- a) provide brief information (with an executive summary not exceeding 200 words, if the report exceeds four pages) to the Secretariat, in particular on any national management measures that prohibit commercial take or trade, and respond to the Notification called for in Decision 19.CC;
- b) in accordance with their national legislation, provide a brief report (with an executive summary not exceeding 200 words, if the report exceeds four pages) to the Secretariat about the assessment of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives for CITES-listed species stored and obtained before the entry into force of the inclusion in CITES in order to control and monitor their trade, if applicable;
- c) respond to the Notification called for in Decision 19.CC and, share available national conversion factors used when estimating live catch weight by species, fishery, and product form for more accurate reporting of shark and ray trade data by Parties and indicate whether and how these are used in the development of their non-detriment findings;
- d) inspect, to the extent possible under their national legislation, shipments of shark parts and derivatives in transit or being transhipped, to verify presence of CITES-listed species and verify the presence of a valid CITES permit or certificate as required under the Convention or to obtain satisfactory proof of its existence;
- e) continue to support the implementation of the Convention for sharks, including by providing funding for the implementation of Decisions 19.BB, 19.DD and 19.EE, and consider seconding staff members with expertise in fisheries and the sustainable management of aquatic resources to the Secretariat; and
- f) actively collaborate to combat illegal trafficking in sharks and ray products by developing mechanisms for coordination between source, transit, and destination countries.

19.BB Decisions directed to Secretariat

Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall continue to provide capacity-building assistance for implementing Appendix-II shark and ray listings to Parties upon request.

19.CC The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification to the Parties, inviting Parties to:
 - i) provide concise (with 200 word executive summary, if the report exceeds four pages) new information on their shark and ray conservation and management activities, in particular:

- A. the making of non-detriment findings;
 - B. the making of legal acquisition findings;
 - C. the identification and monitoring of CITES-listed shark-products in trade, in source, transit, and consumer Parties; and
 - D. recording stockpiles of commercial and/or pre-Convention shark parts and derivatives for CITES Appendix-II elasmobranch species and controlling the entry of these stocks into trade; and
- ii) share with the Secretariat their NDFs and conversion factors used when estimating catch live weight through converting recorded shark landings and trade, where available, to post in the sharks and rays web portal;
 - iii) highlight any questions, concerns or difficulties Parties are having in writing or submitting documentation on authorized trade data (e.g. which units are used in reporting trade) for the CITES Trade Database;
- b) provide information from the CITES Trade Database on commercial trade in CITES-listed sharks and rays since 2010, sorted by species and, if possible, by product;
 - c) invite non-Party, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organization observers to support Parties by providing concise information related to the above;
 - d) disseminate new or existing guidance identified by the Standing Committee on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives pursuant to Decision 19.GG, paragraph b); and
 - e) collate this information for the consideration of the Animals Committee and the Standing Committee.

19.DD The Secretariat shall, subject to external funding, and in collaboration with relevant organizations and experts:

- a) conduct a study to investigate the apparent mismatch between the trade in products of CITES-listed sharks recorded in the CITES Trade Database and what would be expected against the information available on catches of listed species; and
- b) bring the results of the study in paragraph a) and any proposed solutions to resolve this issue in the future to the attention of the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.EE The Secretariat, subject to external funding, is requested to collaborate closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to:

- a) verify that information about Parties' shark management measures is correctly reflected in the shark measures database developed by FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ipoa-sharks/database-of-measures/en/>) and if not, support FAO in correcting the information;
- b) compile clear imagery of wet and dried unprocessed shark fins (particularly, but not exclusively, those from CITES-listed species) along with related species level taxonomic information to facilitate refinement of iSharkFin software developed by FAO;
- c) conduct a study analysing the trade in non-fin shark products of CITES-listed species, including the level of species mixing in trade products and recommendations on how to address any implementation challenges arising from the mixing that may be identified; and

- d) bring the results of activities in paragraphs a) to c) to the attention of the Animals Committee or Standing Committee, as appropriate.

19.FF Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee, in collaboration with relevant organisations and experts, shall:

- a) continue to develop guidance to support the making of non-detriment findings (NDFs) for CITES-listed shark species, in particular in data-poor, multi-species, small-scale/artisanal, and non-target (by-catch) situations, and for shared and migratory stocks, and introduction from the sea; and
- b) report the outcomes of its work under this Decision to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19.GG Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consider:

- a) developing guidance on the making of legal acquisition findings, and related assessments for introductions from the sea for CITES-listed shark species in the context of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 18.7 on *Legal acquisition findings*;
- b) developing new guidance or identifying existing guidance on the control and monitoring of stockpiles of shark parts and derivatives, in particular for specimens caught prior to the inclusion of the species in Appendix II; and
- c) report its findings under this Decision to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19.HH Directed to the Standing Committee and the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee and Standing Committee shall analyse and review the results of any of the activities under Decisions 19.AA and 19.GG and with the support of the Secretariat, prepare a joint report for the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of these Decisions.

The Committee requested its Chair and the Chair of the working group on sharks and rays to contribute to the joint report on sharks and rays with the Standing Committee to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

26. Seahorses (*Hippocampus* spp.) [Decision 18.232] AC31 Doc. 26 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 26 and its addendum that report on progress on the implementation of Decision 18.229, including the publication of responses to Notification to the Parties No. 2020/015, and details of a study being undertaken by Project Seahorse. The addendum also presents draft decisions that renew activities for which work is either ongoing or could not yet be completed.

The representatives for Central South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) and North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), and Peru supported the draft decisions in paragraph 7 of the addendum to document AC31 Doc. 26. Peru informed the Committee of its national measures to prohibit harvesting and trade in seahorses, and the data collection on the perspectives of artisanal fishers on bycatch and seahorse trade.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 26 and its addendum and agreed to submit the draft decisions in paragraph 7 of the addendum of document AC31 Doc. 26 to the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting for its consideration and submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

27. Pangolins (*Manis* spp.) [Decision 18.243] AC31 Doc. 27 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 27 and its addendum that provide an update on the development of conversion parameters for all pangolin species and on the preparation of a report on pangolin conservation status, legal and illegal trade, stocks and stockpile management, and enforcement

issues. The addendum contains a draft decision to extend the work beyond the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19).

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) supported the draft decision and the proposal that the Animals Committee undertake a review of the report at its first meeting following CoP19. He further suggested adding “law enforcement and” before “court purposes” in draft decision 19.AA and recommended the Secretariat consult and receive input from the AC Chair before its submission to the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting (SC74).

Environmental Investigation Agency UK, also on behalf of Environmental Investigation Agency US, Species Survival Network, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Center for Biological Diversity, Fondation Franz Weber, Eurogroup for Animals, Humane Society International, Natural Resources Defense Council, Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free USA, Born Free Foundation, Pro Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, Zoological Society of London, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance and Fauna and Flora International urged the Committee to ensure that the report on the status of and trade in pangolins is made available prior to SC74.

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), also on behalf of Conservation Force, Dallas Safari Club (DSC), European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), Safari Club International (SCI), Safari Club International Foundation (SCI-F), and Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) emphasized the importance of involving international hunting operators who are actively patrolling vast expanses of land inhabited by pangolins and therefore can contribute to their conservation.

The Committee agreed to submit the following draft decision as amended by the representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) for consideration of the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting and onward submission to CoP19.

19.AA Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the conversion parameters for all pangolin species, developed in accordance with the provisions of Decision 18.239, to enable the reliable determination of the number of animals associated with any quantity of pangolin scales seized, and that can be used by Parties in cases where national legislation demands that such information be provided for law enforcement and court purposes; and
- b) make recommendations, as appropriate, to the Standing Committee and the Secretariat.

The Committee recommended that the Secretariat consult with and receive input from the Chair of the Animals Committee on the report entitled “Implementation of CITES Decision 18.240 (c) on Pangolins (*Manis* spp.)” before they submit it to the Standing Committee for consideration at its 74th meeting.

The Committee agreed that it should undertake a review of the report at its first meeting following CoP19.

28. African lions (*Panthera leo*) [Decision 18.247]..... AC31 Doc. 28 and Addenda 1 and 2

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 28 and its addenda that contain the *Guidelines for the conservation of lions in Africa* and progress on studies being undertaken in fulfilment of Decision 18.246. Addendum two, by the co-chairs of the intersessional working group on African lions, provided some first elements of reflection and clarified that the working group did not have enough time to fully implement its mandate.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), the alternate representative for North America (Ms. Lougheed), Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) supported the establishment of an in session working group. CMS suggested the possibility of the task of the review being delegated to the African Carnivore Initiative range State meetings in the future to avoid any potential back and forth reviews by the respective scientific bodies of CITES and CMS.

Zimbabwe and the United Republic of Tanzania, echoed by Safari Club International, did not support the Guidelines in their current form and felt there was insufficient time to make any meaningful submission during the intersessional working group.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 28 and its addenda 1 and 2.

The Committee recommended that the mandate in Decision 18.247, paragraphs a) and b), be extended beyond the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Committee established an in-session working group on African lions with the mandate to:

- a) agree on a process and way forward for implementing Decision 18.247, paragraph a); and
- b) draft recommendations for consideration by the Animals Committee later in this meeting.

The membership* was decided as follows:

Members: representative for Africa (Mr. Kasoma) (Chair), representative for Asia (Mr. Mobaraki), representative for Europe (Ms. Ziková);

Parties: **Austria**, Botswana, China, Ethiopia, Gabon, Japan, Lesotho, Namibia, Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Zimbabwe; and

Observers: Convention on Migratory Species, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Born Free Foundation, Center for Biological Diversity, CIC – International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation, **Conservation Analytics**, Conservation Force, Dallas Safari Club, Humane Society International, International Association for Wildlife, Panthera, ProWildlife, Safari Club International Foundation, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, Zoological Society of London.

Later in the meeting, the representative for Africa (Mr. Kasoma) introduced document AC31 Com. 6.

Based on document AC31 Com. 6, the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a) The Committee invited the Secretariat to convey the comments and suggestions on the *Guidelines for the Conservation of the Lion in Africa* generated by the Animals Committee's intersessional working group on lions to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and to make the comments and suggestions available in an information document.
- b) The Committee requested the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in collaboration with the CITES and CMS Secretariats, and in consultation with African lion range States, to develop the next version of the *Guidelines for the Conservation of the Lion in Africa* in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Work for the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI), taking into consideration the comments and suggestions referred to in paragraph a) and recent scientific literature pertinent to the conservation of African lion.
- c) The Committee encouraged the ACI range States to consider the revised *Guidelines for the Conservation of the Lion in Africa* referred to in paragraph b) at their next meeting, which is envisaged for 2022.
- d) The Committee encouraged the African lion range States to share experiences and best practice recommendations in using and implementing the *Guidelines for the Conservation of the Lion in Africa* at their ACI range States' meetings and through the Joint CMS/CITES/IUCN web portal on African lions.
- e) The Committee agreed to submit the following draft decisions for consideration at the 19th meeting of the Conference of Parties:

* The working group members indicated in bold were added on 1 June 2021 since they were not able to express an interest for technical reasons on 31 May 2021.

19.AA Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall inform the Animals Committee regarding the activities and outputs of the African Carnivore Initiative (ACI) that relate to the Committee's mandate and request advice from the Animals Committee, as appropriate.

19.BB Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall advise the Secretariat, as appropriate, on information that it provides regarding the activities and outputs of the ACI that are relevant to the Animals Committee's mandate.

29. Leopards (*Panthera pardus*)

29.1 Leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in Africa [Decision 18.255] AC31 Doc. 29.1

The representative for Africa (Mr. Kasoma) introduced document AC31 Doc. 29.1 and the review of the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa*.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Ziková) supported the way forward and the addition of habitat alteration as a threat. She also would welcome more information in the *Roadmap's* chapter on sociology and social work. Botswana proposed that the review of the *Roadmap* be postponed to the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee and that the section on hunting be revised to show the role of hunting as a conservation tool.

The Convention on Migratory Species highlighted that the *Roadmap* was developed in the context of the joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative (ACI) and will also be reviewed within CMS. It further suggested that the *Roadmap* be discussed in the context of ACI range State meetings in order to avoid back and forth between the scientific bodies of CITES and CMS in the future.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 29.1 and agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties the following draft decisions:

19.XX Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall share with the Animals Committee the *Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for its review.

19.YY Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall review *the Roadmap for the Conservation of the Leopard in Africa* by IUCN, and make recommendations, as appropriate, concerning the aspects of it that relate to the implementation of CITES.

29.2 Quotas for leopard hunting trophies [Decisions 18.167 and 18.168] AC31 Doc. 29.2 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc.29.2 and its addendum that present information from Botswana, Ethiopia and the Central African Republic in the context of the review of their leopard hunting quotas as contained in Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP16) on *Quotas for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use* in order to consider whether they are set at levels which are non-detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

The representatives for Africa (Mr. Kasoma), Europe (Ms. Ziková) and North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), the alternate representative for Africa (Mr. Mensah), Zimbabwe, International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), also on behalf of Conservation Force, Dallas Safari Club (DSC), European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), Safari Club International (SCI), Safari Club International Foundation (SCI-F), and Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) supported the proposed recommendations by the Chair and the Animals Committee, i.e. the reduction of the quota from 200 to 20 leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use for Ethiopia; the retention of the quota of 40 for

Central African Republic; and the maintenance of the quota of 130 from Botswana (see information document AC31 Inf. 17).

The representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson), echoed by the representative for Central South America and the Caribbean (Mr. Ramadori) and Israel, expressed concerns that the proposed quota from Botswana was too high and proposed waiting until more recent population surveys are complete. Botswana provided an oral report on the adaptive management used in the country and gave an overview of the data collected on sustainable leopard trade. Botswana noted that its national quotas were set at very low conservative levels, and that it had not had any hunting from 2014 to 2021. Botswana expressed its wish to maintain the export quota at 130 leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use, and to continue to manage its internal quota adaptively.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the World Wide Fund for Nature expressed general concerns about Resolution Conf 10.14 (Rev. CoP16), where there is a significant difference in some cases between some of the quotas mentioned therein and the much lower actual levels of trade as justified by the range States' non-detriment findings. The United Kingdom felt it was unclear what purpose the CoP-approved quotas are fulfilling in those circumstances.

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), also on behalf of Conservation Force, Dallas Safari Club (DSC), European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), Safari Club International (SCI), Safari Club International Foundation (SCI-F), and Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF), supported the AC Chair's recommendations and noted that this review process was an expensive undertaking for the range States and encouraged CITES to secure funding for this type of quota reviews. In view of the information provided by Botswana, the United States also supported the AC Chair's recommendations on the way forward.

Born Free Foundation, on the behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free USA, Center for Biological Diversity, Eurogroup for Animals, Fondation Franz Weber, Four Paws International, Humane Society International, Pan African Sanctuary Alliance, ProWildlife, and Species Survival Network, highlighted ongoing leopard declines and uncertainty around population estimates. They expressed concern that neither the Central African Republic nor Botswana currently have specific leopard management plans in place and called for a suspension of all quotas for leopard hunting trophies, at least until the guidance on establishing non-detriment findings for trade in leopard hunting trophies was finalized.

The Committee agreed to inform the Standing Committee that it considers the quotas for leopards for the Central African Republic and Botswana, as mentioned in Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP16) on *Quotas for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use*, to be set at levels which are non-detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

The Committee agreed to inform the Standing Committee that, for Ethiopia, it considers the proposed reduction of the quota for leopards in Resolution Conf. 10.14 (Rev. CoP16) to 20 trophies to be set at levels which are non-detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

30. Songbird trade and conservation management (Passeriformes)
[Decision 18.257] AC31 Doc. 30 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 30 and its addendum and noted that Decision 18.256 could not be implemented due to lack of external funding. He drew attention to two reviews available as information documents AC31 Inf. 11 and AC31 Inf. 12 that could inform the basis of the study and technical workshop envisaged under Decision 18.256.

The United States of America, echoed by Humane Society International and Wildlife Conservation Society, highlighted the importance of the work on songbirds and supported the renewal of the Decisions. The United States of America announced that it will provide USD 25,000 for a study of the songbird trade in the western hemisphere, particularly focusing on Latin American and the Caribbean.

The Committee agreed to propose to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting the renewal of Decisions 18.256 to 18.259 on *Songbird trade and conservation management (Passeriformes)* as follows:

18.256 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Secretariat

Subject to available funds, the Secretariat shall:

- a) within 12 months of the conclusion of the ~~18th~~ 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, commission a preliminary study on the scale and scope of international songbird trade to consider the management and conservation priorities of songbird taxa involved in such trade;
- b) consult with appropriate technical experts in the preparation of documents on the conservation, trade, management, enforcement and regulatory priorities of the songbird taxa identified;
- c) convene a technical workshop to consider the findings of the study and the reports referred to in paragraph b);
- d) invite the members of the Animals and Standing Committees, representatives from range, exporting, transit and consumer States, and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in the workshop; and
- e) make the results of the study and workshop, together with recommendations, available to the Animals Committee for its consideration.

18.257 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall review document CoP18 Doc. 79 and the results of the study and workshop on trade in songbirds, with the recommendations of the Secretariat, as per Decision 18.256 (Rev. CoP19), and make its own recommendations to the Standing Committee or ~~19th~~ 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate.

18.258 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall consider the recommendations by the Animals Committee and make its own recommendations to the ~~19th~~ 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

18.259 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to Parties, nongovernmental organizations, commercial traders, and donors

Parties and non-Parties, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, commercial traders and donors are encouraged to provide funding to the Secretariat for the implementation of these Decisions.

31. **Banggai cardinalfish (*Pterapogon kauderni*) [Decision 18.265]**..... AC31 Doc. 31 (Rev. 1)

Indonesia introduced document AC31 Doc. 31 (Rev. 1) that contains a progress report on its implementation of Decision 18.263 on the conservation and management measures taken to ensure the sustainability of international trade in the Banggai cardinalfish (BCF) (*Pterapogon kauderni*), including population surveys, the establishment of a marine protected area, the development of a survey of Banggai cardinalfish, monitoring guidelines and rehabilitation guidelines, and the establishment of a harvest quota.

The representatives for Europe (Ms. Zíková) and North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ornamental Fish International, also on behalf of the European Pet Organization, Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council USA, and Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council Canada, acknowledged the progress made by Indonesia on the management of the Banggai cardinalfish, and agreed to the proposed recommendations and to concluding the discussion on Banggai cardinalfish in CITES.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) and the United Kingdom suggested the use of the Banggai cardinalfish as a case study under the work on marine ornamental fish and invited Indonesia to share this experience as a best practice example. The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), supported by the United Kingdom, proposed the following edits to the recommendations in paragraph 7 b): replacing the word “ensure” with the word “promote”, and replacing the word “Appendix species” with the word “Appendices”, and also the deletion of the word “then” before “Indonesian”. In paragraph 7 c), he suggested

the deletion of the phrase “agree that Banggai cardinalfish shall not be discussed further in future CITES meetings” and inserting the phrase “encouraged Indonesia to continue its work to promote the conservation, management, and sustainable trade in Banggai cardinalfish”.

Fondation Franz Weber, also on behalf Center for Biological Diversity, Animal Welfare Institute, Defenders of Wildlife, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Pro Wildlife, Robin des Bois, Earthtrust, Humane Society International, CATCA Environmental and Wildlife Society and Species Survival Network, expressed concern for the species conservation and survival and recommended the Animals Committee retain the species on its agenda.

The Committee acknowledged and noted document AC31 Doc. 31 (Rev. 1). The Committee appreciated Indonesia’s efforts which, as explained in this report, have resulted in many positive outcomes of Banggai cardinalfish protection, conservation and management that promote its sustainable use. As Banggai cardinalfish is not listed under the Appendices, efforts on its conservation and management are regulated under Indonesian national laws. The Committee acknowledged the current status of Banggai cardinalfish as a non-CITES-listed species and, referring to significant progress achieved by Indonesia explained in document AC31 Doc. 31 (Rev. 1), encouraged Indonesia to continue its work to promote the conservation, management and sustainable trade in Banggai cardinalfish and to present this case to the technical workshop on marine ornamental fishes envisaged under Decision 18.296.

32. Saiga antelope (*Saiga spp.*) [Decision 18.272]..... AC31 Doc. 32 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 32 and its addendum. He noted that no external resources had been secured to support the implementation of Decision 18.271, but that the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) had undertaken work that contributes to its implementation, including updated information on the conservation status of saiga as reported by range States, a study on the sustainable use of saiga antelopes, and preparing the 4th meeting of the signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (*Saiga spp.*), to be hosted online by the Russian Federation.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), echoed by Wildlife Conservation Society, supported the work done so far and the renewal of the decisions, but considered that it would be premature for the Animals Committee to make recommendations to the Standing Committee based solely on the information available at this time.

The United States of America announced it would provide USD 40,000 to the CITES Secretariat to fund the needed work on saiga stockpile inventory and management under Decision 18.271, paragraph d). If this work is able to be initiated soon, the Secretariat should report directly to the Standing Committee on saiga horn stockpile management.

CMS directed interested Parties and stakeholders to the CMS website which contains the draft report on *The sustainable use of saiga antelopes: perspectives and prospects* that will be discussed at the online meeting of the signatories in September this year.

The International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), on behalf of the Conservation Force, Dallas Safari Club (DSC), European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE), Safari Club International (SCI), Safari Club International Foundation (SCI-F), and Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF), agreed with the measures outlined in section 3 of the work programme and encouraged further research and awareness raising actions around the demand for saiga horn.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 32 and its addendum and agreed to propose the renewal of Decisions 18.270 to 18.274 to the Standing Committee for onward submission to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties as follows:

18.270 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to range States of saiga antelope (*Saiga spp.*) (Kazakhstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), and important consumer and trading countries of saiga parts and derivatives

- a) The range States of the saiga antelope (*Saiga spp.*) and important consumer and trading countries of saiga parts and derivatives, as identified by the Secretariat on the basis of CITES trade data, should fully implement the measures directed to them in the *Medium-Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope for 2016-2020 [MTIWP]*

~~(2016-2020)] and for 2021-2025 [MTIWP (2021-2025)], developed in support of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (Saiga spp.) and its Saiga Action Plan; and~~

- b) Consistent with the measures directed to Saiga range States in ~~MTIWP (2021-2025) the Medium Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope for 2016-2020 [MTIWP (2016-2020)],~~ the range States of the saiga antelope are encouraged to establish internal market controls for saiga parts, including registration of stockpiles, labelling of parts and products, and registration of manufacturers and traders, and report such information to the CITES Secretariat.

18.271 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Secretariat

Subject to the availability of external resources, the Secretariat shall:

- a) ~~assist the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in organizing the fourth meeting of the signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (Saiga spp.), expected to be held in the Russian Federation in 2020;~~
- b) ~~in collaboration with the CMS Secretariat, provide inputs as needed in developing a Medium Term International Work Programme for the Saiga Antelope for 2021-2025 [MTIWP (2021-2025)], developed in support of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of the Saiga Antelope (Saiga spp.) and its Saiga Action Plan;~~
- a) review, in consultation with the CMS Secretariat, the conservation of and trade in saiga antelope, *Saiga* spp., based on available data on legal and illegal trade, materials and outcomes of the fourth meeting of saiga MoU signatories, and stakeholder consultations, and report any consequent findings and recommendations to the Animals Committee, and to the Standing Committee in the context of the implementation of Resolution Conf. 13.3 on *Cooperation and synergy with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)* and the joint CMS-CITES work programme;
- b) consult saiga range States and major trading and consumer States concerning their management of stockpiles of saiga specimens; review processes and practices; and provide assistance in ensuring effective stockpile management and monitoring, including the development of inventories and strengthening stockpile security; and
- c) report to the Animals Committee and Standing Committee on the implementation of this Decision, as appropriate.

18.27 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall, as appropriate, consider any findings and recommendations submitted by the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 18.271 (Rev. CoP19), and make recommendations to the Standing Committee.

18.273 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall, as appropriate, consider any findings and recommendations submitted by the Animals Committee and the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 18.271 (Rev. CoP19) and 18.272 (Rev. CoP19), and make recommendations as necessary.

18.274 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to saiga antelope range States, Parties, multilateral environmental agreements, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders

Saiga antelope range States, Parties, multilateral environmental agreements, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate in the conservation and restoration of the saiga antelope

(*Saiga* spp.), and to support the implementation of ~~MTIWP (2016-2020)~~ and MTIWP (2021-2025).

33. Queen conch (*Strombus gigas*) [Decision 18.276] AC31 Doc. 33 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 33 and its addendum, highlighting the ongoing development of non-detriment finding guidance for trade in queen conch. The addendum provides information on a project with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) that would support the main queen conch producing countries of OECS through UNCTAD's BlueBioTrade programme.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) welcomed the activities undertaken by the Secretariat in collaboration with FAO and other partner organizations towards helping to ensure the international trade in queen conch is sustainable.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 33 and its addendum.

34. Titicaca water frog (*Telmatobius culeus*) [Decision 18.284] AC31 Doc. 34 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 34 and its addendum that summarize responses by Peru, a range State of *Telmatobius culeus*, New Zealand, and the IUCN/SSC Amphibian Specialist Group to Notification to the Parties No. 2020/012. The responses included information on two ongoing *in-situ* projects by the United Nations Development Programme, involving studies on the biology of the species.

Peru provided an oral report on the work completed through the implementation of Decision 18.284 in collaboration with the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and the work done as part of their binational action plan.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) urged Parties and the Animals Committee to include this species in their future work on amphibians and highlighted their support to Peru in order to develop a Peruvian multisectoral action protocol to address trafficking in the Titicaca water frog.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 34 and its addendum, as well as the update provided by Peru. The Committee encouraged Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia to continue their collaboration for implementing the Binational Action Plan for the conservation of the Titicaca water frog.

35. Tortoises and freshwater turtles (*Testudines* spp.) [Decision 18.291] AC31 Doc. 35 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 35 and its addendum that presents a guide on categories of turtle parts and derivatives in trade.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz), Peru, and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) welcomed the work done and the *Identification guide to tortoises and freshwater turtles: Parts, products and derivatives in trade*. Peru informed the Committee that they were preparing a draft proposal to include two species of *Testudines* spp. in Appendix II due to growing international demand.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) urged Parties to adopt strong measures to disrupt criminal networks relating to *Testudines* trade. They suggested the use of scale for photos to assist Parties and customs officials who are unfamiliar with the taxa and further suggested developing an online version of the guide.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to finalize the *Identification guide to tortoises and freshwater turtles: Parts, products and derivatives in trade*, taking into consideration comments made during discussions at the present session on the use of scales and photos, and make it available for use by Parties, including possibly as an online version.

36. Marine ornamental fishes [Decision 18.297] AC31 Doc. 36 and Addendum

The AC Chair introduced document AC31 Doc. 36 that describes four thematic studies that are proposed based on the five topics specified in paragraph c) of Decision 18.296. The addendum recalls that the scope of the work on marine ornamental fishes was agreed via an intersessional decision-making process to cover "international trade in non-CITES listed live coral reef fishes (including small sharks and rays)" and provides updates on the progress of the studies.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) welcomed and supported the recommendations, including the renewal of the Decisions.

Fondation Franz Weber, also on behalf of Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free Foundation, CATCA Environmental and Wildlife Society, Center for Biological Diversity, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthtrust, Humane Society International, Pro Wildlife, Robin des Bois, Sea Shepherd Legal and Species Survival Network, expressed concern about the format used by the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) that is challenging and time consuming for relevant experts and suggested edits to the document

Ornamental Fish International, also on behalf of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council USA, and the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council Canada, expressed their support for any activities aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of the trade in marine ornamental fishes, and noted that a listing was not always necessary to improve the conservation status of a species, with the Banggai cardinalfish as a case in point. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations highlighted that sharks and rays held in public aquaria would also include whale sharks.

The Committee noted document AC31 Doc. 36 and its addendum and agreed to submit the following draft decisions for consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting:

19.AA Directed to the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) convene a technical workshop to consider the conservation priorities and management needs related to the trade in non-CITES listed marine ornamental fishes worldwide, with a particular focus on data from importing and exporting countries;
- b) invite the Animals Committee, representatives from range States, exporting, and importing countries, fishery stakeholders, industry representatives and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to participate in this workshop; and
- c) submit findings and recommendations of this workshop to the Animals Committee.

19.BB Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall consider the results of the workshop referred to in Decision 19.AA and make recommendations to the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Maintenance of the Appendices

37. Report of the specialist on zoological nomenclature [Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18) and Decisions 17.312 (Rev. CoP18), 18.309 to 18.312] AC31 Doc.37 and Addendum

and

38. Listing of pangolins in the Appendices [Decision 18.315] AC31 Doc. 38 and Addendum

The AC nomenclature specialist (Mr. Van Dijk) introduced document AC31 Doc. 37 and its addendum that provide an overview of the implementation of Decisions on nomenclature for fauna.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková), Israel, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America supported the suggested way forward as proposed in document AC31 Doc. 37 and its addendum, and the recommendations made by the AC nomenclature specialist.

The representative for Europe (Ms. Zíková) suggested the inclusion in Species+ of the exact dates on which a nomenclature change entered into force under CITES to facilitate further processing of permits.

The United States and Israel were concerned that substantive nomenclature changes to the CITES Appendices represent a technical challenge for Management Authorities and suggested that the Standing

Committee's electronic systems and information technology working group survey Management Authorities on the current methods of recording nomenclature changes in their electronic CITES permit systems.

Israel suggested that the specialist on zoological nomenclature could look into whether the African elephant should be considered as one or two species.

The specialist on zoological nomenclature (Mr. Van Dijk) introduced document AC31 Doc. 38 that contains a draft listing proposal to streamline the current listing of pangolins in the Appendices for consideration. The specialist noted that the intersessional working group on zoological nomenclature had not able to reach consensus on a way forward, with some members expressing concern about potential alterations of the scope and stability of the listing.

The representative for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) expressed concern about the inclusion of higher taxa in the Appendices, stating that the more precise the Appendices, the better for the implementation of the Convention, while China was concerned that the current listing resulted in risks and uncertainties in the implementation of the Convention.

Bangladesh and the United States of America opposed replacing the current listing of all eight individual named species of *Manis* in Appendix I with the higher order listing of the order Pholidota and deleting *Manis* spp. from Appendix II since this would not respect the original intent of the listing.

China and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, echoed by IWMC-World Conservation Trust, the International Association for Wildlife (IAW) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) supported the suggestion to include a higher taxon listing for all pangolins in Appendix I, thus ensuring that any new species discovered would also be included in Appendix I.

Humane Society International (HSI) highlighted that there are broader issues in relation to the interpretation of higher taxa on listings and suggested that further work be done on this issue in general after CoP19.

The Committee established an in-session working group on nomenclature with the mandate to:

- a) prepare draft decisions to replace Decision 17.312 (Rev. CoP18) on *Nomenclature of birds*, and Decisions 18.309 to 18.312;
- b) review the cases highlighted in yellow in column K (or H) in the Annex to the addendum to document AC31 Doc. 37 and assign them to either the green (recommended for adoption at CoP19) or red (not recommended for adoption at CoP19) categories;
- c) consider options to update the higher taxonomy of lizards and snakes;
- d) prepare recommendations requesting the working group of the Standing Committee on electronic systems and information technologies to explore how Management Authorities address nomenclature changes in their electronic permitting systems;
- e) consider the listing proposal on Order PHOLIDOTA (pangolins) in document AC31 Doc. 38; and
- f) report on its deliberations to the Animals Committee.

The membership* was decided as follows:

Members: specialist on zoological nomenclature (Chair), **acting representative for Asia (Mr. Diesmos)**, representative for Oceania (Mr. Robertson);

Parties: Australia, Bangladesh, **Belgium**, China, **Gabon**, Germany, Japan, Mexico, **Sudan**, Switzerland, **Thailand**, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America; and

* The working group members indicated in bold were added on 1 June 2021 since they were not able to express an interest for technical reasons on 31 May 2021.

Observers: United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC); German Society of Herpetology, Humane Society International, **International Association for Wildlife**, Parrot Breeders Association of Southern Africa, **Wildlife Conservation Society**, World Parrot Trust.

Later in the meeting, the specialist on zoological nomenclature (Mr. Van Dijk) introduced document AC31 Com. 4.

IWMC-World Conservation Trust raised the issue of higher taxa listings with Humane Society International suggesting that this would not be an option for *Loxodonta* spp.

Based on document AC31 Com. 4, the Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- a) The Committee agreed to submit the following draft decision 19.AA on *Nomenclature (Bird family and order names)* to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19.AA Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall

- a) evaluate the implications of adopting the HBW/BI *Illustrated Checklist of the Birds of the World* as the new standard nomenclature reference for birds at the species, family and order levels, including the production of a listing of supplementary nomenclatural standard references that may be needed; and
 - b) develop a recommendation for decision at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- b) The Committee requested that the nomenclature specialist work with the Secretariat and the Chair of the Animals Committee to draft decisions for CoP19 to take the work on time-specific versions of online databases forward, using corals and the World Register of Marine Species (WoRMS) database as a case study.
- c) The Committee agreed to submit for adoption at CoP19 the 180 nomenclatural updates presented in the 'recommended' worksheet in Annex A to document AC31 Com. 4.
- d) The Committee noted the cases in the 'Undecided' and 'Rejected' worksheets for further evaluation after CoP19 under Decision 19.AA and as part of regular activities under Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Standard nomenclature*.
- e) The Committee agreed to submit to the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting the following draft decisions 19.BB to 19.DD.

19.BB Directed to the Secretariat:

The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification seeking the perspectives of Parties and other stakeholders on the potential effects of recognizing African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) as a separate species to African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) for CITES purposes;
- b) develop a list of all current Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties that would be impacted by such a change of nomenclature;
- c) collate the responses to the Notification to the Parties and prepare a review of the potential impacts of recognising *L. cyclotis* as a separate species for CITES purposes, including the potential impacts on Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties; and
- d) prepare a report of its findings pursuant to a), b) and c) above and submit this report to the Standing Committee for its consideration.

19.CC Directed to the Animals Committee

The Animals Committee shall:

- a) review the taxonomic-nomenclatural history of African elephant *Loxodonta africana* in CITES and the nomenclature that reflects accepted use in biology, at its 32nd meeting; and
- b) if appropriate, make a recommendation on adopting a new standard nomenclature reference for African elephants, for decision at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

19.DD Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall:

- a) review the report submitted by the Secretariat under paragraph d) of Decision 19.BB; and
 - b) provide advice and any recommendations on the potential impacts of recognizing *L. cyclotis* as a separate species for CITES purposes, including the potential impacts on Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties, for consideration at the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- f) The Committee requested its nomenclature specialist to continue to seek input and perspectives from reptile taxonomists and other sources, as part of regular activities under Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Standard nomenclature*.
- g) Concerning Annexes 1 and 2 to document AC31 Doc. 37, the Committee instructed its nomenclature specialist to prepare revised Checklists incorporating recent changes to the genera *Goniurosaurus* and *Tylototriton* and agreed to propose those for adoption at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- h) The Committee agreed to submit Annexes 3 and 4 to document AC31 Doc. 37 to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties for adoption as supplementary checklists for species of fishes and invertebrates newly included in the Appendices at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
- i) The Committee requested its Chair to propose to the Chair of the Standing Committee that the Standing Committee's working group on electronic systems and information technologies be asked to consider within its existing mandate, the recording of species nomenclature changes in electronic CITES permit systems.
- j) Through its Chair, the Committee agreed to seek the views of the Standing Committee on the matter of benefits and impacts of higher taxon listings in the Appendices, taking into account document AC31 Doc. 38 with its Annex and its addendum, as well as the provisions of Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP17), Annex 3, as part of its work on *Guidance for publication of the Appendices*, or another process.

39. Nomenclature of Appendix-III listings* **[Decision 18.313]**..... AC31 Doc. 39 and Addendum

The AC nomenclature specialist (Mr. van Dijk) introduced document AC31 Doc 39/PC25 Doc. 33 and its addendum that present an outline of the scope of the problem with regard to nomenclatural changes to species listed in Appendix III. He suggested that further deliberations on this complex topic were necessary, including close engagement with the Standing Committee and the Secretariat to further define the scope and focus of the documentation to be prepared for the Standing Committee by the Plants and Animals Committees. He stated that deliberations will likely need to continue after the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties and suggested the renewal of Decisions 18.313 and 18.314.

The Committees agreed to propose the renewal of Decisions 18.313 and 18.314 to the Standing Committee as follows:

18.313 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

The Animals and Plants Committees shall, taking into consideration the current guidance in Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18) on *Standard nomenclature*, paragraph 2 g), evaluate how nomenclature changes affect Appendix-III listings and propose further guidance and recommendations as necessary, ~~for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 73rd meeting~~, that address how such nomenclature changes are to be handled, for consideration by the Standing Committee.

18.314 (Rev. CoP19) Directed to the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee, in consultation with the Secretariat, shall ~~at its 73rd meeting~~ take into account the guidance and recommendations from the Animals and Plants Committees and make recommendations to address nomenclature changes that affect an Appendix-III listing, including possible amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.11 (Rev. CoP18) or Resolution Conf. 9.25 (Rev. CoP18) on *Inclusion of species in Appendix III*, for consideration at the ~~1920th~~ meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

No intervention was made on this agenda item.

40. Annotations* [Decision 16.162 (Rev. CoP18)]..... AC31 Doc. 40

Canada, as Chair of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on annotations, introduced document AC31 Doc. 40/PC25 Doc. 35 that provides an overview of activities of that working group and identifies challenges pertaining to the implementation and interpretation of annotations. The work on annotations has continued, and progress was presented at the 73rd meeting of the Standing Committee as outlined in document SC73 Doc. 25.

Israel welcomed the document and advised against the renumbering of hash annotations. The Republic of Korea expressed some concern about annotation #4 that it will bring to the attention of the working group of the Standing Committee.

The Committees noted document AC31 Doc. 39/PC25 Doc. 33 and the oral update by the Chair of the Standing Committee's intersessional working group on annotations.

41. Periodic Review of species included in Appendices I and II [Resolution Conf. 14.8 (Rev. CoP17)]

41.1 Overview of species under Review*..... AC31 Doc. 41.1

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 41.1/PC25 Doc. 39.1 that presents in its Annexes an overview of the animal and plant species in the Periodic Review process in the period between the 13th and 19th meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

The Committees noted document AC31 Doc. 41.1/PC24 Doc. 39.1.

No intervention was made on this agenda item.

41.2 Periodic review of *Cynomys mexicanum*..... AC31 Doc. 41.2

41.3 Periodic review of *Terrapene coahuila*..... AC31 Doc. 41.3

and

41.4 Periodic review of *Aphopelma pallidum*..... AC31 Doc. 41.4

Mexico introduced the three periodic reviews in documents AC31 Doc. 41.2 to 41.4. Mexico recommended the transfer of *Cynomys mexicanum* from Appendix I to Appendix II, the retention of *Terrapene coahuila* in Appendix I, and the retention of *Aphopelma pallidum* in Appendix II.

The representative for Africa (Mr. Mensah) supported Mexico's recommendations in the periodic reviews.

The Committee thanked Mexico for documents AC31 Doc. 41.2, Doc. 41.3 and Doc. 41.1 and supported the recommendations therein.

41.5 Periodic review of *Branta canadensis leucopareria*..... AC31 Doc. 41.5

The United States of America introduced document AC31 Doc. 41.5 that recommended the transfer of *Branta canadensis leucopareria* from Appendix I to Appendix II.

The representatives for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson) supported the recommendations in the periodic review. Safari Club International, speaking also on behalf of Safari Club International Foundation, the European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation (FACE) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), also supported the recommendations and highlighted the role played by the hunting community in the recovery of that species.

The Committee thanked the United States of America for document AC31 Doc. 41.5 and supported the recommendations therein.

41.6 Periodic review of *Phoebastria albatrus*..... AC31 Doc. 41.6

The United States of America introduced document AC31 Doc. 41.6 that recommended the transfer of *Phoebastria albatrus* from Appendix I to Appendix II.

The representatives for North America (Mr. Benítez Díaz) and Oceania (Mr. Robertson) supported the recommendations in the periodic review.

China expressed concerns about the distribution of the species in the document, noting that the Diaoyu Island and its affiliated islands have always been an inherent part of Chinese territory and the Taiwan region is an inalienable part of China's territory.

Humane Society International noted that the species was still vulnerable due to its small breeding range and considered that a transfer to Appendix II was premature.

The Committee thanked the United States of America for document AC31 Doc. 41.6, supported the recommendations therein and noted the comments made by China and Humane Society International.

42. Guidance for the publication of the Appendices*
[Decision 18.331] AC31 Doc. 42

The Chair of the Plants Committee introduced document AC31 Doc. 42/PC25 Doc. 40 that presents draft guidance for the publication of the Appendices as of May 2020, noting that work on this guidance had continued and an updated guidance was presented in document SC73 Doc. 26 (Rev. 1).

The United States of America asked the Secretariat to consult with the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and their members before the submission of the draft guidance at the 74th meeting of the Standing Committee. IWMC-World Conservation Trust asked for confirmation that the issue of renumbering of hash annotations pertained to the *Guidance for the publication of the Appendices*, and not to the Standing Committee intersessional working group on annotations. Canada noted this concern and informed the Animals and Plants Committees that it will answer IWMC directly.

The Committees noted document AC31 Doc. 42/PC25 Doc. 40 and invited Parties and observer organizations to submit to the Secretariat their comments on the draft revised *Guidance for the publication of the Appendices* in document SC73 Doc. 26 (Rev. 1). Given that the Animals and Plants Committees were not provided an opportunity for input or discussion of the document, it was requested that the record reflect that noting the document does not imply agreement or endorsement.

Regional matters

43. Regional reports

43.1 <u>Africa</u>	AC31 Doc. 43.1
43.2 <u>Asia</u>	AC31 Doc. 43.2
43.3 <u>Central and South America and the Caribbean</u>	AC31 Doc. 43.3
43.4 <u>Europe</u>	AC31 Doc. 43.4
43.5 <u>North America</u>	AC31 Doc. 43.5
43.6 <u>Oceania</u>	AC31 Doc. 43.6

The Committee welcomed and noted the regional reports in documents AC31 Doc. 43.1 to Doc. 43.6.

Concluding items

44. Any other business..... *No document*

There was no intervention.

45. Time and venue of the 32nd meeting of the Animal Committee..... *No document*

The Committee noted that the 32nd meeting of the Animals Committee should take place in 2023.

46. Closing remarks..... *No document*

The Secretary-General and the Chair thanked the Committee members, in particular those that chaired in-session working groups, as well as Party observers, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, the interpreters, the operators and the Secretariat; and the Chair closed the meeting.