

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



Thirteenth meeting of the Plants Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 12-15 August 2003

Significant trade in plants

EVALUATION OF THE REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT TRADE [DECISION 12.75]

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 12th meeting (CoP12, Santiago, 2002), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 12.75 regarding the evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, directed to the Animals and Plants Committees, stating that:

The Animals and Plants Committees shall draft terms of reference for an evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade, to be considered at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

3. A process to address concerns regarding the implementation of Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) of the Convention was established in the early 1980s, requiring the CITES Technical Committee and subsequently the Animals Committee to review trade in Appendix-II listed animal species and to recommend as necessary remedial actions to improve compliance with the implementation of Article IV. At its 8th meeting (CoP8, Kyoto, 1992), the Conference of the Parties formalized this process with the adoption of Resolution Conf. 8.9. The process for the Review of Significant Trade established through this Resolution involved identification of animal species for which existing information was insufficient to demonstrate that trade was being maintained at levels that would not be detrimental to the survival of the species concerned; review of the trade and conservation status of those species; formulation of recommendations to range States to address concerns identified; and provisions for further actions should the recommendations not be implemented satisfactorily. The Plants Committee adopted a different approach to review the implementation of Article IV in relation to plant species, as Resolution Conf. 8.9 only dealt with animals. The approaches for animals and plants were harmonized with the revision of Resolution Conf. 8.9 at CoP11 (Gigiri, 2000). This Resolution and related Decisions were consolidated and further refined in the form of Resolution Conf. 12.8 at CoP12.
4. The Review of Significant Trade is considered to have made an important contribution to the successful implementation of the Convention. Few species have been transferred from Appendix II to Appendix I since the process was initiated, an indication that it is helping to maintain international trade in specimens of Appendix-II listed species within sustainable levels.
5. However, the longer term impacts on the conservation and trade status of the species targeted for review has not been formally analyzed. This might, however, be helpful in assessing and improving the effectiveness of the review. In some cases, for example, a reduction of international trade in a given species from one or more range States following the adoption of certain measures has been shown to coincide with an increase in trade of that same species from other range States. In others, a reduction in trade in a particular species has resulted in the increase in international trade of other species with similar characteristics. Changes in production strategies for the target taxa, e.g. increases in the export of specimens produced through captive breeding or artificial propagation, have also been observed. Although

less apparent, following the adoption of certain measures a reduction in international trade similarly may have coincided with changes in domestic and possibly undocumented cross-border trade for those species for which there are domestic or regional markets. The Review of Significant Trade may also have triggered specific conservation actions, modifications in management practices and policies, or changes in the distribution of the costs and benefits associated with the trade in species subject to the reviews.

6. The Secretariat has drafted Terms of Reference for an evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade for the consideration of both Committees (see the Annex to this document). A final draft of such Terms of Reference should be provided by the Animals and Plants Committees for consideration at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
7. It should be noted that this evaluation shall only be undertaken when the necessary funds have been raised externally.

Draft
Terms of Reference
Evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade

Objectives

1. The objectives of the evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade are to:
 - a) Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Review of Significant Trade as a mechanism to ensure adequate implementation of Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a);
 - b) Assess the impact over time of the actions taken in the context of the Review of Significant Trade on the trade and conservation status of species selected for review and subject to recommendations, taking into consideration the possible effects of these measures on other CITES-listed species;
 - c) Formulate recommendations in view of the results and findings of the evaluation and the impact assessment; and
 - d) Prepare a document on the evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade and the resulting conclusions and recommendations, for consideration at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Process

2. The evaluation will take place between the 13th and 14th meetings of the Conference of the Parties, contingent on the availability of funds.
3. The Secretariat will be responsible for coordinating the evaluation and may engage consultants to assist it in this regard.
4. The Secretariat will work in close cooperation with the Animals and the Plants Committees, which may decide to set up a working group composed of representatives of the Animals and the Plants Committees, Parties and invited experts. The working group could be responsible for advising on the evaluation process, reviewing the findings of associated research and developing recommendations for wider consideration by the Parties.
5. The Secretariat will report on the progress of the evaluation at regular meetings of the Animals and Plants Committees that will take place prior to the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
6. A final report, which may include proposed amendments to existing Resolutions or Decisions, or other recommendations, and that will incorporate the comments of the Animals and Plants Committees, will be submitted by the Secretariat for consideration at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Content of the evaluation

7. The evaluation of the Review of Significant Trade should include the following activities:
 - a) Assess:
 - i) the process used to select species for review, and the types of species selected as a result;
 - ii) the process used to compile and review information concerning the implementation of Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) for the selected species, and the subsequent use of this information;
 - iii) the types and frequency of recommendations made;
 - iv) the nature and rate of responses to recommendations, and constraints identified;

- v) the use of the recommendations by range States as guidance for managing target species and other CITES-listed species with similar characteristics;
 - vi) the nature and scale of the support provided to range States for implementing the recommendations, including field projects;
 - vii) the process to monitor and review the implementation of recommendations over time; and
 - viii) the impacts of the process on other aspects of CITES implementation, including how problems identified in the course of the review but were not directly related to the implementation of Article IV, paragraphs 2 (a), 3 and 6 (a) were addressed.
- b) Conduct case studies of selected taxonomic groups and countries subject to recommendations to assess subsequent short- and longer-term changes in:
- i) conservation status of the target taxa in the range States subject to recommendations;
 - ii) trade volumes and patterns of the target taxa, considering trade involving the range States subject to recommendations, other range States and non-range States;
 - iii) production or management strategies for the target taxa;
 - iv) markets and policies developments;
 - v) costs and benefits associated with the management of and trade in the target taxa;
 - vi) protection status of the target taxa within range States, or regulatory measures outside range States; and
 - vii) trade patterns, conservation status and management for other CITES-listed species that might be suitable 'substitutes' for the target taxa.
- c) Analyze the information to assess the effectiveness, costs and benefits of the Review of Significant Trade as implemented thus far, and identify means to improve the impacts, effectiveness and efficiency of the Review of Significant Trade in reducing the threats to wild species, and particularly to Appendix-II species, in international trade.