

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

Forty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee
Paris (France), 19-22 June 2001

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

TRADE IN TIME-SENSITIVE RESEARCH SAMPLES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Decision 11.103 directs the Animals Committee (in consultation with the Plants Committee, if necessary) to:

“examine the issues related to the international transfer of samples of species included in the CITES Appendices. The terms of reference for this work shall be to examine the following issues with regard to the need to establish or recommend procedures for expeditious transfer of biological samples in specified situations:
 - a) identification of the various types of samples transferred internationally for purposes of research;*
 - b) categorization of purposes for which samples are transferred internationally, in terms of their commercial, non-commercial and strict conservation elements, e.g. veterinary and diagnostic samples;*
 - c) categorization of the recipient institutions and other recipients of such samples; and*
 - d) evaluation of the need for expedited transfer of samples in each of the categories.”*
3. The Animals Committee, at its 16th meeting (Shepherdstown, United States of America, 11-15 December 2000) discussed the subject and the tables in Annexes 1 to 3 present the outcome of its examination of the subjects in subparagraphs 2 a)-c) above. Concerning the evaluation of the need for expedited transfer of samples in each of the categories referred to in subparagraph 2 d), the Committee considers that, for an export to qualify for expedited processing, the purpose must be non-commercial and have conservation elements under any of the following situations:
 - a) urgency in the interest of the individual animal;
 - b) urgency in the interest of the species concerned or other CITES-listed species;
 - c) urgency for judicial or law enforcement purposes; and/or
 - d) urgency with regards to transferable diseases (between species of animals).

4. The Secretariat, on behalf of the Animals Committee, has requested the Plants Committee to include this subject on the agenda of its 11th meeting (in accordance with Decision 11.103).
5. Following receipt of the conclusions of the Animals Committee on this issue, the Standing Committee should, as specified in Decision 11.87:
 - "a) make recommendations regarding the need and opportunities for capacity-building with regard to enforcement and implementation, in the light of current approaches in national and regional legislation;*
 - b) develop recommendations for consideration at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties regarding the issues examined by the Animals Committee;*
 - c) ensure that the recommendations provided have been made in close consultation with the Convention on Biological Diversity, to guarantee consistency with the provisions of the Convention; and*
 - d) examine and evaluate different procedural and legal options for addressing these issues in compliance with CITES."*
6. The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee consider adopting the following procedure to implement Decision 11.87:
 - a) request Management Authorities through a Notification to the Parties (as also recommended by the Animals Committee) to comment on Annexes 1 to 3 and subparagraphs 2 a)-d) above and to inform the Secretariat of current practices concerning the issuance of CITES documents for the import and (re-) export of samples of CITES-listed species in the categories outlined in Annexes 1 to 3 and subparagraphs 2 a)-d) above; and
 - b) request the Animals Committee to summarize responses and identify possible procedures that can be used to prepare a draft resolution with recommendations for streamlined processing of CITES documents for time-sensitive samples; and
 - c) consider the summary and recommendations of the Animals Committee at its 46th meeting prior to submitting a draft resolution for consideration at the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
7. Concerning the implementation of Decision 11.88 (as well as Decision 11.105) the Secretariat could, on behalf of the Standing Committee, inform the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity of the conclusions of the Animals Committee and request comments on the proposed draft resolution.

Identification of various types of samples transferred internationally

Type of sample	Typical size of sample	Use of sample
blood, liquid	drops or 5 ml of whole blood in a tube with anticoagulant; may deteriorate in 36 hours	haematology and standard biochemical tests to diagnose disease; taxonomic research; biomedical research
blood, dry (smear)	a drop of blood spread on a microscope slide, usually fixed with chemical fixative	blood counts and screening for parasites
blood, clotted (serum)	5 ml of blood in tube with or without a blood clot	serology and detection of antibodies for evidence of disease; biomedical research
tissues, fixed	5 mm ³ pieces of tissues in a fixative	histology and electron microscopy to detect signs of disease; taxonomic research; biomedical research
tissues, fresh (excluding ova, sperm and embryos)	5 mm ³ pieces of tissues, sometimes frozen	microbiology and toxicology to detect organisms and poisons; taxonomic research; biomedical research
swabs	tiny pieces of tissue in a tube on a swab	growing bacteria, fungi, etc. to diagnose disease
hair, skin, feathers, scales	small, sometimes tiny pieces of skin surface in a tube with or without fixative	genetic and forensic tests and detection of parasites and pathogens and other tests
cell lines	no limitation of sample size	cell lines are artificial products cultured either as primary or continuous cell lines that are used extensively in testing the production of vaccines or other medical products and taxonomic research (e.g. chromosome study and extraction of DNA)
DNA	small amounts of blood, hair, feather follicle, muscle and organ tissue (e.g. liver or heart), purified DNA etc.	sex determination; identification; forensic investigations; taxonomic research; biomedical research
secretions, (saliva, venom, milk), does not include excretions (urine and faeces)	1-5 ml in vials	phylogeny research, production of antivenene, biomedical research

Categorization of purposes for which samples are transferred internationally in terms of their typically commercial, typically non-commercial (see Resolution Conf. 5.10), and strict conservation elements

Purpose of sample transfer	Commercial purpose	Non-commercial purpose	Strict conservation purpose
veterinary diagnosis		X	X
forensic and law enforcement purposes		X	X
taxonomic purposes and identification		X	X
genetic and ecological research		X	X
genetic engineering	X		X
biomedical research	X	X	X
pharmaceutical purposes	X		
education and training	X	X	X

Categorization of the recipient institutions and other recipients of such samples

Categorization of types of recipient
veterinary laboratories
government agencies for non-commercial purposes (laboratories, law enforcement, forensic)
universities
museums and herbaria
private forensic laboratories
individual scientists and veterinarians
private research institutions, including conservation organizations
zoological parks, aquaria, botanical gardens
pharmaceutical and biomedical companies