

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

Reports

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE

This report (for the period 20 April 2000 to 15 April 2001) has been prepared by the Chairman of the Animals Committee.

1. Immediately after the closure of 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP11), the newly elected members and alternate members of the Animals Committee (AC) met in order to get to know each other and to elect a Chairman for the coming period, as Hank Jenkins was no longer representing Oceania and the position of Chairman had become vacant. The new composition of the AC is as follows:
 - a) Africa: members: Prof. Dr Kim Howell (United Republic of Tanzania) and Michael Griffin (Namibia), alternates: Dr Edson Chidzya (Zimbabwe) and Dr Richard Kiome Bagine (Kenya);
 - b) Asia: members: Tonny R. Soehartono (Indonesia) and Dr Schwann Tunhikorn (Thailand), alternates: M. Muzammel Hussain (Bangladesh) and Dr Choo-Hoo Giam (Singapore);
 - c) Central and South America and the Caribbean: members: Sixto J. Incháustegui (Dominican Republic) and Dr Marco Polo Micheltti Bain (Honduras), alternates: Roberto Ramos Tagarona (Cuba) and Sra. Magaly M. Ojeda (Venezuela);
 - d) Europe: members: Dr Marinus S. Hoogmoed (Netherlands) and Dr Katalin Rodics (Hungary), alternates: Dr Vin Fleming (United Kingdom) and Dr T. Althaus (Switzerland);
 - e) North America: member: Dr Susan S. Lieberman (USA), alternate: Dr Rodrigo Medellín Legorretta (Mexico);
 - f) Oceania: member: Dr Rod Hay (New Zealand), alternate Dr Richard John Watling (Fiji).
2. At the meeting Dr Malan Lindeque was representing the Secretariat. There was a quorum and I, as the regional representative of Europe, was elected as Chairman.
3. It was evident that as a result of CoP11 a number of issues would be moulded into Resolutions and Decisions that would have consequences for the work of the AC, as would the new Strategic Vision and Action Plan of the Convention. Going over the issues at hand it soon was evident that these could be divided into three groups: one concerning biological issues, one concerning implementation and legal issues and one with elements of both. Members of the AC are elected on the basis of their expertise in zoological matters, and it

seems inappropriate to ask these biologists to e.g. try to establish how best to mark tins of caviar.

4. With the permission of the AC it was proposed to the Chairman of the Standing Committee (SC) to look into the possibilities to establish a technical committee composed of experts on implementation and legal matters to deal with these issues more efficiently. The Chairman of the SC received this proposal positively, and it will be discussed at the 45th meeting of the SC in Paris. In this way the non-scientific elements of discussions can be eliminated as much as possible from the time-limited meetings of the AC. The Committee should focus on zoological matters, which after all are the field of expertise of the Committee and its membership, and try to reach conclusions and make decisions based on scientific information and evidence only.
5. In May all members and alternates were contacted by the Chairman to discuss the main issues that had to be dealt with in the coming period. There was consensus on this and the item was carried forward for adoption at the 16th meeting of the Committee (AC16).
6. Also in May the Chairman nominated six persons among the members and alternates (one from each region) to participate in the Criteria Working Group (CWG), established pursuant to Decision 11.2, to review the criteria for amending Appendices I and II. The Criteria Working Group composed of AC and Plants Committee (PC) representatives, together with some external experts, met in Canberra, Australia from 2 to 4 August 2000. The AC was represented by Messrs Bagine, Hay, Hoogmoed, Michelletti and Tunhikorn and by Ms Lieberman. A joint meeting of the AC and the PC in Shepherdstown, United States of America, held from 7 to 9 December 2000, was completely devoted to discussion of the results of the CWG, and all members of the AC participated. The Chairman, as a member of the Dutch delegation (and a prospective member of the CWG) attended the consultation meeting of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) concerning CITES listing criteria in Rome, Italy, from 28 to 30 June 2000. The Vice-Chairman, Dr Lieberman, also attended the Rome meeting as member of the delegation of the United States of America.
7. In August the Secretariat and the Chairman prepared the Agenda and Work Plan for AC16. The outstanding recommendations for phase IV of the Significant Trade Review process, pursuant to Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.) were prepared. These were sent out to the Parties concerned in September 2000.
8. From September to October, the various documents for AC16 were discussed with the Secretariat. After CoP11 the Chairman had asked Dr Vincent Fleming, alternate representative for Europe, to continue chairing a working group on corals. He agreed to do so and actively started networking with the members of his dynamic group. In September, Dr Thomas Althaus, alternate representative for Europe, and Dr Dietrich Jelden of the German Management Authority were asked to prepare a discussion paper on the transborder movement of tissue cultures for AC16. Both agreed and a lively discussion on the matter, yielding many useful suggestions ensued.
9. AC16 took place in Shepherdstown, United States of America, from 11 to 15 December 2000. Meetings of the AC are in fact meetings of the 10 elected regional representatives, experts in zoological matters, who are responsible for coming up with recommendations and decisions to be discussed by either the SC or the Conference of the Parties. All others present are observers that do not have a formal responsibility in this committee. In order to ensure that the representatives of the AC benefited from the presence of the observers of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), it was decided in cooperation with the Chairman of the PC that admission of NGO observers should occur through a regulated procedure

that identified the expertise of the organisations and the individuals representing them. To keep numbers to a manageable level, only one person per NGO could be registered for the meeting.

10. In the process of registrations of NGOs, the Chairman assembled a large database providing background information on the expertise and know-how, structure, mission statements and funding of a significant number of NGOs. A problem arose concerning participation of the Humane Society of the U.S. (cf. Notification to the Parties No. 2000/60), which could be solved. However, at AC16 some countries mentioned the difficulties that they had experienced because of unfounded accusations made by HSUS. The matter was clearly brought to everyone's attention and it is hoped that no such incidents will occur again in the future.
11. During the meeting, working groups were established under the chairmanship of a member or alternate member of the AC, but with some exceptions. Participation of NGOs in the working groups was by invitation of the Chairman and based on their expertise on the subject to be discussed. The working groups came up with either final or interim reports while some have to continue their work between sessions of Committee meetings.
12. The reports of the nine working groups that were established at AC16 were adopted with the exception of the one on the registration and supervision of operations engaged in captive breeding of CITES listed species listed in Appendix I (cf. Resolution Conf. 11.14, Decision 11.101 and Decision 11.102). No consensus was reached about the proposed definitions for "critically endangered in the wild", "difficult to keep in captivity" and "difficult to breed in captivity", and the Chairman decided to defer the matter to AC17.
13. The working group on cross-border movement in time-sensitive biological samples for conservation purposes submitted a report that formed the basis of SC45 Doc.10, thereby fulfilling the AC's part of this process (Decisions 11.103, 11.104 and 11.105).
14. The working group on the review of the Appendices concluded that no changes in listing were necessary for the species that had been selected for consideration.
15. The Significant Trade Review Working Group proposed and/or confirmed categories for *Naja naja*, *Moschus* spp. and *Acipenseriformes*. In consultation with the Secretariat, the AC formulated recommendations for these taxa that were circulated to the relevant range States early in 2001.
16. The Significant Trade Review process is a matter of utmost importance to the AC and the Convention. This process tries to monitor whether significant levels of trade in selected species are in conformity with Article IV of the Convention. During the meeting in Shepherdstown, it soon became evident that there are some problems with the practical application of Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.). For instance it became clear very early in the discussions that biological status and management status of a species should not be confused, and that a species in dire circumstances everywhere, but under completely different management systems in neighbouring countries, can not simply be squeezed into a single category. That is exactly what Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.) appears to require, i.e. putting species subject to different management regimes into one category, which is supposed to relate to both management and implementation. When these categories in Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.) were drawn up, biological status and the management regimes a species was subject to were not clearly separated. As long as the Significant Trade Review process is dealing with species that are endemic to one country, or are only traded from one country, matters are simple and straightforward. However, when several countries are sharing a species and are all exploiting it under different management regimes,

matters become very complex and the Significant Trade Review process is then difficult to apply.

17. One of the objectives of the AC will therefore be to present to CoP12 a new draft Resolution on Significant Trade Review, that will address these issues and at the same time try to streamline the whole process and make it more transparent for everyone. It also appears that Decision 11.106 needs to be incorporated in, or more closely harmonized with Resolution Conf. 8.9 (Rev.). A simplified users guide to the Significant Trade Review process should help to facilitate its further implementation.
18. Finally, it was confirmed at AC16 that the organization of two workshops dealing principally with non-CITES listed species (one on trade in freshwater turtles and tortoises and one on trade in seahorses and other members of the family Syngnathidae) was progressing well, and that funding was becoming available.
19. On the basis of the Strategic Vision, a Work Plan for the AC was outlined in which priorities are established. This plan was adopted at AC16, and many items were immediately dealt with at the meeting. An issue of significant concern was the problematic relationship between members of the AC and the Scientific Authorities and/or Management Authorities of the countries in their region. There is hardly any response to requests from members of the Committee while Parties attend AC meetings only to take care of issues of interest to them. It is hoped that regional and inter-regional contacts will improve in future.
20. One of the results of AC16 was the adoption of a mission statement that reads: "The mission of the CITES Animals Committee is to provide the Conference of Parties, Parties, other Committees and working groups and the Secretariat, with reliable scientific information and advice on biological matters (including criteria and their application) concerning international trade in animal species included in the Appendices as well as, when applicable, animal species subject to international trade that may be considered for inclusion in the Appendices in the future."
21. The Secretariat provided the following information on the expenditures incurred in 2000 for organising AC16:

	USD	CHF
Logistic costs for the CA meeting	20,000	33,800
Translation of documents	22,134	37,406
AC members travel and daily allowance costs	26,301	44,449
Rapporteur for AC16	1,902	3,214
TOTAL	70,337	118,870

22. The budget for AC expenses during 2000 was CHF 90,000, while the costs of organising AC16 totalled CHF 118,870. The overspending was largely due to external translation costs. It was noted that only the Committee members from the Netherlands and the USA managed to secure their own funding for their participation in AC16, and that the eight other members had to rely on the AC16 budget line for travel and subsistence. For 2001, the AC has a generally reduced budget for organising meetings, totalling CHF 100,000 CHF (USD 60,000).

23. Since his election, the Chairman was able to dedicate about 60 % of his normal working time to CITES (which includes both AC matters and national CITES issues concerning the Netherlands). This was possible thanks to a contractual arrangement between the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries (responsible for the implementation of CITES in the Netherlands), and the employer of the Chairman, the National Museum of Natural History in Leiden, the Netherlands. The expenses for travelling to and attending the regular meetings of the AC and CoPs, and the costs to cover associated staff time, were funded from a budget that was generously provided by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries under this contract.
24. The one-year experience learned that full governmental and institutional support (including financial support) is required to effectively undertake the work of the Chairman of the Committee. In other circumstances, it would practically be impossible to adequately assume all the responsibilities of the Chairman of the Committee. This implies that persons from countries where such financial and other support cannot be ensured are actually prevented from taking up this position, which in practice might be seen as unfairness against certain regions or countries. This is a matter of concern, and the SC may wish to look into the possibilities of having funds available to remunerate countries for the time that the Chairman of the AC needs to devote to the assignment.
25. The budget allocated to organizing AC17 may not be sufficient to cover all the costs of the meeting.
26. Viet Nam kindly offered to host the next meeting of the AC, which will take place from 30 July to 3 August in Hanoi.
27. Germany generously offered to host a European Regional meeting of the AC. This offer was accepted. On January 24, 2001, Dr Katalin Rodics, the Chairman of the AC and Dr Ger van Vliet of the Secretariat visited Bonn to discuss further details with the German authorities. It was decided that the meeting will take place from 14 to 16 November 2001 in Bonn, Germany, and that it will be preceded by a two-day regional training seminar.
28. During the past year there has been intensive contact with the Secretariat via e-mail and telephone concerning a large variety of matters and I want to thank the Secretariat, but especially Dr Malan Lindeque, for his help and the pleasant contact that we have maintained throughout these sometimes very hectic times. I look forward to our continued collaboration.

Dr M. S. Hoogmoed
Chairman of the Animals Committee
Leiden

15 April 2001