

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

Forty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 22-25 April 2003

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

NATIONAL REPORTS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat and addresses both annual and biennial reports.

Late or non-submission of annual reports for 1997-2000

2. At its 47th meeting (Santiago, November 2002), the Standing Committee determined that several countries had failed, without having provided adequate justification, to provide the annual reports required under Article VIII, paragraph 7(a), of the Convention for three consecutive years within the deadline established in Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP12) or the extended deadline that is provided for in that Resolution. The Committee instructed the Secretariat to issue a Notification to the Parties recommending suspension of trade in specimens of CITES-listed species in relation to these Parties.
3. Consequently, on 19 December 2002 the Secretariat issued Notification to the Parties No. 2002/064 informing Parties that, pursuant to Decision 11.37, the Conference of the Parties had recommended that with immediate effect Parties should not authorize any trade in specimens of CITES-listed species with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Djibouti, Dominica, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia and Vanuatu.
4. Cambodia provided its annual reports for 1997-2000 directly to the Secretariat during the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Santiago, 2002), so it was not included in the group of Parties listed in Notification to the Parties No. 2002/064.
5. The Secretariat subsequently determined that Bangladesh had been mistakenly included in the group of Parties listed in Notification to the Parties No. 2002/064. Notification to the Parties No. 2003/006 of 7 February 2003 was consequently issued withdrawing, with immediate effect, the recommendation to suspend trade with Bangladesh and expressing the Secretariat's regret for any inconvenience that may have been caused.
6. On 19 December 2002, Dominica provided to the Secretariat copies of several CITES permits for the years 2000-2001. Recently, Dominica has orally confirmed that these documents reflect the totality of CITES trade for 1997-2001. Recent information provided to the Secretariat by UNEP-WCMC indicates that Vanuatu has entered its CITES trade data into a computerized database and has provided annual reports for 1997-2001.
7. A Notification to the Parties will be prepared by the Secretariat withdrawing the recommendation to suspend trade with Dominica and Vanuatu.

8. No communication on the late or non-submission of annual reports has been received from Afghanistan, Djibouti, Liberia, Rwanda or Somalia.

Late or non-submission of annual reports for 1999-2001

9. At its 12th meeting, the Conference of the Parties determined that Decisions 11.37 and 11.89 had proved to be useful in promoting compliance with the requirement to submit annual reports and should therefore remain in effect.
10. UNEP-WCMC has advised that the percentage of the number of Parties that complied with the annual report requirement is 89.4 per cent for 1999, 78.8 per cent for 2000 and 58.8 per cent for 2001.
11. The Secretariat has written to 10 Parties that the Secretariat's records show to have failed, without having provided adequate justification, to provide annual reports for the years 1999-2001. Six of these Parties are currently subject to the recommendation to suspend trade in Notification to the Parties No. 2002/064.

Working Group on reporting

12. At its 12th meeting, the Conference of the Parties directed the Standing Committee to:

12.87 a) (...) undertake a review of the reporting requirements under the Convention with a view to identifying and analysing the causes of non-compliance with those requirements and proposing ways to turn reporting requirements into useful management tools for Parties.

13. Specific terms of reference for this review, covering both annual and biennial reports, were set forth within Decision 12.87 (see Annex). The Standing Committee is to report on the results of the review at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Recommendations

14. As required by Decision 11.89 the Standing Committee should determine, on the basis of this report and an oral report by the Secretariat at the 49th meeting of the Committee, which Parties have failed to provide annual reports for the years 1999-2001 without having provided adequate justification. In keeping with Decision 11.37, the Secretariat will then issue a Notification to the Parties recommending suspension of trade in specimens of CITES-listed species in relation to those Parties.
15. The Secretariat recommends that the Standing Committee establish a working group for undertaking a review of reporting requirements under the Convention and providing related findings and conclusions at the 50th meeting of the Standing Committee.

Reporting requirements

Directed to the Standing Committee

12.87 a) *The Standing Committee shall undertake a review of the reporting requirements under the Convention with a view to identifying and analysing the causes of non-compliance with those requirements and proposing ways to turn reporting requirements into useful management tools for Parties.*

b) *The review shall consider the:*

- i) various reporting requirements under the Convention and Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties (e.g. annual reports, biennial reports, special reports, etc.);*
- ii) feasibility and desirability of undertaking analyses of Parties' capacity to produce complete, accurate and timely reports;*
- iii) possible inclusion of CITES reports in broader biodiversity or state-of-the-environment reports;*
- iv) experience of other conventions in facilitating Parties' compliance with reporting requirements;*
- v) sufficiency of the existing Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports;*
- vi) actions needed to make better use of CITES data through graphic review tools, building on the report on CITES trade data: an under-utilized wildlife resource, and to develop the searchability of such data on the CITES website;*
- vii) desirability and feasibility of producing an International Yearbook of Wildlife Trade;*
- viii) work of the Standing Committee related to information management systems;*
- ix) additional financial or technical assistance that might facilitate reporting;*
- x) implications of technological developments such as electronic permitting;*
- xi) desirability and feasibility of a coordinated global system for the issuance and monitoring of CITES permits and certificates;*
- xii) accessibility of annual reports;*
- xiii) consequences of persistent late or non-submission of reports, despite assistance;*
- xiv) possible need to revise or draft relevant resolutions of the Conference of the Parties;*

- xv) *necessary funding from the CITES Trust Fund or external sources that would be required to implement actions that are proposed; and*
 - xvi) *most cost effective measures required to implement these matters.*
- c) *The review shall include the following terms of reference relevant to biennial reports:*
- i) *to clarify the purpose and usefulness of biennial reports, especially in relation to annual reports, the submission of biennial reports by Parties with Category 1 legislation under the National Legislation Project and various special reports under the Convention;*
 - ii) *to assess the need to enhance the use of biennial reports as a means for Parties to communicate implementation problems and possible solutions;*
 - iii) *to explore whether biennial reports could be thematic in nature and synchronized with special reports for the Conference of the Parties or subsidiary bodies to the Convention;*
 - iv) *to consider whether biennial reports could be harmonized with national reporting under other biodiversity-related conventions; and*
 - v) *to identify ways in which biennial reports could be standardized for easier analysis and comparison, including the adoption of guidelines and standard formats for their preparation and submission.*
- d) *The Standing Committee shall report at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*