

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



Fifty-fourth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 2-6 October 2006

Strategic and administrative matters

CITES Strategic Plan: 2008-2013

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been prepared by the Strategic Plan Working Group.
2. At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004), considering that the period covered by the Strategic Vision through 2005 was coming to an end, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 13.1 as follows:

The Conference of the Parties decides:

- a) *to extend until the end of 2007 the time validity of the Strategic Vision and its Action Plan, which were adopted with Decision 11.1 at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000) (attached as Annex 1 to [the CoP13] Decisions);*
 - b) *to establish a Strategic Plan Working Group as a subcommittee of the Standing Committee, with representation from all regions and of the Animals and Plants Committees, with the task to develop, with the cooperation of the Secretariat, a proposal for a Strategic Vision and Action Plan through 2013, in particular in order to contribute to the achievement of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) targets of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010;*
 - c) *to invite input from relevant intergovernmental organizations to the work of the Strategic Plan Working Group with respect to possible synergies;*
 - d) *to urge all Parties and to instruct the Secretariat and the permanent Committees to evaluate their efforts in relation to the implementation of the existing Strategic Vision and Action Plan and to submit the outcome thereof to the Strategic Plan Working Group through their representatives on that working group;*
 - e) *that the Strategic Plan Working Group shall submit its proposal to the Standing Committee for approval at its annual meeting prior to the deadline for the submission of proposals for consideration at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which is to be held in 2007; and*
 - f) *that the Standing Committee shall submit the proposal for a Strategic Vision and Action Plan through 2013 for adoption at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*
3. At its 53rd meeting (Geneva, June – July 2005), the Standing Committee established the Strategic Plan Working Group. It designated Ghana as the Chairman of this Working Group and Canada as the Vice-Chairman, and agreed that the regional representatives in the Committee should inform the Secretariat of the person selected to represent their region in the Working Group.

4. At the same meeting, the Standing Committee agreed on the terms of reference of the Strategic Plan Working Group. These are presented in Annex 1 to the present document.
5. A meeting of the Working Group was organized from 24 to 28 April 2006, in Ottawa, Canada, hosted by the Government of Canada. Unfortunately, neither the Chairman nor the Vice-Chairman of the Plants Committee was able to attend. The members of the Working Group who participated were:
 - Chairman: Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana)
 - Africa: Sonja Meintjies (South Africa)
 - Asia: Meng Xianlin (China)
 - Central and South America and the Caribbean: Annemarie Duncker (Chile)
 - Europe: Stefan Verbunt (Netherlands)
 - North America: Lynda Maltby (Canada) (Vice-Chairman)
 - Oceania: Wilbur Dovey (New Zealand)
 - Animals Committee: Thomas Althaus.

The Working Group was assisted by the Secretariat (Jim Armstrong and Jonathan Barzdo).

6. In advance of the meeting, the Secretariat sent Notification to the Parties No. 2006/018, of 9 March 2006, inviting Parties to submit their comments for the consideration of the Strategic Plan Working Group. As a result, at the meeting, the members of the Working Group were able to take into account submissions from Parties and non-governmental organizations, in addition to documents from the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat, and the documents referred to specifically in the terms of reference.
7. At the Ottawa meeting, the Working Group agreed on two main themes for the Strategic Plan, and on two main goals for each of these themes. The first theme is about making the Convention work effectively. The second is looking to the future and to the role of CITES in a world that, since the inception of the Convention, has witnessed a number of global environmental initiatives relevant to sustainable use of wildlife and benefits for people; where CITES exists alongside many other multilateral environmental agreements dealing with the environment, and where there is increasing concern about the status of some of the most commercially important species of wildlife, in particular marine and timber species. The Working Group also agreed, after long discussions, on a number of Objectives to be met in order to achieve the goals, and on indicators that could be used as a basis for determining the success of the Strategic Plan.
8. The Working Group followed its terms of reference closely but one issue that emerged in its discussions caused it to stray from these terms of reference in one respect. It was noted that the Action Plan to implement the current Strategic Vision Through 2007 contained a large number of activities to be implemented by the Parties, the permanent committees of CITES or the Secretariat. Many of the Action Points had been implemented and the Secretariat provided a long list of the actions taken to achieve the implementation of the Action Plan. However, for many Action Points particularly those addressed to the Parties, there was no information available to indicate what action had been taken. It was noted that some of the Action Points are expressions of policy that might be better recorded in a different way. After considerable discussion, the Working Group agreed to suggest that any specific actions that are to be taken by Parties, committees or the Secretariat should be specified in the Resolutions and Decisions of the Conference of the Parties, and that it was not helpful to create another separate layer of instructions and recommendations. For this reason the Working Group decided not to prepare an action plan to implement the Strategic Plan. Rather it suggests that the Strategic Plan should provide a framework for the future development of the body of Resolutions and Decisions, so that amendments to this soft law of CITES and any new resolutions and decisions should be designed to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan.

9. The draft of the Strategic Plan for the Convention for the period 2008 to 2013 presented in Annex 2 is the result of discussions of the Working Group at its Ottawa meeting with corrections and additional text agreed subsequently through electronic communication.
10. The Standing Committee is invited to consider the draft, to be forwarded for further consideration at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUP

1. These terms of reference have been produced by the Secretariat on the basis of document SC53 Doc. 6.1, as amended by the Standing Committee at its 53rd meeting (Geneva, June – July 2005).

2. Membership

One representative of each region and the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman of the Animals and Plants Committees).

3. Input from non-governmental organizations

The Chairman of the Working Group may invite submissions from non-governmental organizations on aspects of its work at key stages in the deliberations.

4. Terms of reference

- a) Conduct a review to identify outcomes from the work of the Standing Committee in relation to each objective in the current Strategic Vision and Action Plan;
- b) Identify outcomes from the work of the Secretariat, Animals and Plants Committees, and Parties for each objective in the current Strategic Vision and Action Plan by inviting review from these bodies and from NGOs;
- c) Analyse the above reviews and include in that analysis an assessment of whether objectives have been achieved and whether Convention resources had been optimally applied;
- d) On the basis of the above analysis, identify and clearly define ongoing objectives and possible new objectives for inclusion in the new Strategic Vision and Action Plan, taking into account any recommendations from the Review of Scientific Committees;
- e) Develop indicators for successful fulfilment and an indication of the priority of each objective, for inclusion within the new Strategic Vision and Action Plan;
- f) Reflect views and opinions of Convention Parties in its work of drafting the new Strategic Vision in order to guarantee fairness and transparency;
- g) Consider the conclusions of document CoP13 Doc. 14 and other alternative possibilities for financing, among other things, the Convention and/or the conservation of and sustainable international trade in species of wild fauna and flora; and
- h) Further consider all recommendations of the Vilm report (CoP13 Doc. 12.1.1 Annex 2) to identify those elements of most significance, for their inclusion in the new Strategic Vision and Action Plan through 2013, in order to contribute to the achievement of the WSSD target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, and take into account the relevant Decisions and Resolutions adopted at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on improved cooperation and synergy between CITES and CBD.

DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR CONSIDERATION AT
THE 14TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

CITES Strategic Plan 2008-2013

RECALLING Decision 11.1, adopted at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Gigiri, 2000), through which the Conference adopted the *Strategic Vision through 2005* and the *Action Plan*;

RECALLING Decision 13.1, adopted at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, 2004) through which the Conference extended to 2007 the period of validity of the *Strategic Vision through 2005* and established a Strategic Plan Working Group as a subcommittee of the Standing Committee to prepare a new strategic vision for the period 2008 to 2013;

RECOGNIZING, with gratitude, the work of the Strategic Plan Working Group;

CONSCIOUS of the need to improve the implementation of the Convention globally;

CONVINCED that the evolution of CITES must take into account developments in the broader international community relating to the environment and trade;

REAFFIRMING the commitment of the Conference of the Parties, expressed in Decision 13.1, to contribute to the World Summit on Sustainable Development target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

ADOPTS *The Strategic Plan for CITES: 2008-2013*, annexed to this Resolution;

URGES Parties to review their policies and plans, including their biological diversity strategies and action plans where appropriate, in order to make any adjustments necessary to help ensure that the Goals specified in *The Strategic Plan for CITES* are achieved;

REQUESTS the Secretariat to design its programmes of work for the period 2008 to 2013 in order to support the implementation of *The Strategic Plan for CITES*;

INVITES intergovernmental environmental fora, the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, other intergovernmental bodies and other organizations with an interest in the objectives of CITES to review their policies and their current and planned programmes and activities, with the aim of supporting achievement of the Goals specified in *The Strategic Plan for CITES*; and

INSTRUCTS the Standing Committee to review the progress in implementation of *The Strategic Plan for CITES*, and in achievement of the Objectives, at each of its ordinary meetings during the term of the plan, and to report at the 15th and 16th meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CITES: 2008-2013Introduction

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was concluded on 3 March 1973. It entered into force, after ratification by 10 States, on 1 July 1975.

Since then, the number of countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention has continued to increase. With 169¹ Parties, CITES is widely regarded as one of the most important international conservation instruments. During this period, the Conference of the Parties has shown itself to be capable of adapting to changing circumstances and, through the adoption of Resolutions and Decisions, has demonstrated an ability to construct practical solutions to increasingly complex wildlife trade and conservation problems.

At its ninth meeting (Fort Lauderdale, 1994), the Conference of the Parties commissioned a review of the Convention's effectiveness. The principal purposes of the review were to evaluate the extent to which the Convention had achieved its objectives and the progress made since CITES came into being and, most importantly, to identify deficiencies and requirements necessary to strengthen the Convention and help plan for the future. At its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997), the Conference agreed to an Action Plan for implementing certain findings and recommendations of the review. A central finding was the need for a strategic plan and, at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000), the Conference of the Parties adopted the *Strategic Vision through 2005*, and an Action Plan.

At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 13.1, which extended the Strategic Vision and Action Plan until the end of 2007. It also established a procedure for developing a new Strategic Plan through 2013, particularly to contribute to the achievement of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) targets of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. The present document is the result of this process.

With this new Strategic Plan, the Conference of the Parties to CITES outlines the Convention's direction in the new millennium and takes into account issues such as:

- meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals;
- significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010;
- ensuring stewardship of natural resources and their use at sustainable levels;
- safeguarding wildlife as an integral part of the global ecosystem on which all life depends;
- achieving deeper understanding of the cultural, social and economic issues at play in producer and consumer countries;
- promoting wider involvement of civil society in the development of conservation policies and practices (including non-governmental organizations concerned with development or environment, community groups, professional associations, trade unions, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups); and
- placing greater attention on timber and aquatic species.

¹ As of September 2006.

Purpose

The two-fold purpose of the Strategic Plan is:

- to improve the working of the Convention, so that international trade in wild fauna and flora is consistently conducted at sustainable levels; and
- to ensure that CITES policy developments are aligned with changes in international environmental priorities and take into account new international environmental initiatives.

The Strategic Plan confirms the recognition by the Parties that sustainable trade in wild fauna and flora can make a major contribution to achieving the broader objectives of sustainable development and biodiversity conservation. It also recognizes that the Convention must continue to ensure that proper trade mechanisms are put in place. These depend upon the availability of and access to reliable scientific data and to information generated by effective monitoring systems to counter over-exploitation. But information by itself is not enough and such trade mechanisms also require strong national capacity backed by good cooperation at national, regional and global levels. However the purposes of the Strategic Plan will be achieved only if CITES maintains a high political profile.

Structure

In order to achieve this purpose, four broad goals have been identified as the key components of the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Ensure compliance with and implementation and enforcement of the Convention
- Goal 2: Secure the financial basis for the Convention
- Goal 3: Adopt balanced wildlife trade policies compatible with human well-being, livelihoods and cultural integrity
- Goal 4: Reduce the rate of global biodiversity loss.

The first two of these goals are aimed at consolidating the existing strengths of the Convention. The second two are forward-looking and provide a framework for the evolution of CITES.

Within the framework provided by each of these goals, this Strategic Plan identifies a number of objectives to be achieved. And, as a basis for determining success of the Plan, when the Parties meet at their 16th meeting, in 2013, a number of specific indicators are listed under each objective.

This document is not an action plan. It does not try to prescribe how the goals or objectives are to be achieved. Rather this is left to the Parties, the committees or the Secretariat to decide for themselves, or for the Conference of the Parties to specify the required actions through Resolutions or Decisions. For example, it does not indicate what kind of capacity building is required to achieve the objectives, or how scientific advice is to be provided. These sorts of determinations must be made on the basis of this agreed strategy. They are the next step.

CITES MISSION STATEMENT

**TO CONSERVE BIODIVERSITY AND PROMOTE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH SUSTAINABLE AND REGULATED INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE**

Explanation of the Mission Statement

This statement of the Mission of CITES provides the context for the Strategic Plan that follows. It provides a vision of the aim of CITES in the modern world, taking account of developments in the international community since the Convention was concluded in 1973. These include, in particular: the conclusion of several multilateral environmental agreements, notably the Convention on Biological

Diversity; the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals; and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

In light of this Mission, the Strategic Plan through 2013 has been designed to take into account the experience of implementing the Strategic Vision through 2007, to build on that experience and to set out a number of new directions for the CITES Parties and bodies.

THE STRATEGIC GOALS

The Conference of the Parties has identified four primary goals to provide the framework for the implementation of the Strategic Plan. These have been divided thematically into two categories.

THEME 1 – WORKING EFFECTIVELY

GOAL 1 ***ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH AND IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE CONVENTION***

Introduction

The effectiveness of the Convention depends upon its full implementation by all Parties, whether they are consumers or producers of wild animals and plants. Full implementation relies, in turn, upon each Party's:

- commitment to the Convention and its principles;
- national legislation and law enforcement capability;
- access to scientific expertise and analyses; and
- access to and understanding of the Convention's requirements.

Overall, implementation of the Convention should be aimed at promoting and regulating the sustainable management of and responsible trade in wild fauna and flora and promoting the effective enforcement of the Convention.

Many activities that take place under the Convention are aimed at enhancing Parties' ability to implement CITES. Such capacity building is a common thread throughout this Strategic Plan and an aspect of virtually every objective. Improved national capacity, in turn, should enable a better management of wild animals and plants, and thus reduce the need to include species in the CITES Appendices. It is also important to consider the potential of regional coordination and collaboration for national capacity-building efforts.

The need for a coordinated process of implementation has grown as the Convention faces up to trade issues involving species that often fall beyond the direct reach of the Management and Scientific Authorities. It is also recognized that, for trade to be carried out in a responsible manner and based on sustainable use, social and economic incentives are needed to bring local communities and local authorities into partnership with government under an appropriate policy, legislative and financial framework.

Excessive and illegal trade, in wild animals and plants for commercial gain are major factors in the depletion of some of the world's natural resources. These activities undermine countries' conservation efforts, affect the income of rural populations and have driven several species to the brink of extinction. Species therefore are listed in the CITES Appendices on the basis of relevant scientific information and comprehensive criteria, in order to regulate their trade and ensure that it is not detrimental to the survival of the species.

In addition to the regular monitoring and inspection of CITES trade, timely and proportionate enforcement responses to detected violations are essential for effective implementation of the Convention. This requires the development or enhancement of strong multi-agency coordination mechanisms involving both CITES authorities and enforcement agencies, parity between wildlife enforcement officers and other

law enforcement officers, increased priority for wildlife offences and heightened awareness among prosecutors and judges regarding their role in deterring wildlife crime. Although enforcement of the Convention is primarily a matter of national competence, bilateral, regional and global cooperation to combat wildlife crime is essential. CITES implementation and enforcement depends to a large degree on efficient border and trade controls. Consequently, the involvement of ICPO-Interpol and the World Customs Organization in enforcement of the Convention is critical.

To ensure Parties' compliance with the Convention, there should be continued efforts to simplify implementation requirements, to correct misperceptions and promote greater understanding of the Convention and to obtain broader recognition of the beneficial contribution which sustainable trade management can make to conservation. The support and participation of the trade community and the public must also continue to be enhanced.

Parties should be encouraged to report any implementation difficulties that they may be experiencing, so they can be provided with appropriate assistance. The CITES Standing Committee can continue to play an important role in promoting compliance and addressing non-compliance.

Objective 1.1 Parties comply with their obligations under the Convention through appropriate legislation, policies and procedures.

Indicators

All Parties have appropriate legislation, policies and procedures to implement the Convention.

The wildlife trade policies of each Party have been assessed and are coherent with other relevant national policies.

Parties have management programmes for the conservation and recovery of CITES-listed species with the objective that the species may be removed from the Appendices.

All Parties have established Management Authorities, Scientific Authorities and enforcement authorities that have the skills and resources necessary to undertake their Convention obligations to a high standard.

Trade in CITES-listed species is authorized on the basis of sound and relevant scientific information, appropriate risk assessment, and monitoring so as to ensure that such trade is not detrimental to the survival of the species.

All Parties provide their staff responsible for implementing CITES with access to adequate training and information resources.

Objective 1.2 Regulatory procedures are practical, simplified, updated and made user-friendly.

Indicators

Standard procedures for the issuance of permits have been adopted by each Party, in consultation with the trade sector, which ensure that permits are issued in a timely fashion.

A majority of Parties have established electronic systems for information management, permit issuance, marking of specimens and generating annual, biennial or other reports.

Parties are to the fullest extent possible making use of the simplified procedures provided for in Resolution Conf. 12.3.

Officers of CITES Parties responsible for enforcement of the Convention and related national legislation have access to specialized training for this purpose.

Objective 1.3 Parties are enforcing the Convention to reduce illegal wildlife trade.

Indicators

A wildlife enforcement coordination network is established by each Party with representation from all relevant national enforcement bodies.

Mechanisms are developed to quantify more precisely the levels of illegal trade in species in high demand and the effectiveness of the enforcement measures applied.

Cooperation exists between national, regional and international law enforcement agencies and Management Authorities to effectively combat illegal trade in wild fauna and flora.

Objective 1.4 The Standing Committee has the primary role in promoting compliance and addressing non-compliance.

Indicator

Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP13) is amended to strengthen the role of the Standing Committee regarding compliance issues.

GOAL 2 SECURE THE FINANCIAL BASIS FOR THE CONVENTION

Introduction

Successful implementation and enforcement of the Convention requires an appropriate level of funding at the national and international levels.

At the national level, a number of countries make charges for issuing permits and certificates in order to cover the costs of processing them. Others however, find it increasingly difficult to cover the costs of implementing the Convention, but following the user-pays principle is one way to offset or cover these costs.

At the international level, an appropriate level of funding, as well as efficient fiscal management, is needed to meet the requirements of operational effectiveness of the Convention, to provide a platform for international coordination and cooperation. Moreover, when the Conference adopts a Resolution or Decision requiring specific activities to be undertaken, in the past these have often been subject to external funding. Many donors have been very generous and this has been deeply appreciated. Nevertheless, if the Conference decides that an action needs to be carried out, it would be appropriate to make provision in the budget to cover the costs, rather than letting the implementation of Conference decisions be dependent on the priorities, interests and generosity of others.

When the Parties collectively adopt the CITES budget, it is also the responsibility of the Parties collectively to ensure that contributions are made to cover the agreed costs. The Standing Committee, as the senior committee, representing the Conference of the Parties between its meeting, is the appropriate body to take action to try to ensure that all Parties do pay their agreed contributions.

Objective 2.1 Financial resources are sufficient to ensure full implementation of the Convention.

Indicators

Cost recovery through, for example user-pay procedures, is established to fund the implementation of the Convention.

The Standing Committee is empowered to take appropriate measures in relation to Parties that repeatedly fail or have failed to meet their obligations with regard to their assessed contributions to the Trust Fund.

Objective 2.2 The funds to implement Resolutions and Decisions that require funding for their implementation are provided in the CITES Trust Fund budget.

Indicator

Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP13) is revised to indicate that the Conference of the Parties will not consider draft resolutions or draft decisions that do not comply with this Resolution.

THEME 2 – MOVING FORWARD

GOAL 3 ***ADOPT BALANCED WILDLIFE TRADE POLICIES COMPATIBLE WITH HUMAN WELL-BEING, LIVELIHOODS AND CULTURAL INTEGRITY***

Introduction

Consistent wildlife trade policies

For international conventions to function as intended, consistency of implementation is an important element. Parties should have an assurance of equitable treatment by other Parties. With respect to CITES, Parties should implement the provisions of the Convention, Resolutions and Decisions in a way that is consistent with national policies and regulations and positions in other MEAs.

Parties should also review their domestic measures to bring them into line with their international obligations under the various conventions and agreements to which they are party.

While Article XIV of CITES specifically recognizes the right of Parties to adopt domestic measures stricter than those required by the Convention, the objective should be that no new such measures are introduced. Parties should as far as possible refrain from introducing new stricter measures. However, should they wish to introduce such measures, Parties should maintain close collaboration with the Secretariat throughout the legislative process so as to ensure that their stricter measures are in line with the principles of the Convention.

Financing wildlife conservation and sustainable trade in wildlife

Parties appear to be increasingly unwilling to approve increases in the budget for the administration of the Convention. Other avenues must therefore be explored to finance the implementation of the Convention, such as cost recovery by Parties from those people or bodies undertaking international trade in wildlife and the direct investment of those funds in wildlife conservation. In order to demonstrate the value of international trade in wildlife specimens to local communities Parties should seek to return at least a proportion of the funds collected to those local communities in the areas from which the wildlife is taken. This should act as encouragement to local communities to value endangered wildlife in their area as a resource that should be conserved as it could assist with their economic well-being.

Responsible international trade in wildlife should always have regard to the sustainability of this trade and this should be considered especially when establishing non-detriment findings. Case studies should be produced and considered showing the applicability or not of the CBD's Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity to international trade in wildlife conducted under the provisions of CITES.

Objective 3.1 **National wildlife trade policies are consistent with policies and regulations adopted at the international level.**

Indicators

Parties are implementing the Resolutions relating to Article VII exemptions and special provisions in an equitable way.

Stricter domestic measures are not adopted in cases where the problems that they are intended to solve can be addressed through existing multilateral CITES processes.

Coherent environment and trade positions are established by the CITES Management Authority of each Party with the national bodies representing the State in other international fora.

Objective 3.2 **The financial returns from international trade in wildlife contribute to poverty alleviation and livelihoods of local communities and indigenous peoples.**

Indicators

Social and economic instruments are in place to provide benefits to local communities from wildlife trade, to an extent commensurate with the value of the specimens traded.

Costs involved in regulating wildlife trade are recovered and used to reinvest in wildlife conservation.

Objective 3.3 **CITES contribution to sustainable development is strengthened.**

Indicators

Case studies are available addressing the applicability to CITES of the CBD's Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity.

Indicators of sustainability have been developed and are applied.

GOAL 4 REDUCE THE RATE OF GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY LOSS

Introduction

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) called for a significant reduction by 2010 in the current rate of loss of biological diversity, and called for actions at all levels. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the Global Biodiversity Outlook highlighted once again in 2006 the need for considerable additional efforts to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the current negative trend. Significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss is also essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and WSSD objectives relating to poverty eradication, food security, health, environmental sustainability and water. To achieve these goals requires the provision of sustainable conditions for life and opportunities for sustainable development, including trade in sustainably harvested products of biodiversity.

Mutual supportiveness of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and enhanced cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and processes is considered to be an important condition for effective measures to halt the loss of global biodiversity. CITES plays a key role in this process.

CITES has proven to be an effective instrument for agreeing on objectives, targets and measures that prevent over-exploitation as result of trade in threatened, commercially important species. In light of the high political commitment to the 2010 challenge, it is opportune to extend this role now to all species of animal and plant subject to trade that are vulnerable, threatened with extinction or likely to become endangered if current levels of exploitation are maintained. In this way CITES, will become an instrument for enhancing sustainable management of natural stocks and sustainable trade in such commodities.

There are several ways in which CITES can fulfil this role. Firstly, there is a need to define appropriate, scientifically underpinned criteria to identify the species that are in danger of (commercial) extinction in the short term or the long term. On the basis of these criteria, lists can be drawn up that serve as advice to all stakeholders involved, including governments, managers and users. Secondly, governments should strictly adhere to and Resolutions and other Decisions adopted by the Conference of Parties. Thirdly, CITES can advise on, and if necessary elaborate, instruments to regulate trade and prevent harmful trade. Furthermore it will initiate cooperation between Parties, environmental and trade organizations.

Objective 4.1 Species are appropriately listed in the Appendices on the basis of the agreed biological and trade criteria.

Indicators

The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation and management needs of species, having been regularly reviewed by the Animals and Plants Committees.

A programme exists to review species included in the Appendices before the adoption of the criteria in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP13) and to amend the Appendices where appropriate.

Proposals to amend the Appendices that do not contain the information required in Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP13) are not considered by the Conference of the Parties.

A mechanism exists for identifying CITES species that are not at risk from trade and should be considered for removal from the Appendices.

Objective 4.2 A mechanism exists for identifying non-CITES species that are at risk from trade and should be considered for inclusion in the Appendices and a procedure developed for submitting listing proposals for these species.

Indicators

A resolution has been adopted specifying the procedure for the submission of amendment proposals regarding the species identified through this mechanism.

Information management tools have been developed for monitoring trade in non-CITES species.

Species subject to intensive commercial exploitation are considered for inclusion in the Appendices before they become commercially extinct.

Objective 4.3 Parties cooperate in managing shared wildlife resources.

Indicators

Cooperative recovery plans are in place for all shared populations of Appendix-I species.

Cooperative management plans are in place for all shared populations of Appendix-II species.

Objective 4.4 An integrated communication strategy exists for conveying concise, accurate and objective information about the Convention and its achievements.

Indicators

Awareness of CITES is increased and it is recognized globally as the Wildlife Trade Convention.

A list has been developed of CITES accomplishments and lessons learned.

CITES permits are considered as a certification of sustainable trade.

Objective 4.5 Strategic alliances are forged with environmental and trade organizations.

Indicators

Common biodiversity conservation goals, objectives and programmes of work are integrated with those of relevant multilateral environmental agreements (such as the Convention on Biological Diversity) and related conventions, agreements and associations.

Scientific and technical programmes of the Convention are coordinated with those of relevant technical partners and other competent organizations and agencies, particularly the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements.

CITES has observer status in the formal trade negotiation forum of the WTO and a Memorandum of Cooperation has been concluded between the two bodies.