

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

Arrangement for the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties

SUMMARY RECORDS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At each meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Secretariat produces in-session summary records of each of the plenary sessions and of the sessions of Committees I and II.
3. The only guidance on this matter provided in the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties is in Rule 10, paragraph 1, which states:

Summary records of plenary sessions and of sessions of Committees I and II shall be kept by the Secretariat in the working languages of the meeting. These shall be circulated to all Parties as soon as possible after the meeting.

4. Over the years, the growing amount of work of the Conference of the Parties has led to an increase in the size of the team of rapporteurs, which comprised 10 people at the latest three meetings. This large team has been necessary to cover the concomitant sessions of Committees I and II, and to ensure that the summary records are produced in a timely manner (i.e. no later than two sessions after the one they represent a record of; the only exception being the record of the last day of the meeting, which is sent to the Parties shortly after the meeting).
5. The documents that are produced are truly a summary record but, although they are condensed, they are nonetheless rather detailed. To produce long, detailed minutes requires more rapporteurs, more checking, more editing, more translation time, more printing time and more paper.
6. The production of summary records at meetings of the Conference of the Parties could be streamlined, and the cost reduced if it were agreed that abbreviated records were acceptable. One way to do this would be to follow the practice that has been followed at Standing Committee meetings since its 45th meeting (Paris, June 2001), that is to produce each day only an executive summary that indicates the decisions taken, without indicating specific Parties. The summary record of the Standing Committee is slightly longer, with the addition of a brief statement of the main points of discussion of each agenda item and a list of the States and organizations whose representatives participated in the discussion. But that is produced after the meeting.
7. Executive summaries are also produced for the meetings of the Animals and Plants Committee, although they include a brief indication of the main points of discussion and are produced on a daily basis rather than after each session.
8. As this approach followed for the meetings of the CITES permanent committees has proved satisfactory for several years, the Secretariat believes that it could now be followed for meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

Recommendation

9. In order to reduce costs for meetings of the Conference of the Parties and to simplify and expedite the whole production process for summary records, the Secretariat requests the Standing Committee to agree that, at CoP14 and future meetings, the summary records of sessions should be in the form of executive summaries comprising, for each agenda item: an indication of the decisions taken; and a list of the States and organizations whose representatives participated in the discussion.
10. If this is agreed, the Secretariat will plan to provide only six rapporteurs for CoP14.