

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

Review of the scientific committees

SELF-EVALUATION BY THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

The Annex to this document has been submitted by the Chairmen of the Animals and Plants Committees. It contains the results and recommendations of the self-evaluation undertaken by the Animals, Nomenclature and Plants Committees in a joint session held during their recent meetings (PC16 and AC22, Lima, Peru, 3-8 and 7-13 July 2006 respectively).

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES' SELF-EVALUATION

This Annex has been submitted by the Chairmen of the Animals and Plants Committees and is based on the report of a working group (document PC16/AC22 WG1 Doc. 1) which was produced and adopted at the joint session of the 16th meeting of the Plants Committee and 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee (Lima, 3-13 July 2006).

REVIEW OF SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

Membership (as decided by the Committee)

Chairman: Greg Leach (PC Regional representative for Oceania); Co-chairman Rodrigo Medellin (AC Regional representative for North America)

Members: PC and AC regional representatives not participating in other working group, Co-Chairmen of the Nomenclature Committee.

Mandate

1. Finalize the self-evaluation by completing sections 5 to 9 in the 'Review of Scientific Committees' presented in Annex 2 to document AC22 Doc. 7 (Rev. 1)/PC16 Doc. 7 (Rev. 1).
2. With regard to section 6, finalize the work undertaken by a joined AC/PC working group and reported in document Doc. PC15/AC21 WG2 Doc. 1, and integrate the result in the 'Review of Scientific Committees' paper.
3. With regard to sections 7 to 9, produce practical suggestions for improving the operation, efficiency and effectiveness of the scientific committees, and provide options for regularly reviewing the performance of the scientific committees, including indicators.

Recommendations

1. The WG, composed of all scientific committees, concluded that this WG report is submitted to the External Evaluation Working Group of the Standing Committee, and that Annex 4 of document AC22 Doc. 7 (Rev. 1)/PC16 Doc. 7 (Rev. 1) Annex 2, is replaced by Table 2a in document SC54 Inf. 5 for the PC and AC, and by Table 2b for the Nomenclature Committee.
2. The committees achieve a generally high level of performance in the high priority tasks assigned to them and often with very limited resources or a reliance on voluntary effort. To achieve increased performance, particularly in lower priority tasks, it would be necessary to increase budgetary funds and other resources in relation to those tasks.
3. Performance by the committees would further improve if greater consideration is given by CoP and the SC at the time tasks are assigned to the scientific committees as to whether the tasks are within their mandates and the Convention's Strategic Action Plan and whether the task is adequately resourced.
4. Performance of committees would be improved if funds were made available for chairmen to operate and participate and represent their committees in other meetings.
5. To promote and facilitate coordination and contact between the taxonomic expertise in regions, the NC might best operate as a permanent working group of the AC and PC.
6. The requirement of a Party/region to provide the time/resources for a regional representative to carry out his/her duties needs to be strengthened. It could be a mandatory commitment made at the time of the nomination of a representative.

7. Regarding the challenge of the double role of chairman as both chairman and a regional representative, the evaluation should note the approach taken by other environmental conventions where committee chairmen do not have regional tasks. The WG was of the strong opinion that the chairmen should originate from amongst the regional representatives.
8. To improve the scientific procedures that sustain all activities of the committees, AC and PC chairman and members should be more involved in the assignment of consultants and the definition of terms of reference for specific projects.
9. The review process of the performance of the committees has consumed considerable resources and time and the WG does not recommend putting in place a periodic, detailed process of review. The WG agreed to recommend conducting internal monitoring through the regional reports and the chairmen's reports to the CoPs and Table 3 of document SC54 Inf. 5 can be appended to the format to prepare regional reports. External monitoring can examine and review the indicators as identified in Tables 1a and 1b of the same document.
10. Once the external evaluation has been completed, the delivery mechanisms will be decided.