

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



Fifty-seventh meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 14-18 July 2008

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Rules of Procedure

SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS

1. This document has been submitted by Israel.

2. Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure says:

Documents to be considered at a meeting shall normally be provided to the Secretariat at least 60 days before the meeting where they are to be discussed, and should not be longer than 12 pages.

3. Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure says:

All documents submitted to the Secretariat by a Party, or submitted by an observer at the request of the Chairman, shall be placed on the Secretariat's website as soon as possible after they are received, in the original language in which they have been submitted. The Secretariat shall distribute printed documents for any meeting to the members and alternate members of the Committee at least 45 days before the proposed date of the meeting where they are to be discussed. The documents shall also be provided to all Parties that may be directly affected by any discussion of the documents and to all Parties that request them.

4. Notwithstanding:

- a) At its 55th meeting (The Hague, June 2007) the Standing Committee considered 13 documents. Of these, at least 11 documents were submitted late. Of the two documents that were submitted on time, one of them, SC55 Doc. 10.2 concerning MIKE baseline information, was subjected to a substantive revision and resubmitted only four days before the meeting.
- b) At its 54th meeting (Geneva, October 2006) the Standing Committee considered 73 documents. Of these, 18 documents were submitted late. Of those documents submitted on time, 12 were subjected to substantive revision and resubmitted after deadline. Thus 30 of the meeting's 73 working documents were late.

The late submission of documents has also been a chronic problem at the Standing Committee meetings for many years prior to the above-cited occurrences.

5. CITES Decision 10.3 confirms the Standing Committee's representational nature. It verifies that the Standing Committee is composed of Parties elected by the Parties of their regions to represent the interests of their respective regions. It also defines the duties of Regional Representatives, including that:

Regional representatives should maintain a fluid and permanent communication with the Parties of their region and the Secretariat.

Before the meetings of the Standing Committee, the representatives should communicate to the Parties of their region the items on the agenda, to request their opinions, preferably on matters specifically relevant to the countries or the region.

6. The persistent difficulty with late submission of documents precludes Regional Representatives from fulfilling the duties established under Decision 10.3. Late availability of documents diminishes, and sometimes precludes opportunity for consultation within Party administrations and within regions. This, in turn, compromises the representational character of the Standing Committee. It puts Regional Representatives in the awkward position of participating at Standing Committee meetings without really appreciating the opinions of the regions that they represent.
7. Israel encourages the Standing Committee to address this problem of late submission of documents. Israel encourages the Standing Committee to seek and achieve solutions that restore the integrity of the Rules of Procedure as well as the Decisions which define the responsibilities of members of the Standing Committee.