

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



Fifty-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 6-10 July 2009

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade control and marking

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SEA

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group on Introduction from the Sea.
2. The Working Group on Introduction from the Sea, established at the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC57, Geneva, July 2008), met informally in the margins of that meeting to discuss a work plan for implementing the terms of reference contained in Decision 14.48 of the Conference of the Parties.
3. During its informal meeting, the Working Group agreed on the following working modalities:
 - a) It would work electronically for the most part;
 - b) A 'rolling text' (i.e. a draft discussion paper which is without prejudice to the positions of government representatives on the issues under consideration and does not imply agreement on scope or content) would be prepared by the Secretariat and the Chair as a starting point for substantive discussions and distributed to the members for comments;
 - c) The rolling text would be revised to incorporate the comments that had been received and then distributed again to the Working Group members;
 - d) The revised rolling text would be reviewed at a meeting of the Working Group tentatively planned for the first quarter of 2009 in Geneva, pending the identification of the external funds; and
 - e) During its Geneva 2009 meeting, the Working Group would use the revised rolling text to develop a final discussion document and draft revised resolution for consideration at the present meeting and, ultimately, submission to the Conference of the Parties at its 15th meeting.
4. In September 2008, the Secretariat and Chair provided members with an initial rolling text which drew a great deal on the terms of reference given in Decision 14.48 and the outstanding questions included in the report of the 2005 workshop on introduction from the sea (see document CoP14 Doc. 33, Annex 4). Comments on the rolling text were received from Germany, Mexico, Oceania, the United States of America, the European Commission, the Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, IWMC, Species Management Specialists, SSN/IELP and TRAFFIC/WWF.
5. During the fourth quarter of 2008, the European Union provided external funds in the amount of USD 25,000 for the organization of a meeting of the Working Group.

6. In November 2008, the Chair advised the Secretariat that he had been appointed Ambassador of Chile to Paraguay and was due to take up his new responsibilities later that month or in early December 2008. This new development meant that it was unclear whether he would be able to continue chairing the Working Group, and his ability to continue in this capacity was not confirmed until February 2009.
7. From early February to early May 2009, the Secretariat consulted with the Chair and several Working Group members on possible dates for a meeting but did not manage to find any dates that were mutually convenient. During the coming weeks, the Secretariat will be proposing additional dates for consideration and will also be working with the Chair to complete a revised rolling text by June 2009.
9. Working Group members may meet informally in the margins of the present meeting to finalize arrangements for organizing a formal meeting of the Working Group in Geneva and for consulting the Standing Committee on any documents produced by the Working Group, which are to be submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 15th meeting.

Other developments

10. In January 2009 the Secretariat responded to information requests from DOALOS on: the impact of the UN Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea; the Eighth round of informal consultations relating to the Straddling Fish Stocks Agreement; and the implementation of paragraphs 83 to 90 of UNGA Resolution 63/105 (which concern vulnerable marine ecosystems and bottom fishing activities). A copy of the present document will be shared with DOALOS as its contents may be relevant to a more recent DOALOS information request concerning the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction.

Recommendations

11. The Standing Committee is invited to review the discussion document and draft revised resolution, when they are made available by the Working Group, and to provide input by electronic or other means. The Chair of the Working Group and the Secretariat will then make any revisions that might be necessary and submit both documents, on behalf of the Standing Committee, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 15th meeting.