

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

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Sixty-first meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 15-19 August 2011

Strategic matters

Cooperation with other organizations

OVERVIEW

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat, It should be read in conjunction with document SC61 Doc. 14.1 (*Progress report on the implementation of the CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013*) and other documents referenced in the paragraphs below.
2. Goal 3 of the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008 – 2013* is to “contribute to significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by ensuring that CITES and other multilateral instruments and processes are coherent and mutually supportive”. Such coherence and mutual supportiveness are needed, of course, at both the national and international levels.
3. As stated in document SC61 Doc. 14.1, the strategic positioning of the Convention with other organizations, instruments and processes is critical to the successful implementation of the Convention, as reflected in Goal 3. Cooperation efforts undertaken to implement Goal 3 fall into several clusters, namely:
  - biodiversity-related and other conventions;
  - international environment organizations;
  - international organizations and agreements dealing with natural resources;
  - international trade and development organizations;
  - international organizations dealing with law enforcement; and
  - international financial mechanisms and other related institutions.

Biodiversity-related and other conventions

4. CITES has increased its engagement with other biodiversity-related conventions through a variety of means. It has participated actively in the Biodiversity Liaison Group (the BLG, a coordination mechanism for the executive heads of six global conventions), and hosted a meeting of the BLG in April 2011. The Secretariat interacts regularly with biodiversity-related conventions and the three Rio conventions through the Environment Management Group (EMG, a United Nations system-wide coordination body) and the joint initiative between convention secretariats and UNEP on information and knowledge management. Efforts are currently underway to create a network of legal officers in interested convention secretariats. The Secretariat also maintains regular informal contacts with convention secretariats on a wide variety of issues.
5. The Secretariat participated in a high-level retreat of executive heads convened in September 2010 by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in response to requests by other convention secretariats for a joint meeting before the High Level Event on Biodiversity (New York, September 2010). A second retreat is scheduled for September 2011. It also participated in the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-10, Nagoya, October 2010).
6. Other cooperative activities have included: meetings of the chairs of scientific advisory bodies of biodiversity-related conventions; numerous bilateral or wider meetings with other conventions, sometimes by video conference or teleconference; the preparation and delivery of joint statements (e.g. by CITES, the

Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the World Heritage Convention and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands at CBD COP-10); attendance at meetings of governing and subsidiary bodies of other conventions; joint participation in events of mutual interest to several or all conventions; and, most recently, joint planning among the conventions for implementation of the UN Decade on Biodiversity.

7. A number of States have reacted positively to the conventions' cooperative efforts, which are aimed at programmatic rather than administrative synergy. If CITES Parties wish to pursue administrative synergy with other conventions, further direction would be needed.
8. More detailed information about cooperation with CBD is contained in document SC61 Doc. 15.3 and with CMS in document SC61 Doc. 15.4.

#### International environmental organizations

9. The Secretary-General has met on a number of occasions with the Executive Director of UNEP and there is frequent cooperation between the Secretariat and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), UNEP's Division on Environmental Law and Conventions, the Division on Environmental Policy Implementation, the Division on Technology, Industry and Economics, the UNEP Office of Operations and the United Nations Office at Nairobi (see documents under agenda item 9 on relationship with UNEP).
10. One of UNEP's key activities concerns the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services (IPBES), and CITES has participated in informal and formal meetings related to this process (see document SC61 Doc. 15.6).
11. The Secretary-General participated in the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Event on Biodiversity held in New York during September 2010.
12. In addition to being a member of the EMG, CITES is a member of the EMG's Issue Management Group on Biodiversity (IMG-Biodiversity), and the Executive Secretary of CBD and the CITES Secretary-General co-chaired the IMG-Biodiversity meeting held in Geneva during February 2011.
13. Another key partner in the area of environment is the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The Secretary-General has met with the Director General of IUCN on many occasions and convened meetings with staff of CITES and the IUCN Species Survival Commission and the Environmental Law Commission to explore opportunities for deeper engagement with CITES.
14. The Secretary-General has also met with the President of World Wide Fund for Nature International (WWF), the Director General of the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC), the Director of TRAFFIC, the President of the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the President of the Center for International Environmental Law, among others, to discuss CITES implementation.

#### International organizations and agreements dealing with natural resources

15. Cooperation between CITES and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been enhanced through the development of a broader memorandum of cooperation (covering food and agriculture, fisheries, forestry and wildlife) and the joint convening of a meeting on the conservation and sustainable use of sharks (see document SC61 Doc. 15.5). Cooperation between CITES and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) has also increased (see document SC61 Doc. 15.7).
16. The Secretariat has worked closely and effectively with the Secretariat of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) to implement a multi-year, multi-million dollar joint programme aimed at ensuring that international trade in CITES-listed timber species is consistent with their sustainable management and conservation. The Secretary-General met with the Executive Director of ITTO in October 2010 and both secretariats are currently working on the identification of funding for a second phase of their joint programme. In April 2011, target countries participating in the ITTO-CITES programme met with donor countries and the Secretariats of ITTO and CITES in the margins of the 19th meeting of the Plants Committee to review the results that had been achieved and future activities that could be undertaken if additional funds became available.

17. The Secretary-General also met with the Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) in the margins of CBD COP-10, and the latter is expected to participate in a side-event held in the margins of the 25th meeting of the Animals Committee (Geneva, July 2011).

#### International trade and development organizations

18. Cooperation with the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), particularly its BioTrade Initiative, and the International Trade Centre is being strengthened with the joint development of concrete activities. Some of these activities were identified during a meeting which the Secretary-General and Chief of Legal Affairs and Trade Policy had with the Director-General of WTO in September 2010. More detailed information is contained in document SC61 Doc. 15.8.
19. The Secretariat has continued its liaison with the private sector, at times with the support of UNCTAD. These liaison efforts have involved bilateral and wider meetings with industry associations and individual companies that use CITES-listed animals and plants in their products.

#### International organizations dealing with law enforcement

20. In November 2010, CITES, INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank and the World Customs Organization (WCO) established the International Consortium for Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC). The Secretary-General addressed the 79th INTERPOL General Assembly held in Doha during November 2010 and addressed the 30th meeting of the WCO Enforcement Committee held in Brussels during March 2011. In addition, he has had meetings with the President of the World Bank (at the International Tiger Forum in Saint Petersburg, in November 2010), the Secretary-General of WCO, Secretary-General of INTERPOL and the Executive Secretary of UNODC. More detailed information is contained in document SC61 Doc. 30.
21. CITES is a partner of the Green Customs Initiative (GCI), whose objective is to enhance the capacity of Customs and other relevant enforcement personnel to monitor and facilitate legal trade and to detect and prevent illegal trade, *inter alia*, in wild species of fauna and flora. GCI is a joint activity among UNEP, various convention secretariats and several intergovernmental organizations, including WCO. The Secretariat has served as a resource person in a number of GCI-organized training workshops for Customs officers. Its focus on strengthening practical knowledge and skills (e.g. the identification of specimens in trade), rather than general awareness raising, has been appreciated by workshop participants and other GCI partners.

#### International financial mechanisms and other related institutions

22. The Secretary-General met with the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in Washington DC in September 2010 (and at the International Tiger Forum mentioned in paragraph 20 above) to discuss issues relevant to CITES. The GEF has since indicated its willingness to consult with CITES on project proposals involving CITES-listed species (see document SC61 Doc. 16).

#### Other activities related to Goal 3

23. Through its involvement in the Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species, established under CBD, CITES has strengthened its contacts with organizations dealing with animal and plant health and transport [i.e. the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the International Maritime Organization].
24. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) invited the Secretary-General to share experience gained under CITES during a roundtable on the legal instruments for the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property (Paris, March 2011).
25. The CITES Secretariat has accepted an invitation to co-sponsor the World Congress on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability being organized by UNEP, in partnership with the World Bank, INTERPOL, IUCN and others, and the Secretary-General is a member of the Executive Steering Committee of that Congress. More detailed information is contained in document SC61 Doc. 23.

26. The Secretariat has also participated in various meetings held to discuss biodiversity synergies or governance, such as: the Nordic expert symposium on Synergies in the Biodiversity Cluster (Helsinki, April 2010); the first and second meetings of the Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level Representatives on International Environmental Governance (Nairobi, July 2010, and Espoo, November 2010); and the 26th meeting of the UNEP Governing Council (Nairobi, February 2011). By invitation, the Secretary-General participated in a meeting on international environmental governance organized by Switzerland in June 2011.

Recommendation

27. The Standing Committee is invited to take note of the information provided above.