

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

Sixty-fifth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 7-11 July 2014

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Ranching operations in Madagascar

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat. Madagascar's report on this agenda item is contained in document SC65 Doc. 25.1. There is some repetition between the two documents, but the Secretariat has tried to minimize this.

Background

2. The population of the Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) in Madagascar was transferred to CITES Appendix II at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, "subject to the specified annual export quota of 1,000" (CoP5, Buenos Aires, 1985). At its 10th meeting (CoP10, Harare, 1997), the Conference of the Parties agreed to maintain Madagascar's population of *C. niloticus* in Appendix II without being subject to specified annual quotas (proposal submitted pursuant to Resolution Conf. 3.15 on *Ranching*). Currently, Madagascar's population of *C. niloticus* is included in Appendix II, subject to the conditions outlined in Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15) on *Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II*.
3. Between 1985 and 1997, the Conference of the Parties agreed on varying export quotas for wild specimens, ranched specimens or wild nuisance specimens from Madagascar. Thereafter, Madagascar was free to authorize exports in accordance with its ranching programmes.
4. In document SC57 Doc. 22, submitted to the 57th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC57, Geneva, July 2008), the Secretariat reported that:

*Global crocodile ranching programmes were reviewed at the 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee (Lima, July 2006), and Madagascar's compliance with the provisions of Resolution Conf. 11.16 was discussed at the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC54, Geneva, October 2006). In view of concerns that ranching could be used to disguise or launder skins of adult crocodiles harvested from the wild, and the perceived deficiencies in monitoring wild crocodile populations, inspecting ranching operations and controlling exports of crocodile skins, the Standing Committee endorsed the Secretariat's proposal to visit and examine the ranching operations for *C. niloticus* in Madagascar.*

The Secretariat undertook a mission to Madagascar in late 2006. The mission confirmed that Madagascar did not fully comply with certain provisions of Resolution Conf. 11.16, and that the controls of the farming operations had been insufficient to prevent abuses.

5. Following its 55th meeting (SC55, The Hague, June 2007) and 56th meeting (SC66, The Hague, June 2007), where there was insufficient time to consider document SC55 Doc. 13, the Standing Committee agreed through a postal procedure that Madagascar should put into effect a set of 13 recommendations (some with sub-parts) for improving control over the ranching of *C. niloticus*. These

recommendations resulted from the Secretariat's mission in December 2006 and were contained in Annex 1 to document SC55 Doc. 13.¹

6. Madagascar's implementation of the SC55 recommendations was reviewed by the Standing Committee at SC57 and at its 58th meeting (SC58, Geneva, July 2009). At SC57, following its consideration of document SC57 Doc. 22 and the Annex containing information provided by Madagascar, the Committee "noted the progress made by Madagascar in implementing the recommendations, and Madagascar assured the Committee of its wish to comply with the Committee's recommendations in time for SC58" (see SC58 summary record). Additional material submitted by Madagascar was provided in documents SC57 Inf. 5 and SC57 Inf. 10.
7. At SC58, the Standing Committee considered information reported by Madagascar, as well as the Secretariat's report summarizing Madagascar's efforts to implement the SC55 recommendations (document SC58 Doc. 20 and its Annexes). Additional information was provided in documents SC58 Inf. 2 (prepared by the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Crocodile Specialist Group (IUCN/SSC/CSG) and SC58 Inf. 4 (prepared by Madagascar). At the suggestion of the Secretariat, the Committee established a Working Group on Ranching Operations in Madagascar to assist it in determining the extent to which Madagascar had implemented the SC55 recommendations. Following a report from this Working Group (chaired by France and comprising Germany, Japan, Madagascar, the United States of America, IUCN and the Secretariat), the Standing Committee agreed to a list of 15 priority actions, on the basis of the recommendations adopted at SC55. The Committee further agreed that the Secretary-General should send a letter which formally conveyed the list to Madagascar. This was done on 12 November 2009.
8. At its 59th meeting (SC59, Doha, March 2010), in view of new and additional information that had become available since the preparation of document SC59 Doc. 15 and its Annexes, the Standing Committee agreed that the Working Group should meet in the margins of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP15, Doha, 2010) and report further at the 60th meeting of the Committee (SC60, Doha, March 2010). In its oral and written reports to the Standing Committee, the Secretariat drew attention to the external funds it had received from France to assist Madagascar in implementing two of the 15 priority actions agreed at SC58. The funds were disbursed under agreements with both the Government of Madagascar and, at Madagascar's request, the IUCN/SSC/CSG.
9. At SC60, based on its review of relevant documents (e.g. a submission by Madagascar, the Secretariat's report and a draft consultancy report from IUCN/SSC/CSG) and related discussions, the Working Group reported that two priority actions had been carried out with financial support from France (i.e. an audit of five ranching facilities for the Nile crocodile and a training workshop in Madagascar). The Working Group "determined that the other 13 priority actions had been poorly implemented by Madagascar" (see SC60 summary record).
10. On the basis of a recommendation by the Working Group and persistent concerns about the management of ranching operations in the country, the Standing Committee agreed at SC60 to recommend a suspension of trade with Madagascar in Nile crocodile specimens until 30 September 2010. It further agreed to review the situation via postal procedure after 30 September 2010 if the Secretariat determined that Madagascar had implemented the actions agreed at SC60 (i.e. a set of nine actions, based on the 13 priority actions from SC58 that remained to be implemented), and to then determine whether its recommendation should be withdrawn. The trade suspension was communicated to the Parties through Notification to the Parties No. 2010/015 of 17 June 2010, which is still valid.
11. As indicated its report to the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee (SC61, Geneva, August 2011), contained in document SC61 Doc. 26, the Secretariat's "initial evaluation of the information [which Madagascar provided by 30 September 2010] indicated that the Government's actions were not sufficient to advise the Standing Committee that the recommended trade suspension should be lifted". The Secretariat therefore proposed consulting with Madagascar through video or telephone conference or undertaking "a country mission to evaluate, in consultation with the CITES Management Authority of Madagascar, the efforts it had made to implement the actions agreed at SC60". Madagascar indicated that a mission would be welcome but no specific dates were agreed before SC61. As no representative of Madagascar attended SC61, and there was no written submission from Madagascar, the Standing Committee agreed to maintain the recommendation to suspend trade with Madagascar in *C. niloticus* and to defer consideration of the issue until its 62nd meeting (SC62, Geneva, July 2012).

¹ See: <http://www.cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/55/E55-13.pdf>

12. The Secretariat undertook two missions to Madagascar before SC62. At SC62, the Standing Committee again reviewed Madagascar's implementation of the SC60 actions on the basis of the Secretariat's report (document SC62 Doc. 25) and a report from the Working Group (document SC62 Com. 5), which met in the margins of the meeting. Submissions from Madagascar were provided in documents SC62 Inf. 5 (Rev. 1) and SC62 Inf. 15. In its document, the Secretariat advised that it was working with Madagascar to develop several small-scale funding agreements designed, *inter alia*, to improve Madagascar's current and longer-term management of the Nile crocodile.
13. In its report to SC62, the Working Group stated, *inter alia*, that:

On the basis of the information included in document SC62 Inf. 5, Madagascar presented its efforts to implement the SC60 recommendations, but recognized that, despite these efforts, all the recommendations have not been fully implemented.

This was confirmed by the Secretariat, which clarified that some of the recommendations appear to have been fully implemented (e.g. Recommendation 1 on the review, update, adoption and implementation of the Strategy and Management Plan for Crocodiles in Madagascar and Recommendation 7 on the update of relevant databases relating to crocodile management).

Participants agreed that they would review whether the actions implemented so far were sufficient for the Working Group to recommend the Standing Committee to withdraw the suspension. A discussion engaged, during which the following recommendations were identified as particularly insufficiently implemented:

- Recommendation 3 on developing a system of control for ranches;*
- Recommendation 4 on quantifying the numbers of artisanal and conventional retail outlets and tanneries (particularly in the provinces), ensuring their registration / licensing, carrying out related stock inventories, monitoring their registers and carrying out random and regular inspections; and*
- Recommendation 5 on ensuring that products not complying with established size limits are seized and destroyed, and offenders prosecuted.*

In addition to its findings and recommendations concerning the SC60 actions (see Recommendation 1 and part of Recommendation 2 below), the Working Group considered a new concern raised by one of its members, i.e. possible discrepancies in the CITES trade database regarding Madagascar's authorization, monitoring and reporting of re-exports of Nile crocodile specimens. Six of the seven recommendations agreed by the Group addressed this new concern (see part of Recommendation 2 as well as Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 below). Following related discussions, the Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group, as follows:

Recommendation No. 1

With regard to the primary question under consideration by the Working Group (whether the actions implemented so far by Madagascar were sufficient to recommend that the Standing Committee withdraw the recommended trade suspension):

Based on the written information provided by Madagascar at SC62 (Inf. Doc. 5) that outlined its progress to date in implementing the recommendations made by SC60, the majority of the Working Group members (France, Germany, Japan, the United States, IUCN and the Secretariat) considered that insufficient information had been provided by Madagascar to warrant the withdrawal of the recommended trade suspension.

These members agreed that making a different recommendation in the current situation would undermine the credibility of the Group and the Standing Committee.

Recommendation No. 2

As Madagascar asked how it should proceed for the suspension to be withdrawn, the Working Group advised that a detailed report concerning the implementation of the Standing Committee recommendations and addressing the CITES trade database discrepancies related to imports and re-

exports (see item 6) be submitted at the 63rd meeting of the SC, as a formal discussion document (SC63 Doc.xx), not as an information document.

Recommendation No. 3

Regarding the issue of the above mentioned discrepancies, it was agreed that the Secretariat would request assistance from UNEP-WCMC in preparing a comparative review of trade in Nile crocodile between Madagascar and other Parties (for a period of time including years before the recommended trade suspension was put in place as well as years afterward) and identifying any potential discrepancies which would need clarification from Madagascar. The Secretariat should work with UNEP-WCMC to ensure that Madagascar receives this information and the related requests of clarification in a timely manner for them to be able to reply ahead of SC63.

Following receipt of the comparative review from UNEP-WCMC, the Secretariat will identify any concrete questions and concerns which arose from the review. The Secretariat will then share the review with Madagascar as well as any concrete questions and concerns which arose from the review.

Recommendation No. 4

Madagascar should be asked to respond as soon as possible to any questions and concerns expressed in the framework of Recommendation No. 3, in order to clarify the re-export issue in advance of SC63.

Recommendation No. 5

With regard to the issue of re-exports, the Working Group considered if the Standing Committee should clarify whether the trade suspension recommended in March 2010 covers only exports or also re-exports from Madagascar.

The Secretariat reported that it was already asked that question by a Party during 2011, and that its interpretation was that the recommended trade suspension applies only to exports.

Some members of the Working Group considered however that imports into Madagascar of skins and their subsequent re-exports in the form of worked items made in the country was a cause for serious concern, since this may be a channel for trade in illegally caught wild Malagasy Nile crocodiles, especially because of the perceived lack of an appropriate chain of custody in Madagascar and of appropriate controls.

Madagascar replied that it is not specified in Notification to the Parties No. 2010/015 that they cannot import and re-export Nile crocodile specimens.

There was an agreement within the Working Group that, since Madagascar and the Secretariat's view are consistent in that the suspension covers only the exports, and since the current practice of the importing Parties that are part of the Working Group is consistent with that approach, there was no need for the WG to advise the Standing Committee to consider clarifying the matter.

Recommendation No. 6

In the event that the Standing Committee would not be in a position to withdraw the trade suspension on the occasion of its 63rd meeting, the Working Group considered that it would then be necessary to clarify the matter of re-exports.

Recommendation No. 7

In connection with the above, the Working Group reflected on whether it would be appropriate to suggest to the Standing Committee that the Secretariat be requested to issue a new Notification to the Parties in order to clarify, for the period between July 2012 and March 2013, whether the recommended trade suspension applies to re-exports.

The rationale for this is that the language in Notification to the Parties No.2010/015 could be ambiguous (e.g. only the exports are covered according to paragraph 2, while the re-exports appear to be covered also in paragraph 7).

The members of the Working Group considered that it was not necessary for the Secretariat to issue such a revised Notification to the Parties.

The Standing Committee also requested Madagascar to look into the issue of re-exports.

14. Following SC62, the Secretariat asked UNEP-WCMC (under its general contract with the Secretariat) to assist it with an "Overview of trade in *Crocodylus niloticus* from Madagascar during the period 2006 – 2011". The report, which was based on information from the CITES trade database, was thereafter shared with Madagascar. Using the report as a basis, Madagascar reviewed its trade records and prepared a detailed response to the comparative review of trade in Nile crocodile specimens between Madagascar and other Parties, as well as the potential discrepancies that had been identified and related questions for which clarification was sought.
15. The Standing Committee most recently considered this issue at its 63rd meeting (SC63, Bangkok, March 2013) on the basis of a document submitted by Madagascar (document SC63 Doc. 13), as well as an oral report provided by the Working Group, which met in the margins of the meeting. Additional information was provided in documents SC63 Inf. 1 ("Overview of trade in *Crocodylus niloticus* from Madagascar during the period 2006-2011") and SC63 Inf. 2 (Madagascar's response to the Overview). The written report of the Working Group was prepared by the Chair after SC63 and is attached as an Annex to the present document. Following discussion of the issue, the Standing Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Working Group "to retain the recommended trade suspension until SC65 [the present meeting], unless the situation were resolved earlier, and to extend the Group's mandate until that time". Referring to document SC63 Doc. 13, Madagascar stated that, although it would not oppose the recommendation of the Working Group, it had made considerable efforts to remedy the situation but that a lack of resources was preventing it from complying fully with the recommendations from SC60 and SC62. (see SC63 Summary record).

Developments since SC63

16. Madagascar and the Secretariat signed an agreement in the margins of CoP16, under which external funds provided by the European Union for CITES capacity building were disbursed to the Government of Madagascar for a project which would enable the establishment of a comprehensive and sustainable crocodile management system in conformity with CITES. Madagascar submitted a mid-term project report in August 2013 on *Projet crocodile Madagascar*. In the same month, the Secretariat organized a national workshop on the making of CITES non-detriment findings for fauna and flora species in Madagascar. In November 2013, Madagascar submitted its final technical and financial reports for the project, which enabled the Secretariat to make the final payment and close the project.
17. In February 2014, Madagascar sent a letter and summary report on its implementation of the SC60 actions to the Secretariat, requesting that the Standing Committee consider its report through a postal procedure and withdraw the recommended trade suspension for Nile crocodile specimens from Madagascar. The Secretariat advised Madagascar that such a request needed to be made by a member of the Standing Committee and, in view of the time required for a postal procedure, it seemed more appropriate for the matter to be addressed at the present meeting. In addition, the Secretariat noted that it was planning a high-level mission to Madagascar in March-April 2014 on illegal trade in rosewood from Madagascar, headed by the Secretary-General, which would provide a useful opportunity to discuss the matter in detail.
18. Subsequently, the Secretary-General of CITES learned that the new President of Madagascar, H.E. Mr Hery Marcial Rajaonarimampianina, would be in Brussels in early April 2014 and a meeting took place between them on 3 April 2014. During the meeting, the Secretariat advised the President that it was impressed with the results of the crocodile management project implemented by Madagascar and would mention this in its report to the present meeting.
19. An informal meeting of all members of the Standing Committee Working Group on Ranching Operations in Madagascar was held on the margins of the 27th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC27, Veracruz, April 2014). Madagascar's summary report on its implementation of the SC60 actions was shared with the Working Group, which agreed that the matter should be addressed at the present meeting rather than by postal procedure. The Working Group expressed interest in receiving all relevant outputs of *Projet*

crocodile Madagascar, and in reviewing the Secretariat's report on this issue. It invited IUCN/SSC/CSG to provide input as well. The Working Group considered that it would formulate its recommendations on the matter during the present meeting.

20. Representatives of a private sector party interested in establishing a new crocodile ranching facility in Madagascar (aimed, *inter alia*, at contributing to the livelihoods of local communities) met with the Secretariats of CITES and International Trade Centre (ITC) in April 2014.
21. The Secretariat is undertaking a technical mission to Madagascar at the end of May 2014 to provide legal and scientific assistance in relation to Decision 16.152 of the Conference of the Parties and the related Action Plan for Malagasy ebonies and rosewoods. The mission also offers the Secretariat an opportunity to discuss with CITES authorities the issue of ranching operations in Madagascar.

Review of Madagascar's implementation of the SC60 recommendations

22. As indicated above, the nine SC60 actions against which Madagascar's implementation efforts are being compared derive from SC58 priority actions and SC55 recommendations. These actions, priority actions and recommendations are quite similar, but their co-existence has perhaps made this compliance matter more confusing and difficult to implement and monitor for Madagascar, the Standing Committee and the Secretariat.
23. Madagascar has asserted many times its commitment to effectively implement the Convention, within the means available to it, but other Parties and interested observers have expressed concerns over the pace of implementation.
24. There have been different evaluations of the population status of the Nile crocodile in Madagascar and an identified need for reliable, complete and current data on an ongoing basis.
25. Communication problems have been a complicating factor in this matter. For example: key information has not always been shared in a timely fashion or with relevant actors; implementation efforts by Madagascar have occasionally been described in information document rather than discussion documents; and relevant information has been provided on several occasions in only one of the Convention's working languages.
26. There are many different, and sometimes competing, actors as well as interests involved in the conservation and management of the Nile crocodile in Madagascar. The value chain for Nile crocodile products touches a significant segment of the population, with strong links to local cultural practices and livelihoods. Organization of this historically informal and quite complex socio-economic sector and related trade, therefore has a political importance and sensitivity which reaches the highest levels of government.
27. Concern has been expressed by some Parties and observers over the willingness of local harvesters, private sector parties, local artisans and others involved in the use of Nile crocodile specimens in Madagascar to play a constructive role in the effective implementation of the Convention and related national law.
28. Finally, the political and socio-economic situation in Madagascar over the past eight years and the lack of sufficient and stable resources for CITES authorities have contributed to the slow implementation of steps that were identified in 2006 for improving control over ranching operations in Madagascar for the Nile crocodile.
29. The Secretariat has considered the status of Madagascar's implementation of the SC60 actions against this background, and has taken into account Madagascar's detailed self-assessment of its implementation efforts, which is contained in document SC65 Doc. 25.1. The Secretariat has addressed each of the SC60 actions in numerical order below.
 - a) ***Review, update, adopt and initiate implementation of the Strategy and Management Plan for Crocodiles in Madagascar that was prepared in 2004 (see document SC55 Doc. 13, Annex B). Madagascar shall provide the Secretariat with a copy of the new Strategy and Management Plan signed by the Minister of Environment and Forests.***
30. As mentioned in Madagascar's report, the Strategy and Management Plan for Crocodiles in Madagascar (2010-2015) was adopted by the National Crocodile Committee in 2010 and then amended to include the actions agreed at SC60. A revised Plan, signed by the Minister of Environment and Forests, was provided

to SC62 in document SC62 Inf. 15. Madagascar has initiated implementation of the Plan and its report to the present meeting indicates that it will begin working on the development of a successor Plan this year.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented.

b) Establish legally-binding size limits with regard to crocodiles harvested from the wild in order to protect breeding stock.

31. Madagascar has had an administrative instruction since 2010 which establishes size limits for crocodiles harvested from the wild. During the recent crocodile management project, it developed a draft Decree which will, *inter alia*, make such size limits legally-binding.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented, once the draft Decree is adopted and enters into force.

c) Further to the training workshop, develop and implement a system of control of the ranches. In particular, their registers should include the following information:

- i) source of incoming stock (i.e. referenced authorization of each provider of eggs and source from which skins or hatchlings were obtained);**
- ii) date and place of slaughter;**
- iii) information relating to scute-clipping of hatchlings at the time of hatching, so that captive and ranched specimens can be identified;**
- iv) identification of skins according to their origin, that is captive-bred or ranched specimens (through internal tagging system);**
- v) captive breeding (eggs and hatchlings produced); and**
- vi) if the ranch has a tannery, information on the skins that are processed and converted into products.**

32. Madagascar addressed this action under the recent crocodile management project.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented, once the draft Decree and related draft ministerial Arrêté are adopted and enter into force.

d) With regard to the artisanal industry: quantify numbers of artisanal and conventional retail outlets and tanneries; carry out inventories of current stocks (products and skins); develop and make it compulsory for the artisans to keep stock registers. These registers should include the following information:

- i) referenced authorization of each provider of live animals, skins and/or products; and**
- ii) date of sale and details of buyer.**

In addition, ensure that all artisans are registered or licensed with the government; and carry out random and regular inspections. Madagascar shall report to the Secretariat on the enforcement measures it has taken.

33. Madagascar began working several years ago to formalize the artisanal industry, which has historically been informal in nature. This involved identifying and quantifying artisans and retail outlets, registering/licensing them with the government, requiring the use of stock registers and carrying out periodic inspections. Madagascar took additional steps to implement this action under the recent crocodile management project referred to in paragraph 16 above.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented, once the draft Decree and related draft ministerial Arrêté have been adopted and entered into force.

e) Further to the inventory of stocks and through regular inspections, ensure that skins and products entering the national and international markets are within the established legally-

binding size limits; all products and skins not in compliance must be seized and destroyed and perpetrators must be prosecuted in accordance with appropriate national legislation.

34. There has been implementation of this action in relation to captive-bred specimens and re-exports. Otherwise, it has not been applicable because of the current recommended trade suspension. Madagascar has the commitment and means to implement this action when the suspension is withdrawn.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented insofar as possible under the recommended trade suspension.

f) Ensure that only licensed and authorized egg collectors carry out egg collection for the ranching programme, and that a collection report is submitted to the Direction Générale des Forêts (General Directorate for Forests, the CITES Management Authority for Madagascar).

35. Madagascar addressed this action under the recent crocodile management plan mentioned in paragraph 16 above. Nevertheless, it has not been wholly applicable under the current recommended trade suspension. Madagascar has the commitment and means to implement this action when the suspension is withdrawn.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented insofar as possible under the recommended trade suspension and once the draft Decree and related draft ministerial Arrêté have been adopted and entered into force.

g) Update all relevant databases relating to crocodile management, including human/crocodile conflicts.

36. Madagascar has addressed this action under the recent crocodile management project mentioned in paragraph 16 above. Although it only refers to the human-crocodile conflict database in its report under this action, the updating of other databases (e.g. on the Nile crocodile population, collectors, ranchers or captive breeders, tanners and artisans) is mentioned in other parts of its report. The draft Decree and related draft ministerial Arrêté also envisage databases for the monitoring information that will be gathered on a regular basis.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented, once the draft Decree and related ministerial Arrêté have been adopted and entered into force.

h) Provide the Secretariat with all relevant measures (e.g. law, decrees, 'notes de service', licence conditions for tanneries) affecting harvesting, use of and trade in Nile crocodiles specimens in Madagascar, as well as copies of the minutes of the 'National Crocodile Committee'.

37. Madagascar has provided the Secretariat with all relevant legislative, regulatory and administrative measures affecting its management of the Nile crocodile. In the past, it provided minutes of National Crocodile Committee meetings but the Secretariat does not seem to have the minutes for more recent meetings. The Secretariat notes that Madagascar is establishing an interministerial Crocodile Commission, primarily aimed at collecting information about human/crocodile conflicts, but the relationship between this Commission and the existing Committee needs to be clarified.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented upon receipt of the above-mentioned clarifications.

i) On the basis of the audit carried out, establish the 2010 export quotas for ranched specimens (source code 'R') from each ranching operation.

38. Madagascar did establish the relevant quotas in 2010 but they were never implemented. Thereafter, this action has not been applicable, owing to the current recommendation to suspend trade. Madagascar has indicated that it will not allow any commercial export of wild-taken or ranched Nile crocodile specimens during 2014. Instead, it plans to use the rest of this year to prepare for a cautious re-commencement of ranching operations in 2015, and this should include the establishment of an export quota for ranched specimens from each ranching operation.

Secretariat conclusion: Fully implemented, insofar as possible under the circumstances.

Overall assessment

39. Ranching operations in Madagascar for the Nile crocodile have been under review by the Standing Committee since 2006. The recent crocodile management project undertaken by the Government of Madagascar (see paragraph 16 above) has enabled it to address the issues of concern identified by the Committee, and further progress on the strengthening of such management cannot easily take place while a recommended trade suspension remains in place.
40. In the view of the Secretariat, Madagascar has taken steps to fully implement the nine SC60 actions reproduced and reviewed in paragraphs 28 to 36 above. The Secretariat would consider all of the actions fully implemented once the draft Decree and related draft ministerial Arrêté, developed by Madagascar under the recent crocodile management project mentioned in paragraph 16 above, are adopted and enter into force, and certain clarifications are provided in relation to one of those actions.
41. The Secretariat notes that the assessment of Madagascar's implementation of the SC60 actions is a compliance-related matter which involves Madagascar, other Parties and the Convention bodies identified in Resolution Conf. 14.3 on *CITES compliance procedures*.
42. Should the recommended trade suspension contained in Notification to the Parties No. 2010/015 be withdrawn, Madagascar would once again be expected to fulfil the conditions outlined in Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP15), including the submission of annual reports on all relevant aspects of approved ranching operations.

Recommendation

43. The Secretariat recommends that the Working Group on Ranching Operations in Madagascar meet in the margins of the present meeting and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Standing Committee.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON RANCHING OPERATIONS IN MADAGASCAR

Provided orally to the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee (SC63, Bangkok, March 2013)

This document has been prepared by the Working Group on Ranching Operations in Madagascar, in relation to agenda item 13. It is the summary report of a meeting, which took place on the occasion of the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee.

Participants

France (Chair), Germany, Japan, Madagascar, United States of America, IUCN and CITES Secretariat.

Context

1. During its 60th meeting (Doha, 25 March 2010), the Standing Committee decided to recommend to the Parties that they suspend trade in specimens of Nile Crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*) with Madagascar. In addition, the Committee agreed on a list of actions to be implemented by Madagascar before it can reconsider the situation.
2. At its 62nd meeting (Geneva, July 2012), the Committee considered that the written information provided by Madagascar [document SC62 Inf. 5 (Rev. 1)] was not sufficient for withdrawal and decided to maintain its recommendation to suspend the trade.
3. It was also agreed during this meeting that:
 - a) the Secretariat would seek assistance from UNEP-WCMC with the preparation of a comparative review of the trade in Nile crocodiles between Madagascar and other Parties in order to identify potential discrepancies related to imports, exports and re-exports;
 - b) Madagascar would submit to the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee a detailed report addressing both its implementation of the Standing Committee recommendations and the discrepancies that the Secretariat and UNEP-WCMC would possibly identify; and
 - c) this report should be an official document (Doc. XX), but not an information document (Inf. XX).
4. As a reply to the first part of item 3.b) above, Madagascar communicated to the Secretariat on 2 January 2013 a document titled "*mise en œuvre des recommandations issues du SC 60 de la CITES sur la filière crocodile à Madagascar*" (document SC63 Doc. 13). This document was published on the Secretariat website on 30 January 2013.

In relation to the second part of item 3.b), on 27 February 2013, Madagascar sent to the Secretariat a document titled "*Étude comparative entre Madagascar et les autres Parties en réponse à l'analyse de PNUE/WCMC - Cas des exportations, importations et réexportations des produits issus de Crocodylus niloticus de l'année 2006 à 2011 - Rapport de Madagascar (soumis par Madagascar)*". This document was made available on the CITES Secretariat website as SC63 Inf. 2 on 1 March 2013, i.e. the day before the 63rd meeting of the Standing Committee.

Meeting

5. The members of the Working Group acknowledged that the information provided by Madagascar mentions that some progress has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Standing Committee.
6. However, the majority of the members of the Working Group (France, Germany, Japan, United States of America, IUCN and Secretariat) considered that this progress was not sufficient for the working group to be in a position either to suggest to the Standing Committee that it withdraw its recommendation to suspend the trade, or to justify that the working group meet in the margins of CoP16 to consider further recommendations to be submitted to the 64th meeting of the Standing Committee.

7. As a result, the Working Group recommends that the Standing Committee:
 - A. Maintain the recommendation to suspend trade until its 65th meeting to be held in 2014;
 - B. Extend the mandate of the Working Group, to accomplish the following tasks:
 - B.1) to work electronically after the 64th meeting;
 - B.2) on the basis of any new information, to assess the implementation by Madagascar of the recommendations from the Standing Committee; and
 - B.3) should it consider implementation of the recommendations to be satisfactory, to recommend to the Standing Committee that it withdraw the recommended trade suspension, by a decision taken through a postal procedure.
8. In the event the recommended suspension of trade is not withdrawn, the Working Group recommends that Madagascar submit the report referred to in paragraph 3.b) above in a timely manner so that the Standing Committee can review it at its 65th meeting. In accordance with article 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee, Madagascar should submit this report at least 60 days before the 65th meeting of this Committee.