

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



Sixty-sixth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 11-15 January 2016

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Compliance and enforcement

Enforcement matters

ILLEGAL TRADE IN BAHAMIAN ROCK IGUANAS (*CYCLURA RILEYI*):
REPORT OF THE CONTACT GROUP)

1. This document has been submitted by the United States as Chair of the Standing Committee contact group on document [SC65 Inf. 4](#).

Background

2. The Bahamas submitted SC65 Inf. 4 (Report on the Smuggling of Bahamian Rock Iguanas) to the 65th meeting of the Standing Committee (Geneva, 2014). The Bahamas intended that the submission be treated as a regular Document of the meeting, but due to administrative error, the document was not received by the Secretariat until one day after the SC65 document submission deadline; it was, therefore, posted as an Information (Inf.) Document.
3. The Bahamas introduced the document at SC65, which the Committee noted and referred to a Contact Group of the Committee. The Standing Committee directed the Contact Group to look into the issues raised in the document and to report its findings and recommendations to the 66th meeting of the Committee [[SC65 Sum. 6 \(Rev. 1\)](#)]. This document contains those findings and recommendations.
4. The Contact Group was composed of a number of Parties and NGOs¹ and the Secretariat (also representing ICCWC). The Contact Group conducted its work intersessionally and communicated and discussed Document SC65 Inf. 4 electronically. The Contact Group also benefitted from the receipt of an article on the issuance of CITES documents in the Member States of the European Union, provided by New Zealand, which was not a member of the Group.
5. The Contact Group identified two principle issues raised in SC65 Inf. 4: the need for an assessment of the enforcement needs of the Bahamas to strengthen its implementation of the Convention, and the need for further formal discussions, within the Standing Committee, on making Legal Acquisition Findings (LAFs) for the offspring of animals that may have previously been traded illegally.
6. Regarding the assessment of the enforcement of the Convention in the Bahamas, the members of the Contact Group came to consensus, finding that good progress may be achieved through the implementation of the *ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit*.

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

¹ *Bahamas, Jamaica, Mexico, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States (Chair), Defenders of Wildlife, ProWildlife, and Species Survival Network.*

7. Regarding making LAFs for the offspring of animals that may have been previously traded illegally, the Contact Group did not come to consensus. Some Parties and NGO participants expressed the point of view that Parties should consider the legal origins of founder stock when making LAFs for CITES documents, while one Party in the Contact Group indicated that there was no basis under its national law for doing so. The Contact Group did agree that the issue is of sufficient importance for the Standing Committee to continue discussions on this issue more formally (i.e. through a regular working group of the Committee).
8. The Secretariat also raised the provisions of Resolution Conf. 14.3, and noted that the Resolution provides an already determined compliance procedure, which includes the implementation of Article III, paragraph 2 (b), Article IV, paragraph 2 (b), and Article V, paragraph 2 (a). The Secretariat reminded the Contact Group that the Standing Committee is to operate "within the policy agreed to by the Conference of the Parties" [Resolution Conf. 11.1 (Rev. CoP16) on Establishment of Committees]; as such, the Standing Committee may choose to seek the guidance of the Conference of the Parties on these matters.

Findings and recommendations

9. The Contact Group finds and recommends the following:
 - a) The Standing Committee should take into consideration, during its discussion of the findings and recommendations of the Animals Committee on the implementation of the Convention relating to captive-bred and ranched specimens (and the implementation of Dec. 16.66), issues related to making Legal Acquisition Findings [as per paragraph 8] and the issuance of CITES documents for the offspring of specimens which may have previously been traded illegally.

The Standing Committee should, in turn, make the following recommendations:

- b) The Bahamas is requested to consider the implementation of the *ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit* to undertake a systematic and comprehensive national assessment of the main issues relating to illegal trade in wildlife in the country, and to analyze preventive and criminal justice responses at the national level, and identify technical assistance needs.²
 - c) ICCWC should provide support to the Bahamas to implement recommendations resulting from *ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit* implementation, to strengthen national capacity to detect and respond to illegal trade in wildlife.
10. The Contact Group understands that external funding to support the work referenced in paragraph 9 b) could be made available through ICCWC.

² At the time of submission of this report, the Bahamas informed the Chair of the Contact Group that it has made this request to ICCWC through the CITES Secretariat.