

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

Species trade and conservation

Tortoises and freshwater turtles

REPORT OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE

1. This document has been prepared by the Animals Committee.*
2. At its 16th meeting (CoP16, Bangkok, 2013), the Conference of the Parties adopted several interconnected Decisions on *Tortoises and freshwater turtles* (Testudines spp.), including the following:

Directed to the Secretariat

16.109 *Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall contract independent consultants to undertake a study, taking into account the findings of the Cancún workshop on non-detriment findings and other pertinent sources of information, to identify and discuss factors that are of particular relevance to make non-detriment findings for tortoises and freshwater turtles. These factors should include, but not be limited to, tortoise and turtle population status and dynamics, trade dynamics, production systems, and trade in parts and derivatives. This study should provide guidance to make non-detriment findings for tortoises and freshwater turtles.*

16.110 *The Secretariat shall make the results of the study referred to in Decision 16.109 available to the Animals Committee for consideration, if possible, at its 27th meeting.*

Directed to the Animals Committee

16.111 *The Animals Committee shall review the study undertaken in accordance with Decision 16.109 and make recommendations, as appropriate and, if possible, at its 27th meeting for consideration by the Standing Committee and the Parties.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

16.112 *The Standing Committee shall review the study undertaken in accordance with Decision 16.109 and the Animals Committee recommendations, and make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to the Parties or for consideration at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

3. At the 27th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC27, Veracruz, April 2014), the Secretariat introduced document AC27 Doc.20, explaining that it was not yet in a position to provide the study mentioned in Decision 16.109, but had engaged in discussions with IUCN to undertake the study within the available

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resources. The Animals Committee took note of this, and established an intersessional working group on tortoises and freshwater turtles to work on tasks directed to the Committee in Decision 16.111.

The membership was decided as follows:

Co-Chairs: AC Chair (Ms. Caceres) and the representative of Asia (Mr. Soemorumekso)

Parties: Canada, Indonesia and the United States of America; and

IGOs and NGOs: IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature, Conservation International, Humane Society International, Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council, Species Survival Network, Swan International and TRAFFIC International.

4. Following AC27, the Secretariat, with generous funding from Switzerland and the European Union, was able to contract IUCN and the Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission of IUCN (IUCN/SSC) to undertake the study mentioned in Decision 16.109.
5. Pursuant to Decision 16.109, the IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group produced a guide for CITES Scientific and Management Authorities on non-detriment findings and trade management for tortoises and freshwater turtles. The executive summary and the complete study can be found in [Annex 1](#) and [Annex 2](#) to document AC28 Doc. 15.
6. Pursuant to Decision 16.111, the Animals Committee at its 28th meeting (AC28, Tel Aviv, August 2015) reviewed the study, noting with appreciation the helpful guidance and useful case studies contained within. The Animals Committee welcomed the study contained in document AC28 Doc. 15 and recommended to the Standing Committee that it be communicated to the Parties.

Recommendation

7. The Standing Committee is invited to review the study contained in document AC28 Doc. 15 and the Animals Committee recommendation referred to in paragraph 6 above, and make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to the Parties or for consideration at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.