

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



Sixty-ninth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Geneva (Switzerland), 27 November - 1 December 2017

Strategic matters

DESIGNATION AND ROLES OF MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Article IX of the text of the Convention *inter alia* requires Parties to designate one or more Management Authorities competent to grant permits or certificates on behalf of that Party and to provide the name and address of the Management Authority authorized to communicate with other Parties and with the Secretariat. Additionally, Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties have also attributed many specific tasks to the Management Authorities of Parties including in relation to:
  - a) representing the Party at CITES meetings;
  - b) preparation of proposals to amend the Appendices and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties;
  - c) issuance and verification of CITES documents and communication of the names and sample signatures of the persons empowered to sign permits and certificates;
  - d) preparation of annual, implementation and illegal trade reports;
  - e) legislation, compliance and enforcement;
  - f) national entries in CITES registers in Resolutions Conf. 9.19 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of nurseries that artificially propagate specimens of Appendix-I plant species for export purposes*, Conf. 11.15 (Rev. CoP12) on *Non-commercial loan, donation or exchange of museum and herbarium specimens*, Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish* and Conf. 12.10 (Rev. CoP15) on *Registration of operations that breed Appendix-I animal species in captivity for commercial purposes*;
  - g) disposal of illegally traded and confiscated specimens;
  - h) coordination of national implementation with the Scientific Authority, law-enforcement agencies responsible for investigating illegal trafficking in wild fauna and flora and other ministries and agencies with a role in the implementation of the Convention;
  - i) national communications with the private sector and other stakeholders;
  - j) education and information; and
  - k) training and capacity building.
3. The Secretariat observes that the Convention and Resolutions place considerable responsibility upon Management Authorities for the correct implementation of the Convention. It also notes that Resolution Conf. 10.3 on *Designation and role of the Scientific Authorities* clarifies and consolidates the tasks assigned

to Scientific Authorities, but that no equivalent resolution exists in relation to Management Authorities despite their important role.

4. In recent years, the Secretariat has experienced cases of multiple authorities claiming to be that Party's Management Authority, difficulties in determining which of the Management Authorities in a Party is the one authorized to communicate with other Parties and with the Secretariat and confusion over which persons are authorized to represent a Party at CITES meetings. Despite the fact that Article IX paragraph 3 of the Convention obliges Parties to communicate any changes in the designations to the Secretariat for transmission to all other Parties, the Secretariat regularly receives complaints about out-of-date information appearing on the national CITES authorities pages of the website and indeed often has difficulty contacting Parties itself.
5. Concerning the designation of persons representing a Party at CITES meetings, the CITES Secretariat is currently working closely with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on the adaptation of CBD's meeting registration system (Kronos) for CITES meetings. This new system relies on a Party focal point (in the case of CITES, the Management Authority) to validate all members of the delegation representing that Party. This is a standard practice in a number of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including CBD, and helps ensure that there are only legitimate delegates representing a Party. As it implements the new system, the Secretariat would appreciate the support of Management Authorities in acting as focal points for the registration of their Party representatives to CITES meetings.
6. The Secretariat believes that there may be merit in the Conference of the Parties adopting a resolution on Management Authorities. Such a resolution could summarize the totality of the existing responsibilities allocated to Management Authorities in the Convention and the Resolutions. It could also clarify the procedures for their designation and the updating of information on national CITES authorities on the CITES website and strengthen their role in determining which persons represent Parties at CITES meetings.

#### Recommendation

7. The Standing Committee is requested to:
  - a) endorse the suggestion of the Secretariat that a new resolution on Management Authorities be drafted for consideration at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;
  - b) should this idea find favour, the Committee may wish to establish an intersessional working group to assist the Secretariat in the preparation of a draft of such a resolution for consideration at the 70th meeting of the Committee; and
  - c) encourage Management Authorities to act as registration focal points for upcoming CITES meetings.