

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

Interpretation and implementation matters

Trade control and traceability

Identification of specimens in trade

IDENTIFICATION MANUAL:  
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. In paragraph 1 of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) on *Identification Manual*, the Conference of the Parties DIRECTS the Secretariat to:
  - a) *prepare texts on the identification of animal and plant species for inclusion in the Identification Manual in the three working languages of the Convention;*
  - b) *when listings that include annotations are adopted, prepare sheets that illustrate the parts and derivatives covered under the listings, as appropriate, based on relevant data obtained from Parties whose proposals to amend the Appendices have been adopted;*
  - c) *upon request from a Party, provide advice on the identification of species, or seek advice from experts on the taxa concerned;*
  - d) *ensure, where relevant, that the subject of identification of species or specimens is included in training seminars organized by the Secretariat;*
  - e) *provide assistance to Parties in the development of national or regional identification manuals;*
  - f) *obtain, from Parties whose proposals to include new species in the Appendices have been adopted, appropriate data for inclusion in the Identification Manual within one year after acceptance of such additions;*
  - g) *publish, within its financial capacity, the Identification Manual;*
  - h) *inform the Standing, Animals and Plants Committees on the progress made whenever appropriate; and*
  - i) *report at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

3. While the present document focuses on the Secretariat's progress report related to the implementation of the above-mentioned Resolution, the Secretariat draws the attention of the Standing Committee to several Decisions relating to identification materials adopted at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016) listed below, and to other Decisions that make reference to the need for identification materials<sup>1</sup>:
- Decision 17.31-35 on *Capacity building*;
  - Decision 17.160-161 on *Identification materials*;
  - Decision 17.162-163 on *Identification (ivory)*;
  - Decision 17.164-165 on *Identification (tiger skins)*; and
  - Decision 17.166-169 on *Identification (timber)*.

#### Implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16)

4. As was described at previous meetings of the Standing Committee<sup>2</sup> and the Animals and Plants Committees<sup>3</sup>, as well as at CoP17,<sup>4</sup> the Secretariat's task of updating the CITES Identification Manual and the preparation of identification sheets has been superseded by the provision of the CITES Wiki Identification Manual since 2009.<sup>5</sup> Paragraphs a), b), f) and g) of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) no longer correspond to the current practice.
5. At CoP17, the Parties adopted Decision 17.32 on *Capacity building*, which contains an instruction to the Animals and Plants Committees to establish a joint working group on capacity-building and identification materials, and undertake, among other tasks, a revision of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16), and make recommendations, including possible amendments to this Resolution, to promote accuracy and availability of identification materials.
6. The intersessional working group on capacity-building and identification materials was established at the joint session of the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee and the 23rd meeting of the Plants Committee (AC29/PC23, Geneva, July 2017). The terms of reference of the working group contained in Decision 17.32<sup>6</sup>, may include activities related to the provision of technical assistance and guidance to the implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16) paragraphs c), d) and e), in addition to the review and possible revision of Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16). The co-Chairs of the working group are currently reviewing the draft work plan, which had been prepared by the Secretariat and presented at AC29/PC23<sup>7</sup>, and the activities are expected to begin shortly.
7. With regard to Resolution Conf. 11.19 (Rev. CoP16), paragraphs c), d) and e), the Secretariat continues to provide advice and support to Parties upon request and when relevant on the subject of identification of species or specimens, as well as the development of identification materials. The Secretariat is revising the webpage on the Identification Manual<sup>8</sup> on the CITES website, and plans to improve the CITES Virtual College page on identification materials<sup>9</sup>, so that they may better serve as a tool for providing relevant information on identification materials to Parties.

#### Recommendation

8. The Secretariat invites the Standing Committee to take note of the present document.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex 2 of AC29 Doc.9 / PC23 Doc.10 (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac-pc/ac29-pc23/E-AC29-09-PC23-10.pdf>)

<sup>2</sup> See for example SC65 Doc.32 (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/sc/65/E-SC65-32.pdf>)

<sup>3</sup> See AC29 Doc.9 / PC23 Doc.10 (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac-pc/ac29-pc23/E-AC29-09-PC23-10.pdf>)

<sup>4</sup> See CoP17 Doc.48.2 (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/17/WorkingDocs/E-CoP17-48-02.pdf>)

<sup>5</sup> See CoP15 Doc.38 (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/cop/15/doc/E15-38.pdf>)

<sup>6</sup> See <https://cites.org/eng/dec/valid17/81822>

<sup>7</sup> See AC29 Doc.9 / PC23 Doc.10 (<https://cites.org/sites/default/files/eng/com/ac-pc/ac29-pc23/E-AC29-09-PC23-10.pdf>)

<sup>8</sup> [https://cites.org/eng/resources/wiki\\_id.php](https://cites.org/eng/resources/wiki_id.php)

<sup>9</sup> <https://cites.unia.es/mod/resource/view.php?id=57&lang=en#ID-manuals>