

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

Species specific matters

Sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)

STOCKS SHARED BY RANGE STATES AND THE RESPECTIVE SPECIES:
REPORT OF THE ANIMALS COMMITTEE

1. This document has been prepared by the Animals Committee.*
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted several revisions to [Resolution Conf. 12.7 \(Rev. CoP17\)](#) on *Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish*.
3. Paragraph 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) recommends, with regard to catch and export quotas, that Parties not accept the import of caviar and meat of Acipenseriformes species from stocks shared between different range States, as listed in Annex 3 to the Resolution, unless export quotas have been set in accordance with the procedures outlined in subparagraphs 3 a) i) to vi) of the Resolution.
4. Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) consists of a table entitled "Overview about stocks shared by range States and the respective species". Possible amendments to this table were discussed at CoP17, but no consensus could be reached. The main point of disagreement concerned a proposal to split the shared stock "North-West Black Sea and Lower Danube River" into two shared stocks named "Black Sea" and "Danube River" [see summary record [CoP17 Com. II Rec. 13 \(Rev. 2\)](#) and information document [CoP17 Inf. 82](#)].
5. Consequently, the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 17.182 to 17.184 on *Sturgeons and paddlefish (Acipenseriformes spp.)*, as follows:

Directed to range States for Acipenseriformes

17.182 *All Range States of Acipenseriformes are invited to submit data relating to the content of the table contained in Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) on Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish to the Secretariat to be considered at the next meeting of the Animals Committee.*

Directed to the Animals Committee

17.183 *The Animals Committee shall, based on the information submitted by range States, discuss the content of the table contained in Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17), including possible amendments, and report to the Standing Committee.*

* *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.*

Directed to the Standing Committee

17.184 *The Standing Committee shall, based on the report of the Animals Committee, propose possible amendments to the table contained in Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17), as appropriate, to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

6. To assist with the implementation of Decision 17.182, the Secretariat sent letters in April 2017 to all range States of Acipenseriformes with shared stocks, inviting them to submit any relevant data relating to the content of the table contained in Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17). Responses were received from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Canada, Islamic Republic of Iran, Ukraine and the United States of America, and presented to the Animals Committee in document [AC29 Doc. 20.1](#) and its [Annex](#).
7. At its 29th meeting (AC29, Geneva, July 2017), the Animals Committee established a working group to consider the information submitted by range States of Acipenseriformes, and propose a consolidated version of the table of shared stocks.
8. The Animals Committee considered the proposals from the working group, and agreed to transmit to the Standing Committee the following considerations and recommendations with respect to Annex 3 of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) [see document [AC29 Com.4 \(Rev. by Sec\)](#)]:

The Animals Committee:

- i) *Observes that not enough scientific information is available to the Committee to make conclusive recommendations on the amendments proposed by the Russian Federation to the table in Annex 3 regarding the delimitation of stocks in the North-West Black Sea and Lower Danube;*
 - ii) *Encourages all CITES Parties bordering the Black Sea and Danube river to collaborate on research to address knowledge gaps regarding the distribution and migration of stocks of sturgeon species in their respective jurisdictions, in particular molecular and genetic studies, to establish the basis for science-based delimitation of stocks in the Danube and Black Sea and submit the results of such research to the next meeting of the Animals Committee or the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties;*
 - iii) *Recommends to cooperate with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in the implementation of the above mentioned study;*
 - iv) *Noting the information provided by Ukraine in its response contained in AC29 Doc. 20.1 Annex 1 which suggests that the Lower Danube and North-West Black Sea stock are connected, and noting Russia's views based on experience in other basins that mixing of sturgeons from different tributaries occurs, the Standing Committee may wish to consider the option of proposing amendments to the table in Annex 3 as follows "~~North-west~~ Black Sea and Lower Danube stock" subject to the availability of relevant scientific data and consultation with other Parties from the region.*
9. Based on its assessment that not enough scientific information is available to make conclusive recommendations on the amendments proposed, the Animals Committee calls for the completion of the research indicated in sub-paragraph ii) of paragraph 8 above.

Recommendations

10. The Standing Committee is invited to:
 - a) encourage all CITES Parties bordering the Black Sea and Danube river to collaborate on research, as indicated in sub-paragraph ii) of paragraph 8 of this document; and,
 - b) in case no research results become available, consider the suggestion formulated in paragraph 8, sub-paragraph iv) above as a possible amendment to Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP17) for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its 18th meeting.