

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

QUEEN CONCH (*STROMBUS GIGAS*):  
REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. At its 17th meeting (CoP17, Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions 17.285 to 17.290 on *Queen conch* (*Strombus gigas*), of which the following are pertinent to the Standing Committee:

***Directed to the range States of Strombus gigas***

17.285 *The range States of Strombus gigas shall:*

- a) *following the endorsement of the Regional Queen Conch Fisheries Management and Conservation Plan by all range States, collaborate to implement the regional plan, and develop national Queen Conch Fisheries Management and Conservation Plans as appropriate;*
- b) *organize national level consultations to discuss the Regional Queen Conch Fisheries Management and Conservation Plan, build awareness, increase buy-in of all stakeholders for implementing the measures, and contribute to future national, subregional and regional compliance;*
- c) *continue to collect data on weight of *S. gigas* by processing grade in order to update and improve the agreed regional conversion factors, and develop additional national conversion factors, taking into account the spatial variability and characteristics of the species;*
- d) *continue to collaborate in exploring ways to enhance the traceability of specimens of *S. gigas* in international trade, including, but not limited to, catch certificates, labelling systems and the application of genetic techniques, and consider sharing relevant experiences with the Secretariat, Parties and the Standing Committee, as appropriate, in the context of discussions on traceability systems for trade in CITES-listed species;*
- e) *collaborate in developing and implementing joint research programmes at subregional or regional level to support the making of non-detriment findings, and promote relevant research and capacity building activities through regional fisheries management bodies;*
- f) *promote and collaborate in developing and implementing public education and awareness programmes regarding the conservation and sustainable use of *S. gigas*; and*
- g) *provide information to the Secretariat on the implementation of this decision to allow it to report at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in accordance with Decision 17.290 and, as appropriate, report to the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission on the implementation of the regional plan or national plans.*

### **Directed to the Standing Committee**

17.286 *On the basis of reporting by the Secretariat in compliance with Decision 17.289, the Standing Committee shall review enforcement and traceability issues concerning international trade in queen conch, and make recommendations as appropriate.*

### **Directed to the Secretariat**

17.289 *The Secretariat shall, pending the availability of external funding,*

- a) *continue to collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Working Group on Queen Conch composed of the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council (CFMC), the Organización del Sector Pesquero y Acuicola del Istmo Centroamericano (OSPESCA, Organization for the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector of the Central American Isthmus), the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), WECAFC and other relevant international and regional bodies to provide assistance to range States of *S. gigas* in order to enhance the capacity of their CITES Management and Scientific Authorities, fisheries authorities and other stakeholders to implement the Regional Queen Conch Fisheries Management and Conservation Plan and apply the NDF guidance;*
- b) *monitor the development of traceability systems for queen conch; provide assistance, as appropriate, to FAO, the CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch and others in reviewing options for the development of an auditable "chain of custody" procedure; and report relevant developments to the Standing Committee; and*
- c) *continue to provide assistance to range States of *S. gigas* on relevant enforcement issues, and report new developments in this regard to the Standing Committee, as appropriate.*

17.290 *On the basis of information provided in accordance with Decision 17.285 g), and in consultation with the range States of *S. gigas*, the CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch and FAO, the Secretariat shall report on the progress in the implementation of these Decisions at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

### Implementation of Decision 17.285

3. Regarding the implementation of Decision 17.285, the Secretariat of WECAFC informed the CITES Secretariat that the Regional Queen Conch Fisheries Management and Conservation Plan is now published [online](#) and that a new working programme for the joint CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch is being prepared that fully takes into account the Decisions adopted at CoP17, which includes a possible 3rd meeting of this Working Group early in 2018.
4. In this context, the Chair of WECAFC sent out a letter to WECAFC members that are queen conch range States in July 2017, requesting information on the various elements listed in Decision 17.285, specifically:
  - a) national queen conch fisheries management and conservation plans developed in 2016 and 2017;
  - b) non-detriment findings (NDF) prepared for trade in queen conch;
  - c) confirmation that the regionally adopted conversion factors for meat processing are used, or alternatively, which national level conversion factors are used; and
  - d) queen conch production and trade statistics for 2015 and 2016, preferably in nominal weight (= life weight).
5. At the time of writing, responses had been received from six range States [Honduras, Nicaragua, the Netherlands, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Anguilla) and the United States of America]. The Secretariat will include these and any additional responses on the dedicated page on queen conch on the CITES website.

#### Implementation of Decision 17.289

6. Regarding the external funding for the implementation of the activities called for in Decision 17.289, the WECAFC Secretariat, in collaboration with the CITES Secretariat, has formally submitted a funding proposal to a donor, but no confirmation of that funding was available at the time of writing. The Secretariat may be able to provide an oral update on the status of this funding proposal at the current meeting.

#### Implementation of Decision 17.286

7. While noting that the Secretariat's report is intended to emanate from assistance provided to range States under Decision 17.289 (see paragraph above), which can only commence once external funding has been made available, the Secretariat believes that both the responses provided by range States in response to the letter by the Chair of WECAFC and the possible 3rd meeting of the joint CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch may provide additional opportunities to gather relevant information. The Secretariat therefore intends to make its report on enforcement and traceability issues concerning international trade in queen conch available to the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee for its consideration.

#### Recommendations

8. The Standing Committee is invited to:
  - a) take note of this document and thank the range States for the information that they submitted in response to the request by the Chair of WECAFC; and
  - b) encourage range States that have not yet submitted such information to do so.