

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

Maintenance of the Appendices

ANALYSIS OF THE RELEVANCE OF THE CRITERIA OF RESOLUTION CONF. 9.24 (REV. COP17)

This document has been submitted by Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.*

1. St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a Small Island Developing State, Party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), with limited human (scientific) and financial resources to evaluate the various proposals submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Convention.
2. Like several other Parties, we rely on the recommendations of the CITES Secretariat – and for Marine species (as per Art XV), on the analysis provided by the FAO Panel of Experts – to determine our position on the various proposals. The conclusion provided by the CITES Secretariat and the FAO Panel of experts indicate their respective opinion as to whether the proposal meets the Criteria. Additionally, the CITES Secretariat will, on all proposals, make its own recommendations.
3. When the Criteria were adopted in 1994 (CoP9), after a lengthy process and years of involvement by the CITES Secretariat, the Standing Committee and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), these Criteria were considered as the most efficient tool ever developed for reaching sound decisions on proposals to amend the Appendices and avoid abusive use of the Appendices.
3. Whenever the objective of a proposal is to a) include a species on the Appendices, b) maintain a species on the Appendices or c) transfer a species from App. II to App. I, the Criteria are praised and touted. Whenever a proposal meets the Criteria for a) transfer from Appendix I to Appendix II or b) removal from the Appendices, the Criteria are ignored. Moreover, whenever a proposal does not meet the requirements of the Criteria for listing or up-listing of a species, once again, it is ignored even, at times, by the CITES Secretariat in its own recommendations.

(To illustrate our point, at CoP17, the CITES Secretariat and the FAO Panel of Experts both stated that Prop 42, *Silky shark* did not meet the Criteria and, nevertheless, the CITES Secretariat recommended the adoption; both FAO and CITES stated that Prop 43, *Thresher shark* did not meet the Criteria and the CITES Secretariat recommended the rejection. Both proposals were adopted by an almost identical result: 111Y-30N-5A for Proposal 42 and 108Y-29N-5A for Proposal 43.)

4. This ambiguous and confusing situation creates doubt as to the importance or even the relevance of the Criteria in the CITES decision-making process with respect to the amendments to the Appendices. The Criteria would appear to be more like a one-way street thus, defeating its own original purpose.

* *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.*

THEREFORE' THE GOVERNMENT OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES REQUESTS:

- A. The Standing Committee to instruct the CITES Secretariat:
 - a) to provide an analysis and a detailed table of the all Proposals to amend the Appendices submitted since and including CoP11, in relation to the findings from the CITES Secretariat and – for Marine species – by the FAO Panel of Experts as to whether the proposal met or did not meet the Criteria; and
 - b) to report its findings to SC70, including any recommendations on the relevance of the Criteria, that might be appropriate as a result of its analysis.
- B. Requests the CITES Secretariat to include the issue of “Relevance of the CITES Criteria” on the Agenda of the CITES SC69 in consultation with the Chair of the Standing Committee.