

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



Seventieth meeting of the Standing Committee  
Rosa Khutor, Sochi (Russian Federation), 1-5 October 2018

Strategic Matters

REVISION AND REPLACEMENT OF THE *CITES STRATEGIC VISION 2008–2020*:  
REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP

1. This document has been submitted by Canada as Chair of the Standing Committee intersessional working group on the CITES Strategic Plan.\*

Background

2. At the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties a series of Decisions regarding the updating of the current CITES Strategic Vision were adopted as follows:

***Decision 17.18 directed to the Standing Committee***

*The Standing Committee shall:*

- a) *establish a Strategic Plan Working Group, with representation from all regions and from the Animals and Plants Committees, to develop, with the assistance and cooperation of the Secretariat, a proposal for a strategic vision for the period after 2020 and any associated action plan and indicators to measure progress;*
- b) *through the working group, review progress in implementing the CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020 against the adopted indicators, taking account of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, and of any emerging replacement for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets; and*
- c) *submit a proposal for a CITES strategic vision for the period after 2020 and any associated action plan and indicators, in time for consideration at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

***Decision 17.19 directed to Parties***

*Parties are requested to evaluate their efforts in relation to the implementation of the CITES Strategic Vision 2008-2020 and the associated Action Plan and to submit the outcome thereof to the Standing Committee's Strategic Plan Working Group through their regional representatives on that working group.*

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\* *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.*

### **Decision 17.20 directed to the Secretariat**

*The Secretariat shall, in advance of the 18th Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of external funds, prepare an analysis, including, if possible, a regional breakdown, of progress towards the CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020 based upon the reports of Parties under Article VIII paragraph 7 (a) and (b), and other information as appropriate.*

### **Decision 17.21 directed to the Secretariat**

*Subject to external funding, the Secretariat shall publish the outcomes resulting from implementation of the CITES Strategic Vision and its indicators including through a graphic presentation on the CITES website.*

3. During the 69th meeting of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat presented a proposed approach to the review and revision of the current *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020* (SC69 Doc. 10) which was agreed by the Committee. The Standing Committee further agreed that the next CITES Strategic Plan should run from 2021 to 2030 and endorsed the outline of the next Strategic Plan and related documents, contained in the annex to document SC69 Doc. 10 as a guideline to be used by the working group.
4. As anticipated in Decision 17.18, the Standing Committee established an intersessional Strategic Plan working group, with representation from all regions and from the Animals and Plants Committees with a mandate to:
  - a) review progress in implementing the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020* against the adopted indicators, taking account of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, and of any emerging replacement for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets; and
  - b) on the basis of the annex of document SC69 Doc. 10, develop a proposal for a Strategic Plan for the period after 2020 and any associated action plan and indicators to measure progress and submit this to the 70th meeting of the Committee, together with any background material that the working group believes would be helpful to the Committee in its consideration of the working group's proposal.
5. The membership of the intersessional Strategic Plan working group was agreed as follows: Chair of the Standing Committee (Chair); Argentina, Austria, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, European Union, Georgia, Japan, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Republic of Korea, Uganda, United States of America, and Zimbabwe; and Food and Agriculture Organization, Humane Society International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Species Survival Network, TRAFFIC, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund; and the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees. The Chair additionally accepted the membership of the World Association of Zoos and Aquaria and the United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

#### Part a) of the working group mandate – review progress

6. The intersessional Strategic Plan working group began its deliberations examining part a) of the working group mandate. In doing so, it noted that Decision 17.20 requests the Secretariat to prepare an analysis of progress towards the CITES Strategic Vision in advance of CoP18. However, the Secretariat did not have funds identified to undertake this task and this analysis was not available to support the working group's deliberations.
7. The working group further noted that Decision 17.19 asks Parties to evaluate their efforts against the current Strategic Plan and submit their self-evaluations to the working group. Party self-evaluations were not requested however, as the new "Implementation Report" format agreed at CoP17 (to replace the biennial report), was designed specifically against the goals and indicators of the CITES Strategic Vision. As such, Parties will be undertaking the self-evaluation requested in Decision 17.19 when they provide their implementation reports, due on 31 October 2018 (see CITES notification 2016/006).
8. As the deadline for submission of the implementation reports is after the 70th meeting of the Standing Committee, the working group was unable to consider the Party self-evaluations. Rather, the members of the working group reviewed the existing indicators and provided comments on the implementation of the current Strategic Vision and an indication of the perceived value of each indicator. In doing so, working group participants generally found the existing indicators to be relevant, with some comments on those that could

be nuanced or amended. The preliminary comments are compiled in an information document for reference in further considerations of the indicators of progress.

9. In undertaking this element of our mandate, the working group Chair noted that, in her view, indicators are most beneficial when data has been collected over a number of reporting periods so that trends can be seen and evaluated. The Standing Committee undertook a careful review of the indicators in advance of the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties and that data has not yet been collected against these agreed indicators. It may thus be too soon to provide a careful evaluation of the indicators and of progress against the current CITES Strategic Vision.
10. The working group did not have the time to propose new or revised indicators of progress. As such, the working group proposes the Standing Committee agree to submit a Decision requesting the Standing Committee consider any new or revised indicators of progress, based on the revised Strategic Vision and the information received from Parties in their report on implementation, for consideration by the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties. See proposed Decision 18.DD in paragraph 16 below.

Part b) of the working group mandate – a revised Strategic Plan

10. The working group decided to use Resolution Conf. 16.3 (Rev. CoP17) *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020* as a starting point for their consideration of an updated Strategic Vision, taking into consideration the elements of the template proposed in the annex of document SC69 Doc. 10 and the direction from the 69<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee. The working group first considered the following general questions, keeping in mind connections to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the future revisions of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity* being considered under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and anticipated for 2020.
  - a) Is there a need for a better preamble in Resolution Conf. 16.3 to support the Strategic Vision?
  - b) What additional elements are needed in the existing introduction to the Vision? What may be removed?
  - c) Does the introduction appropriately position CITES and the CITES Strategic Vision globally?
  - d) Is the Vision statement still relevant?
  - e) Is the purpose statement needed? What would be an appropriate Mission statement? Values statement?
  - f) Are we satisfied with the current strategic goals or is a modification needed? This is a key point as it will determine the path forward for future objectives and indicators. Do we need new objectives and indicators?
  - g) Is an Action Plan necessary?
11. In response to the questions posed, the working group agreed in the value of a preamble that sets the CITES and international context for the new Strategic Vision. The working group also agreed to streamline the introductory elements of the Vision, noting a detailed history was not needed. Taking into account the proposed structure in the Annex of SC69 Doc. 10, as well as the structure of the current CITES Strategic Vision, the working group indicated duplication between purpose, mission, values and vision statements should be avoided. The working group chose to provide a vision, values and purpose statement but felt an additional mission statement was not needed.
12. With regards to the goals and objectives, some of the issues raised in the working group included putting some attention on combatting illegal wildlife trade as well as putting a focus on the sustainable use and trade in wildlife. The working group also indicated clarification was needed around goals reflecting the relationship and contributions of CITES to other international processes. Further, the working group agreed that written descriptors for each goal would be useful to set the context and some of this language is drawn from the current Strategic Vision. There were differing views on the scope and ambition for each goal which the Chair attempted to balance and reflect in the development of the five proposed goals. Based on the proposed goals, the working group examined the current objectives, and deleted, rearranged, revised or drafted new objectives to reflect the intent of each goal. As noted above, the working group did not have time to begin consideration of new indicators of progress for the revised goals and objectives.

13. The working group agreed that an action plan is not necessary as actions are undertaken through the direction given in the CITES Resolutions and Decisions. However, the working group agreed that a review of the CITES Resolutions and Decisions against the agreed objectives would be useful to see if there are objectives that are not reflected and where updates (or new) Resolutions or Decisions may be warranted. It is proposed the Secretariat be directed to undertake such a review after the adoption of the revised CITES Strategic Vision. Further, during the joint session of the 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Animals Committee and 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Plants Committee (Geneva, July 2018), the Committees indicated a wish to also review the results of the Secretariat's review. See proposed Decisions 18.BB, 18.CC and 18.DD in paragraph 16 below.
14. Further, in undertaking the review of the current Strategic Vision, the working group noted that the development of the post-2020 *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity* under the CBD will occur after CITES CoP18. As such it was suggested Parties be encouraged to actively participate in its development. Similarly, the working group suggested that a review of the CITES Strategic Vision following the adoption of the new *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity* at CBD CoP15 (2020) would be useful and that the Secretariat could be asked to undertake an analysis of the CITES Strategic Vision against the post-2020 *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity* (one adopted) and the Sustainable Development Goals. See proposed Decisions 18.AA and 18.BB in paragraph 16 below.

#### Recommendations

15. The Standing Committee is invited to submit the proposed revisions to Resolution Conf. 16.3 (Rev. CoP17) *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020* found in Annex 1 and Annex 2 for consideration by the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
16. The Standing Committee submit the following Decisions for consideration by the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties:

#### ***Decision 18.AA directed to the Parties***

Parties are encouraged to actively participate and reflect CITES aims in their contributions to the development of the post-2020 biodiversity framework anticipated to be adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2020.

#### ***Decision 18.BB directed to the Secretariat***

The Secretariat shall:

- a) Undertake a comparative analysis of the adopted CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030 against the goals within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, once adopted, the post-2020 biodiversity framework, and present their analysis to the Standing Committee for their information; and
- b) Review the objectives of *CITES Strategic Vision 2021-2030* against the current CITES Resolutions and Decisions, and identify to the Animals and Plants Committee as appropriate, and to the Standing Committee those objectives (if any) where the current CITES policies as found in the Resolutions and Decisions do not appear to address activities in support of achieving that objective of the CITES Strategic Vision.

#### ***Decision 18.CC directed to the Animals and Plants Committee***

The Animals and Plants Committees will review the draft gap analysis prepared by the Secretariat under Decision 18.BB paragraph 2 and provide their recommendations to the Standing Committee.

#### ***Decision 18.DD directed to the Standing Committee***

1. The Standing Committee shall, taking into account the information provided by Parties via the Report on Implementation, make recommendations on new or revised indicators of progress to be included in the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030*, for consideration by the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

2. The Standing Committee shall review the information provided by the Secretariat in Decision 18.BB paragraph 2, as well as the views of the Animals and Plants Committees, and make recommendations to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

17. Recommend to the 19th Conference of the Parties the deletion of Decisions 17.18 and 17.19.

Track change version of proposed revisions to the cites strategic vision

**Conf. 16.3 (Rev. CoP1~~87~~) CITES Strategic Vision: 20~~198~~-20~~3020~~**

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THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

REITERATING the aim of the Convention to promote international cooperation for the protection of species of wild fauna and flora against over-exploitation through international trade and recognizing the importance of maintaining those species throughout their range at a level consistent with their role in the ecosystem;

ACKNOWLEDGING the ever-growing value of wild fauna and flora from an aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational, ceremonial and economic point of view, and the benefits to local communities arising from the conservation and sustainable use of wild flora and fauna;

CONSCIOUS of the need to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention globally;

RECOGNIZING that achieving the aim of the Convention is reliant on its successful implementation by peoples and States, who are and should be the best protectors of their own wild fauna and flora;

RECALLING the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The Future we Want", and reiterating that CITES stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development, promotes the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, should contribute to tangible benefits for indigenous peoples and local communities, and ensure that no species is threatened with extinction by entering into international trade;

RECALLING also Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly on *Transforming our World; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets contained therein;

RECOGNIZING the intent of the Conference of the Parties to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as relevant to CITES;

RECALLING the importance it placed on cooperation among the biodiversity-related Conventions and the contribution of the Convention to meeting the goals and targets of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*;

NOTING that the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework will be adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at their Conference of the Parties in 2020;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of global cooperation to address the threats posed by illegal trade in wildlife as recognized in, among others, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/314 on *Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife* and the important role of the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime in this regard;

ADOPTS the *CITES Strategic Vision: ~~2008-2020~~2021-2030*, annexed to this Resolution.

### CITES Strategic Vision: ~~2008-2020~~2021-2030

#### Introduction

##### ***General introduction***

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was concluded on 3 March 1973. ~~It and~~ entered into force ~~after ratification or accession by 10 States,~~ on 1 July 1975.

~~Since then, CITES provides a global framework for the number legal and sustainable international trade in CITES-listed species. Today, CITES regulates trade in more than 36 000 species of countries that have ratified, approved, accepted or acceded to the Convention has continued to increase. With 183 Parties, wild animals and plants. CITES is widely regarded as one of the most important international conservation instruments. During this period Since 1975, the Conference of the Parties has shown itself to be capable of adapting adapted this framework to changing circumstances and, through the adoption of Resolutions and Decisions, has demonstrated an ability to construct practical solutions to increasingly complex wildlife trade and conservation problems challenges.~~

~~At its ninth meeting (Fort Lauderdale, 1994), the Conference of the Parties commissioned a review of the Convention's effectiveness. The principal purposes of the review were to evaluate the extent to which the Convention had achieved its objectives and the progress made since CITES came into being and, most importantly, to identify deficiencies and requirements necessary to strengthen the Convention and help plan for the future. At its 10th meeting (Harare, 1997), the Conference agreed to an Action Plan for implementing certain findings and recommendations of the review. A central finding was the need for a strategic plan and, at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000), the Conference of the Parties adopted its first strategic plan, the Strategic Vision through 2005, and an Action Plan.~~

~~At its- at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000). These were subsequently extended until the end of 2007 at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decision 13.1, which extended the validity of the Strategic Vision and Action Plan until the end of 2007. It also established a procedure for developing a new Strategic Vision through 2013, particularly to contribute to the achievement of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. The present document is the result of this process-).~~

~~At Initially, at its 14th meeting (The Hague, 2007), and with amendments agreed at its 16th meeting (Bangkok, 2013),) and 17th (Johannesburg, 2016) meetings, the Conference of the Parties extended the validity of the agreed a new Strategic Vision and Action Plan to for CITES for the period 2008-2020 and included. The agreed amendments to contribute describe the contribution of CITES' activities to the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and as well as to the relevant outcomes achievement of the United Nations Conference on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its Goals and targets relevant to CITES.~~

~~At its 17th meeting (Johannesburg, 2016), the Conference of the Parties adopted amendments to contribute to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and their targets relevant to CITES and to update the number of Parties.~~

With this new Strategic Vision, the Conference of the Parties to CITES outlines the Convention's direction ~~in the new millennium and takes into account, within the context of its mandate, issues such as for the 2021-2030 timeframe in fulfillment of its mandate. It is additionally recognized that Parties' efforts to implement the Convention may also provide benefit to, and draw strength from, efforts being undertaken in other fora, and in this sense highlights the linkages between CITES and, inter alia, the processes and actions listed below:~~

~~—contributing to the 2030 Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and their targets relevant to~~

- ~~• CITES, including those for terrestrial and marine wildlife;~~

~~—contributing to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the implementation of the Aichi~~

- post-2020 Biodiversity Targets adopted by the Framework being developed by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to the extent that they are; and

relevant ~~to CITES;~~

- ~~—contributing to the implementation of the relevant outcomes/resolutions of the United Nations Conference on General Assembly.~~

The Sustainable Development (2012);

~~—contributing to the conservation of wildlife as an integral part of the global ecosystem on which all life depends;~~

~~—cultural, social and economic factors at play in producer and consumer countries;~~

~~—promoting transparency and wider involvement of civil society in the development of conservation policies and practices; and~~

~~—ensuring that a coherent and internationally agreed approach based on scientific evidence is taken to address any species of wild fauna and flora subject to unsustainable international trade.~~

CITES Strategic Vision provides a framework for the future development of the CITES Resolutions and Decisions and provides guidance on goals and objectives to be achieved. The Conference of the Parties, through the Resolutions and Decisions, will determine actions to be taken by Parties, the Committees or the Secretariat, as appropriate. The Strategic Vision also serves the Parties as a tool for the prioritization of activities, and decisions on how best to fund them, in light of the need for the efficient and transparent use of resources.

### **Vision Statement**

By 2030 all international trade in wild fauna and flora is legal and sustainable, consistent with the long-term conservation of species, and thereby contributing to halting biodiversity loss and to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Values**

Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora act in the best interest of the conservation of species, working to ensure their use is legal and sustainable, and aim to adopt measures proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species under consideration. In doing so, Parties have a shared commitment to fairness, impartiality, geographic and gender balance, and to transparency.

### **Purpose**

The twofold purpose of the Strategic Vision is:

- ~~—as a priority,~~ to improve the working of the Convention, so that international trade<sup>1</sup> in wild fauna and flora is conducted legally at sustainable levels; and supports the conservation of listed species; and
- ~~—to ensure that CITES policy developments are mutually supportive of international environmental priorities and take into account new international initiatives, consistent with the terms of the Convention.~~

### **Structure**

#### **Strategic Goals**

In order to achieve this purpose, ~~three~~five broad goals, of equal priority, have been identified as the key components of the Strategic Vision:

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that all references to 'trade' in the Strategic Vision refer to trade as defined in Article I of the Convention.



- ~~–Goal 1: Ensure Trade in CITES-listed species is conducted in full compliance with and implementation and enforcement of the Convention, in order to achieve their conservation and sustainable use;~~
- ~~–Goal 2: Secure the necessary financial Parties' decisions are supported by the best available science and information;~~
- ~~Goal 3: Parties (individually and collectively) have the tools, resources and means for the operation capacity to effectively implement and implementation of enforce the Convention, contributing to the reduction of illegal trade in CITES-listed wildlife species;~~

~~–Goal 3: Contribute to significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss and to achieving relevant globally-agreed goals and targets by ensuring that CITES and other multilateral instruments and processes are coherent and mutually supportive.~~

- Goal 4: CITES policy development and implementation also contributes to and learns from other international efforts to achieve sustainable development; and
- Goal 5: Delivery of the CITES Strategic Vision is improved through collaboration.

The goals aim at consolidating the existing strengths of CITES, ensuring the implementation of ~~the mandate of CITES and the Convention~~ achievement of its overarching aim as a priority, and further improving the relationship with ~~complementary international efforts to achieve conservation and sustainable development, including with other~~ relevant multilateral environmental agreements and related conventions, agreements and associations.

Goal 1 recognizes that only through ensuring compliance with CITES provisions will the aim of the Convention be achieved. This goal speaks to the performance of the Convention and how effectively it is resulting in the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed wild fauna and flora. It recognizes that the effectiveness of the Convention at achieving its Vision depends upon its full implementation by all Parties. Full implementation includes commitment by each Party to the Convention and its principles. Equally important is the commitment of each Party to embody the international co-operation essential for the success of the Convention. Actions to achieve the intent of this goal might include developing innovative tools for the identification and traceability of species in trade, the making of non-detriment findings, determining legal acquisition and for the sharing of trade information. It requires Parties to develop provisions for trade that are proportionate and that can be implemented without undue complexity.

In Goal 2, CITES Parties recognize the need to generate and have access to the best available science and information for supporting their trade risk assessment, listing proposal, permitting and enforcement decisions. Among others, information to support the making of non-detriment findings, determining legal acquisition and evaluating the care of live specimens might be found in the scientific literature, population surveys, provenance records or professional literature and standards. Information might equally be held by national and international experts, including the relevant knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities. Further, in cases of uncertainty, either as to the status of a species, or the impact of trade, Parties commit to act in the best interest of the conservation of the species and aim to adopt measures proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species under consideration.

Goal 3 recognizes the necessity of appropriately supporting Parties to effectively implement the Convention. It is the CITES Parties that are responsible for ensuring enforcement and consistent application of the Convention's obligations, and thus ultimately responsible for how effectively the Convention achieves its Vision. Practically, in addition to appropriate resources allocation be each Party internally, full implementation of CITES also demands the provision of timely capacity building and of adequate financial resources. Underlying this goal is the recognition that effective enforcement is key to combatting the threat illegal and unsustainable trade poses to wild flora and fauna. Parties recognize the important role of CITES in global efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of species (including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities), to address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products, and to tackle organized crime and poor governance, including corruption.

Goal 4 explicitly recognizes the important contribution of CITES to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which seeks to achieve sustainable development through balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions. It is a widely-accepted and broad-scope international process, and it contains several goals and targets that are directly or indirectly dependent on effective implementation of CITES, including supporting legal, sustainable wildlife trade, and tackling both illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade. CITES

~~Parties understand and aim to communicate the important contribution the effective implementation of the Convention has in achieving the global sustainable development goals. CITES Parties equally recognize the need to draw lessons from the global debate on sustainable development, in recognition that CITES stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development.~~

~~Finally, Goal 5 aims to the use of existing or new partnerships or alliances to help achieve its Strategic Vision. This could include work within existing partnerships, such as other conventions, international agreements and organizations, governments, non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations or others, as well as partnerships at the national or regional level. It also reflects work to develop new partnerships or alliances, as relevant and in order to advance the aim of the Convention, and mainstream CITES implementation with relevant sectors and stakeholders. The aim of such collaborations is mutually supportive, where CITES Parties can also help advance other international goals or targets by simultaneously advancing the achievement of CITES goals.~~

~~Within the framework provided by each of these goals, this Strategic Vision identifies a number of objectives to be achieved. Corresponding indicators of progress are to be developed by the Standing Committee and reviewed by the Conference of the Parties.~~

~~This document provides a framework for the future development of the existing body of Resolutions and Decisions. While it should provide guidance on how the goals and objectives are to be achieved, the Conference of the Parties, the Committees or the Secretariat, as appropriate, will take required action. The document also serves the Parties as a tool for the prioritization of activities, and decisions on how best to fund them, in light of the need for the rational application of costs and the efficient and transparent use of resources.~~

~~It should be noted that all references to 'trade' in the Strategic Vision refer to trade as defined in Article I of the Convention.~~

## ~~CITES vision statement~~

~~Conserve biodiversity and contribute to its sustainable use by ensuring that no species of wild fauna or flora becomes or remains subject to unsustainable exploitation through international trade, thereby contributing to the significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss and making a significant contribution towards achieving the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets.~~

### ~~THE STRATEGIC GOALS~~ **CITES Strategic Objectives**

## **GOAL 1 ENSURE TRADE IN CITES-LISTED SPECIES IS CONDUCTED IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH AND IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE CONVENTION IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THEIR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE**

### **Introduction**

~~The effectiveness of the Convention depends upon its full implementation by all Parties, whether they are consumers or producers of wild animals and plants. Full implementation relies, in turn, upon each Party's:~~

- ~~—commitment to the Convention and its principles;~~
- ~~—scientific expertise and analyses;~~
- ~~—capacity building; and~~
- ~~—enforcement.~~

### **Commitment to the Convention and its principles**

~~The proper functioning of the Convention depends to a great extent on the commitment of Parties to comply with and implement the Convention and its principles.~~

Objective 1.1 Parties comply with their obligations under the Convention through the adoption and implementation of appropriate legislation, policies, ~~legislation~~ and procedures.

Objective 1.2 Parties have established CITES Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities that effectively carry out the duties required of them by CITES.

Objective 1.3 Implementation of the Convention at the national level is consistent with Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.

Objective 1.4 The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation status and needs of species.

Objective 1.5 Parties put in place national conservation actions to support the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed species and promote cooperation in managing shared wildlife resources.

## **GOAL 2 PARTIES DECISIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE AND INFORMATION**

Objective 2.1 Parties' non-detriment findings are based on best available scientific information, and their determination of legal acquisition is based on the best available technical and legal information.

Objective 2.2 Parties cooperate in sharing information and tools relevant to the implementation of CITES.

Objective 2.3 Parties have sufficient information to enforce the Convention.

Objective 2.4 Parties have sufficient information to make listing decisions that are reflective of species conservation needs.

Objective 2.5 Information gaps and needs for key species are identified

## **GOAL 3 PARTIES (INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY) HAVE THE TOOLS, RESOURCES AND CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE THE CONVENTION, CONTRIBUTING TO THE REDUCTION OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN CITES-LISTED WILDLIFE SPECIES**

Objective 3.1 Parties have in place administrative procedures that are transparent, practical, coherent and user-friendly, and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens.

~~Objective 1.3 Implementation of the Convention at the national level is consistent with decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.~~

~~Objective 1.4 The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation needs of species.~~

~~Objective 1.5 Best available scientific information is the basis for non-detriment findings.~~

~~Objective 1.6 Parties cooperate in managing shared wildlife resources.~~

~~Objective 1.7 Parties are enforcing the Convention to reduce illegal wildlife trade.~~

~~Objective 1.8 Parties and the Secretariat have develop, adopt and implement~~ adequate capacity-building programmes ~~in place.~~

Objective 3.3

## **GOAL 2 SECURE THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MEANS FOR THE OPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

~~Objective 2.1 Financial resources are sufficient to ensure operation of the Convention.~~

~~Objective 2.2~~ Sufficient resources, including technological solutions, are secured at the national and international levels to support necessary capacity-building programmes and ensure compliance with and full implementation and enforcement of the Convention.

Objective 3.4 Parties recognize illegal trade in wildlife as serious crime and have adequate systems in place to detect and deter it.

Objective 3.5 Parties work collaboratively across range, transit and destination states, to address entire illegal trade chains, including through strategies to reduce the offer of and demand for illegal products.

Objective 3.6 Parties take measures to prohibit, prevent, detect and sanction corruption.

Objective 3.7 Investments in building capacity of CITES are prioritized, coordinated, and their success monitored to ensure stepwise improvement through time.

#### **GOAL 4 CITES POLICY DEVELOPMENT ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO AND LEARNS FROM INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Objective 4.1 Parties support wildlife trade policies that increase the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities and deter poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

Objective 4.2 The importance of achieving CITES' aim as a contribution to achieving the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, as well as any successor to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, is recognized.

Objective 24.3 ~~Sufficient resources are secured at~~ Awareness of the national role, purpose and achievements of CITES is increased globally.

Objective 4.4 CITES Parties are informed of international levels to implement capacity-building programmes-actions for sustainable development that may have a bearing on achieving the goal of CITES

#### **GOAL 3 CONTRIBUTE TO SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING THE RATE OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS AND TO ACHIEVING RELEVANT GLOBALLY-AGREED GOALS AND TARGETS BY ENSURING THAT CITES AND OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS AND PROCESSES ARE COHERENT AND MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE**

#### **GOAL 5 DELIVERY OF THE CITES STRATEGIC VISION IS IMPROVED THROUGH COLLABORATION**

Objective 5.1 Parties and the Secretariat support and enhance existing cooperative partnerships in order to achieve their identified objectives.

Objective 5.2 Parties encourage the formation of new, innovative and mutually sustainable alliances between CITES and relevant international partners to advance CITES' objective and mainstream conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Objective 5.4

~~Objective 3.4~~ Cooperation between CITES and international financial mechanisms and other related institutions is enhanced in order to support ~~CITES-related conservation and sustainable development projects, without diminishing funding for currently prioritized activities~~ activities that contribute to CITES implementation and enforcement.

~~Objective 3.2~~ Awareness of the role and purpose of CITES is increased globally.

~~Objective 3.3~~ Cooperation with relevant international environmental, trade and development organizations is enhanced.

~~Objective 3.4~~ The contribution of CITES to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and their targets, the sustainable development goals set at WSSD, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the relevant outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development is strengthened by ensuring that international trade in wild fauna and flora is conducted at sustainable levels.

~~Objective 3.5 Parties and the Secretariat cooperate with other relevant international organizations and agreements dealing with natural resources, as appropriate, in order to achieve a coherent and collaborative approach to species which can be endangered by unsustainable trade, including those which are commercially exploited.~~

Clean version of proposed revisions to the cites strategic vision

**Conf. 16.3 (Rev. CoP18)**

**CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030**

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THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

REITERATING the aim of the Convention to promote international cooperation for the protection of species of wild fauna and flora against over-exploitation through international trade and recognizing the importance of maintaining those species throughout their range at a level consistent with their role in the ecosystem;

ACKNOWLEDGING the ever-growing value of wild fauna and flora from an aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational, ceremonial and economic point of view, and the benefits to local communities arising from the conservation and sustainable use of wild flora and fauna;

CONSCIOUS of the need to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention globally;

RECOGNIZING that achieving the aim of the Convention is reliant on its successful implementation by peoples and States, who are and should be the best protectors of their own wild fauna and flora;

RECALLING the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The Future we Want”, and reiterating that CITES stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development, promotes the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, should contribute to tangible benefits for Indigenous peoples and local communities, and ensure that no species is threatened with extinction by entering into international trade;

RECALLING also Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly on *Transforming our World; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, and the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets contained therein;

RECOGNIZING the intent of the Conference of the Parties to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as relevant to CITES;

RECALLING the importance it placed on cooperation among the biodiversity-related Conventions and the contribution of the Convention to meeting the goals and targets of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*;

NOTING that the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework will be adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at their Conference of the Parties in 2020;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of global cooperation to address the threats posed by illegal trade in wildlife as recognized in, among others, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/314 on *Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife* and the important role of the International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime in this regard;

ADOPTS the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030*, annexed to this Resolution.

# CITES Strategic Vision: 2021-2030

### **Introduction**

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was concluded on 3 March 1973 and entered into force on 1 July 1975. CITES provides a global framework for the legal and sustainable international trade in CITES-listed species. Today, CITES regulates trade in more than 36 000 species of wild animals and plants. CITES is widely regarded as one of the most important international conservation instruments. Since 1975, the Conference of the Parties has adapted this framework to changing circumstances and, through the adoption of Resolutions and Decisions, has demonstrated an ability to construct practical solutions to increasingly complex wildlife trade and conservation challenges.

The Conference of the Parties adopted its first strategic plan, the *Strategic Vision through 2005*, and an *Action Plan* at its 11th meeting (Gigiri, 2000). These were subsequently extended until the end of 2007 at the 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Bangkok, 2004).

Initially, at its 14th meeting (The Hague, 2007), and with amendments agreed at its 16<sup>th</sup> (Bangkok, 2013) and 17th (Johannesburg, 2016) meetings, the Conference of the Parties agreed a new Strategic Vision for CITES for the period 2008-2020. The agreed amendments describe the contribution of CITES' activities to the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the relevant *Aichi Biodiversity Targets* adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its Goals and targets relevant to CITES.

With this new Strategic Vision, the Conference of the Parties to CITES outlines the Convention's direction for the 2021-2030 timeframe in fulfillment of its mandate. It is additionally recognized that Parties' efforts to implement the Convention may also provide benefit to, and draw strength from, efforts being undertaken in other fora, and in this sense highlights the linkages between CITES and, inter alia, the processes and actions listed below:

- the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and targets relevant to CITES, including those for terrestrial and marine wildlife;
- the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework being developed by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; and
- relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly.

The CITES Strategic Vision provides a framework for the future development of the CITES Resolutions and Decisions and provides guidance on goals and objectives to be achieved. The Conference of the Parties, through the Resolutions and Decisions, will determine actions to be taken by Parties, the Committees or the Secretariat, as appropriate. The Strategic Vision also serves the Parties as a tool for the prioritization of activities, and decisions on how best to fund them, in light of the need for the efficient and transparent use of resources.

### **Vision Statement**

By 2030 all international trade in wild fauna and flora is legal and sustainable, consistent with the long-term conservation of species, and thereby contributing to halting biodiversity loss and to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **Values**

Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora act in the best interest of the conservation of species, working to ensure their use is legal and sustainable, and aim to adopt measures proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species under consideration. In doing so, Parties have a shared commitment to fairness, impartiality, geographic and gender balance, and to transparency.



## **Purpose**

The twofold purpose of the Strategic Vision is:

- as a priority, to improve the working of the Convention, so that international trade<sup>2</sup> in wild fauna and flora is conducted legally at sustainable levels and supports the conservation of listed species; and
- to ensure that CITES policy developments are mutually supportive of international environmental priorities and take into account new international initiatives, consistent with the terms of the Convention.

## **Strategic Goals**

In order to achieve this purpose, five broad goals, of equal priority, have been identified as the key components of the Strategic Vision:

- **Goal 1:** Trade in CITES-listed species is conducted in full compliance with the Convention in order to achieve their conservation and sustainable use;
- **Goal 2:** Parties' decisions are supported by the best available science and information;
- **Goal 3:** Parties (individually and collectively) have the tools, resources and capacity to effectively implement and enforce the Convention, contributing to the reduction of illegal trade in CITES-listed wildlife species;
- **Goal 4:** CITES policy development and implementation also contributes to and learns from other international efforts to achieve sustainable development; and
- **Goal 5:** Delivery of the CITES Strategic Vision is improved through collaboration.

The goals aim at consolidating the existing strengths of CITES, ensuring the implementation of CITES and the achievement of its overarching aim as a priority, and further improving the relationship with complementary international efforts to achieve conservation and sustainable development, including with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and related conventions, agreements and associations.

Goal 1 recognizes that only through ensuring compliance with CITES provisions will the aim of the Convention be achieved. This goal speaks to the performance of the Convention and how effectively it is resulting in the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed wild fauna and flora. It recognizes that the effectiveness of the Convention at achieving its Vision depends upon its full implementation by all Parties. Full implementation includes commitment by each Party to the Convention and its principles. Equally important is the commitment of each Party to embody the international co-operation essential for the success of the Convention. Actions to achieve the intent of this goal might include developing innovative tools for the identification and traceability of species in trade, the making of non-detriment findings, determining legal acquisition and for the sharing of trade information. It requires Parties to develop provisions for trade that are proportionate and that can be implemented without undue complexity.

In Goal 2, CITES Parties recognize the need to generate and have access to the best available science and information for supporting their trade risk assessment, listing proposal, permitting and enforcement decisions. Among others, information to support the making of non-detriment findings, determining legal acquisition and evaluating the care of live specimens might be found in the scientific literature, population surveys, provenance records or professional literature and standards. Information might equally be held by national and international experts, including the relevant knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities. Further, in cases of uncertainty, either as to the status of a species, or the impact of trade, Parties commit to act in the best interest of the conservation of the species and aim to adopt measures proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species under consideration.

Goal 3 recognizes the necessity of appropriately supporting Parties to effectively implement the Convention. It is the CITES Parties that are responsible for ensuring enforcement and consistent application of the Convention's obligations, and thus ultimately responsible for how effectively the Convention achieves its Vision. Practically, in

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that all references to 'trade' in the Strategic Vision refer to trade as defined in Article I of the Convention.



addition to appropriate resources allocation by each Party internally, full implementation of CITES also demands the provision of timely capacity building and of adequate financial resources. Underlying this goal is the recognition that effective enforcement is key to combatting the threat illegal and unsustainable trade poses to wild flora and fauna. Parties recognize the important role of CITES in global efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of species (including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities), to address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products, and to tackle organized crime and poor governance, including corruption.

Goal 4 explicitly recognizes the important contribution of CITES to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which seeks to achieve sustainable development through balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions. It is a widely-accepted and broad-scope international process, and it contains several goals and targets that are directly or indirectly dependent on effective implementation of CITES, including supporting legal, sustainable wildlife trade, and tackling both illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade. CITES Parties understand and aim to communicate the important contribution the effective implementation of the Convention has in achieving the global sustainable development goals. CITES Parties equally recognize the need to draw lessons from the global debate on sustainable development, in recognition that CITES stands at the intersection between trade, the environment and development.

Finally, Goal 5 aims to the use of existing or new partnerships or alliances to help achieve its Strategic Vision. This could include work within existing partnerships, such as other conventions, international agreements and organizations, governments, non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations or others, as well as partnerships at the national or regional level. It also reflects work to develop new partnerships or alliances, as relevant and in order to advance the aim of the Convention, and mainstream CITES implementation with relevant sectors and stakeholders. The aim of such collaborations is mutually supportive, where CITES Parties can also help advance other international goals or targets by simultaneously advancing the achievement of CITES goals.

Within the framework provided by each of these goals, this Strategic Vision identifies a number of objectives to be achieved.

### ***CITES Strategic Objectives***

#### **GOAL 1 TRADE IN CITES-LISTED SPECIES IS CONDUCTED IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THEIR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE**

- Objective 1.1 Parties comply with their obligations under the Convention through the adoption and implementation of appropriate legislation, policies, and procedures.
- Objective 1.2 Parties have established CITES Management, Scientific and Enforcement Authorities that effectively carry out the duties required of them by CITES.
- Objective 1.3 Implementation of the Convention at the national level is consistent with Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties.
- Objective 1.4 The Appendices correctly reflect the conservation status and needs of species.
- Objective 1.5 Parties put in place national conservation actions to support the conservation and sustainable use of CITES-listed species and promote cooperation in managing shared wildlife resources.

#### **GOAL 2 PARTIES DECISIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE AND INFORMATION**

- Objective 2.1 Parties' non-detriment findings are based on best available scientific information, and their determination of legal acquisition is based on the best available technical and legal information.
- Objective 2.2 Parties cooperate in sharing information and tools relevant to the implementation of CITES.
- Objective 2.3 Parties have sufficient information to enforce the Convention.
- Objective 2.4 Parties have sufficient information to make listing decisions that are reflective of species conservation needs.
- Objective 2.5 Information gaps and needs for key species are identified

**GOAL 3 PARTIES (INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY) HAVE THE TOOLS, RESOURCES AND CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE THE CONVENTION, CONTRIBUTING TO THE REDUCTION OF ILLEGAL TRADE IN CITES-LISTED WILDLIFE SPECIES**

- Objective 3.1 Parties have in place administrative procedures that are transparent, practical, coherent and user-friendly, and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens.
- Objective 3.2 Parties and the Secretariat develop, adopt and implement adequate capacity-building programmes.
- Objective 3.3 Sufficient resources, including technological solutions, are secured at the national and international levels to support necessary capacity-building programmes and ensure compliance with and full implementation and enforcement of the Convention.
- Objective 3.4 Parties recognize illegal trade in wildlife as serious crime and have adequate systems in place to detect and deter it.
- Objective 3.5 Parties work collaboratively across range, transit and destination states, to address entire illegal trade chains, including through strategies to reduce the offer of and demand for illegal products.
- Objective 3.6 Parties take measures to prohibit, prevent, detect and sanction corruption.
- Objective 3.7 Investments in building capacity of CITES are prioritized, coordinated, and their success monitored to ensure stepwise improvement through time.

**GOAL 4 CITES POLICY DEVELOPMENT ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO AND LEARNS FROM INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- Objective 4.1 Parties support wildlife trade policies that increase the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities and deter poaching and illegal wildlife trade.
- Objective 4.2 The importance of achieving CITES' aim as a contribution to achieving the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, as well as any successor to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, is recognized.
- Objective 4.3 Awareness of the role, purpose and achievements of CITES is increased globally.
- Objective 4.4 CITES Parties are informed of international actions for sustainable development that may have a bearing on achieving the goal of CITES.

**GOAL 5 DELIVERY OF THE CITES STRATEGIC VISION IS IMPROVED THROUGH COLLABORATION**

- Objective 5.1 Parties and the Secretariat support and enhance existing cooperative partnerships in order to achieve their identified objectives.
- Objective 5.2 Parties encourage the formation of new, innovative and mutually sustainable alliances between CITES and relevant international partners to advance CITES' objective and mainstream conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- Objective 5.4 Cooperation between CITES and international financial mechanisms and other related institutions is enhanced in order to support activities that contribute to CITES implementation and enforcement.