

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

Species specific matters

QUEEN CONCH: 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*), as follows:

***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 Animals Committee**

17.287 *If requested by range States of *S. gigas*, the Animals Committee shall provide advice regarding the making of non-detriment findings for trade in *S. gigas*, research in support of sustainable queen conch fishery and trade, and other technical matters.*

17.288 *The Animals Committee shall review the process for the setting of scientific quotas for queen conch, in particular where scientific quotas make up a large portion of the overall export quota.*

### **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 Acuícola 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 Decisions 17.285 and 17.289

3. The Secretariat is pleased to report that CFMC and WECAFC have secured funding to organize a third meeting of the Working Group on Queen Conch (QCWG), composed of CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM, which will take place on 30 October – 1 November 2018 in Panama City, Panama.
4. The Secretariat has also worked with FAO on a funding proposal to support the other activities in Decision 17.289, which has been submitted to the European Commission for consideration, but at the time of writing of this document, this request was in progress and no confirmation of funding was available.

### Implementation of Decisions 17.287 and 17.288

5. The Animals Committee addressed its mandate under Decisions 17.287 and 17.288 at its 29th and 30th meetings (see documents [AC29 Doc. 26](#) and [AC30 Doc. 22](#)).
6. At its 30th meeting, the Animals Committee adopted the following with regards to the setting of "scientific quota":

*The Committee noted that there are no such things as “scientific” quotas, and that all export quotas for wild specimens of Appendix II species (as is the case of *Strombus gigas*) are to be supported by a non detriment finding formulated by the Scientific Authority of the exporting range State, and based on the best technical and scientific information available, regardless of the purpose of the transaction (whether scientific “S”, commercial “T”, medical “M”, educational “E”, or any other code recognized by CITES).*

7. With regard to Honduras, which had limited its export to a “scientific” quota pursuant to a commitment it had made at the 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee, the Committee adopted the following:

*The Committee noted document AC30 Doc. 22 and noted the progress that Honduras made in implementing its commitments regarding the management of and trade in Queen conch and considered that Honduras has fulfilled the commitments made at the 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee.*

#### Implementation of Decisions 17.290 and 17.286

8. In its report to the Standing Committee at its 69th meeting (SC69, Geneva, November 2017), the Secretariat had noted that its report under Decision 17.290 was linked to assistance that the Secretariat should provide to range States of *Strombus gigas* under Decision 17.289, for which to date no external funding has been made available. With regard to Decision 17.286, the Secretariat had further noted that the 3rd meeting of the joint CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch could provide good opportunities to gather relevant information. With the date of the Working Group meeting confirmed for only later this year, the Secretariat regrets that it does not have sufficient information to report to the Standing Committee for it to fulfil its mandate under Decision 17.286.
9. The Secretariat concludes that securing external funding in time to implement Decisions 17.285, 17.286, 17.289 and 17.290 remains a major challenge. The 3rd meeting of the joint CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch should offer opportunities to assess what activities have been undertaken in the context of the management of and trade in queen conch, and review priorities in the context of the implementation of CITES for tracing Queen Conch.

#### Recommendations

10. The Standing Committee may wish to:
  - a) note the document and welcome the 3rd meeting of the joint CFMC/OSPESCA/WECAFC/CRFM Working Group on Queen Conch; and
  - b) note that the Secretariat in its report pursuant to Decision 17.290 to the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties intends to recommend that Decisions 17.286 and 17.289 be extended.