

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



Seventy-third meeting of the Standing Committee
Online, 5-7 May 2021

CONSOLIDATED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Opening remarks of the Chair and the Secretary-General..... *No document*

The Chair of the Standing Committee and the Secretary-General gave opening addresses for this first online meeting of a CITES Committee.

Administrative and financial matters

1. Agenda

1.1 Adoption of the agenda..... SC73 Doc. 1.1

and

1.2 Annotated agenda..... SC73 Doc. 1.2

The Committee adopted the provisional agenda in document SC73 Doc. 1.1.

2. Adoption of the working programme..... SC72 Doc. 2

The Committee adopted the draft working programme in document SC73 Doc. 2.

3. Rules of Procedure..... SC73 Doc. 3

The Committee noted that its Rules of Procedure as amended at its 70th meeting (Sochi, October 2018) and set out in the Annex to document SC73 Doc. 3 remain valid for each of its meetings.

4. Credentials *No document*

The Committee noted that, at the beginning of the meeting, all delegations of the Members of the Standing Committee had provided credentials and that 68 observer Parties had submitted letters of credentials or nomination letters.

5. Admission of observers.....SC73 Doc. 5 (Rev. 1)

The Committee noted the list of observer organizations that had been invited to attend the meeting as set out in the Annex to document SC73 Doc. 5 (Rev. 1).

6. Financial matters: Report of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee..... *No document*

The Committee noted the oral report provided by the Acting Chair of the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC).

7. Arrangements for the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP19) *No document*

The Committee noted the oral report provided by the Secretary-General, including the composition of the Selection Panel that will review nominations for officers to serve at CoP19, which had been agreed by the Committee intersessionally:

Africa	Ms. Ely HAMUNYELA (Namibia)
Asia (SC Vice-Chair <i>ex officio</i>)	Mr. WU Zhongze (China)
Central and South America and the Caribbean	Mr. José Julián SUAZO CERVANTES (Honduras)
Europe	Ms. Elke MALFAIT (Belgium)
North America (SC Chair <i>ex officio</i>)	Ms. Carolina CACERES (Canada)
Oceania	Ms. Sarah BAGNALL (New Zealand)
Secretariat S-G (<i>ex officio</i>)	Ms. Ivonne HIGUERO
Next Host Country (<i>ex officio</i>)	To be confirmed

8. Report on current activities of the scientific committees

8.1 Animals Committee SC73 Doc. 8.1

The Committee noted the report of the Chair of the Animals Committee in document SC73 Doc. 8.1.

8.2 Plants Committee SC73 Doc. 8.2

The Committee noted the report of the Chair of the Plants Committee in document SC73 Doc. 8.2.

Strategic matters

9. Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties: Report of the working group SC73 Doc. 9

The Committee agreed to propose to the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties the amendments to Rule 7 2.a) as found in paragraph 8 of document SC73 Doc. 9, and the amendments to Rule 25.5 and Rule 25.6 as found in paragraph 9 of the same document. The Committee requested the working group on the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties to continue its deliberations on the amendments to Rule 25.6 taking account of the comments made and to report to it at its 74th meeting. The Committee invited those Parties and observers wishing to join the working group to contact the Secretariat before the close of the meeting.

10. Conduct of Committees: Guidance to assist chairs of working groups established by the Committees SC73 Doc. 10

The Committee endorsed the guidance as set out in the Annex to document SC73 Doc. 10 and requested the Secretariat to finalize the guidance, taking into account the comments made by Canada, Chile, Japan, New Zealand, Peru and Poland, and to make it available to chairs of committee working groups and on the CITES website.

11. Language strategy for the Convention SC73 Doc. 11

The Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a more detailed analysis of the administrative and cost implications of different language strategies for the Secretariat and Parties outlined in document SC73 Doc. 11 and to submit it to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee (FBSC). The Committee invited China and the Russian Federation to join the FBSC as observers when it further considers the Secretariat's detailed analysis on the proposed language strategies and any other approach the FBSC may decide in its discussion. The Committee agreed to consider at its 74th meeting the results of the FBSC's discussions based on the Secretariat's detailed analysis.

12. Cooperation with other biodiversity-related Conventions: CITES input to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework SC73 Doc. 12

The Committee noted the importance of the work at national level between Parties' Management Authorities and national Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) focal points to seek to ensure CITES aims are reflected in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The Committee requested the Secretariat to continue to engage, consistent with Decision 17.56 (Rev. CoP18), in the negotiations on a post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework on behalf of CITES Parties and invited the Secretariat to seek advice from the Standing Committee and the Animals and Plants Committees, through their Chairs, in order to support its engagement, when necessary.

13. Cooperation with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals..... SC73 Doc. 13

The Committee noted document SC73 Doc. 13 and its Annex 1 and endorsed the draft CMS-CITES Joint Work Programme 2021-2025 in Annex 2.

14. African Carnivores Initiative: Report of the Secretariat SC73 Doc. 14

The Committee established an intersessional working group with the mandate to address the revisions proposed by Burkina Faso, Gabon, Israel, Niger, and the United States of America to the draft Programme of Work for the Joint CITES-CMS African Carnivores Initiative in Annex 2 to document SC73 Doc. 14 and report back to the Standing Committee in time for consideration at the next meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) scheduled for September 2021.

Members of the intersessional working group on the African Carnivores Initiative were agreed as follows: Argentina, Benin, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Gabon, Germany (Chair), Israel, Namibia, Niger, South Africa, Spain, United States of America, Yemen, and Zimbabwe; the Convention of Migratory Species, the International Union for Conservation of Nature; and Born Free Foundation, Conservation Analytics, Conservation Force, European Association of Zoos and Aquaria, Humane Society International, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, Panthera, Safari Club International, Safari Club International Foundation, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature, and Zoological Society of London.

The Committee invited those Parties and observers that were not able to express an interest in joining the working group to reach out to the Chair of the working group.

15. Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of the Convention SC73 Doc. 15

The Committee noted document SC73 Doc. 15 and invited the Secretariat to take account of the points made during the discussion, including the definition of exceptional circumstances, the transparency in relation to budgetary issues and implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for fieldwork and studies.

Interpretation and implementation matters

Existing Resolutions and Decisions

16. Review of Resolutions and Decisions: Report of the Secretariat SC73 Doc. 16

The Committee agreed to the proposed corrections of the non-substantive errors in paragraph 4 of document SC73 Doc. 16 and instructed the Secretariat to republish the Interpretation section of the Appendices and the Decisions and Resolutions concerned with the necessary corrections. The Committee noted the Secretariat's proposed revisions to certain Resolutions to ensure consistent use of the term 'wildlife crime linked to the internet' in accordance with Decision 18.84, as indicated in paragraph 5, and further proposed revisions in paragraph 7 of the same document. The Committee invited the Secretariat to take note of the comments made by Argentina, Australia, Gabon, Indonesia, and Peru to its proposed revisions in paragraphs 5 and 7 when making its proposal to the Conference of the Parties.

General compliance and enforcement

17. Revisions to the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports and to the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report..... SC73 Doc. 17

The Committee approved the revised *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports* presented in Annex 1 to document SC73 Doc. 17, including the revisions to the Spanish version proposed in paragraph 7 to document SC73 Doc. 17, and the revised *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual illegal trade reports* presented in Annex 2 to the same document, with the additional deletion of “elephant” in the explanation section for tusk (raw ivory) as follows: N.B. Whole carved elephant tusks should be reported as carving – ivory (see “IVC” above) in both Guidelines.

The Committee further noted the intention of the Secretariat to propose to the Conference of the Parties revisions to Resolution Conf. 4.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Submission of draft resolutions and other documents for meetings of the Conference of the Parties* and Resolution Conf. 11.17 (Rev. CoP18) on *National reports* as outlined in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the document.

The Committee invited the Secretariat to take note of Peru’s suggestions and to consider if further revisions of the *Guidelines* are needed.

Regulation of trade

18. Electronic systems and information technologies: Report of the working group..... SC73 Doc. 18

The Committee noted document SC73 Doc. 18 and further noted that the *Guidance on electronic signatures on CITES permits and certificates* in Annex 1 was a living document.

The Committee agreed to propose the draft amendments to Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP18) on *Permits and certificates* contained in Annex 2 to the document for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its 19th meeting, with a change to paragraph 3 q) to read as follows “or in case of electronic permits and certificates the names of the empowered persons ~~or~~ and methodologies used to authenticate them” and with the exception of paragraph 6, which was referred back to the working group for further consideration.

19. Purpose codes on CITES permits and certificates: Report of the working group..... SC73 Doc. 19

The Committee noted document SC73 Doc. 19 and invited the working group to take into account the comments made by Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Gabon, Indonesia, Peru, and Thailand in its continued work. The Committee further noted the new issues that arose from the discussion at its meeting, namely the possibility of a new purpose code for food and a possible resolution on zoos.

Exemptions and special trade provisions

20. Simplified procedures for permits and certificates: Report of the Secretariat SC73 Doc. 20

The Standing Committee endorsed the draft guidance contained in the Annex to document SC73 Doc. 20; and requested the Secretariat to finalize the guidance taking into account the comments made by Belgium, Canada, and Thailand, and to make it available on the website of the Convention.

21. Stocks and stockpiles SC73 Doc. 21

The Committee established an intersessional working group on stocks and stockpiles with a mandate to:

- a) review the existing provisions agreed by Parties concerning controls on stocks of specimens of CITES-listed species provided in paragraph 7 of document SC73 Doc. 21;
- b) identify CITES conservation and enforcement objectives in the management of stocks and stockpiles of specimens;
- c) suggest definitions of “stock” and “stockpile”; and
- d) report to the Standing Committee at its 74th meeting.

Members of the intersessional working group on stocks and stockpiles were agreed as follows: Argentina, Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Israel, Kenya, Namibia, Niger, Peru, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Union of Conservation of Nature; and Born Free Foundation, Defenders of Wildlife, Environmental Investigation Agency USA, Fauna and Flora International, ForestBased Solutions, Humane Society International, International Association for Wildlife, International Wood Products Association, IWMC-World Conservation Trust, Lewis & Clark – Global Law Alliance for Animals and the Environment, Natural Resources Defense Council, OCEANA Inc., Sea Shepherd Legal, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wide Fund for Nature and Zoological Society of London.

The Committee invited those Parties and observers that were not able to express an interest in joining the working group to reach out to the Chair of the working group.

22. Stocks and stockpiles (elephant ivory): Report of the working group..... SC73 Doc. 22

The Committee did not have time to discuss this agenda item and invited the working group on Guidance on ivory stockpiles to continue its work and to report back at its next meeting.

Species specific matters

23. CITES Big Cats Task Force: Report of the Secretariat SC73 Doc. 23

The Committee did not have time to discuss this agenda item and requested the Secretariat to publish the draft terms of reference and *modus operandi* for the CITES Big Cat Task Force in a Notification to the Parties. The Committee invited Parties and observers to send comments to the Secretariat and requested the Secretariat to revise the draft terms of reference and *modus operandi* based on those comments and to report back to the Standing Committee.

24. Tortoises and freshwater turtles (Testudines spp.)

24.1 Report of the Secretariat..... SC73 Doc. 24.1

and

24.2 Implementation of Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP18) on Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles in Madagascar: Report of Madagascar SC73 Doc. 24.2

The Committee noted document SC73 Doc. 24.2 and the progress reported by Madagascar.

a) The Committee encouraged Madagascar to:

- i) scale up efforts to gather information and intelligence concerning the criminal networks operating within and from the country, to facilitate investigations that will go beyond frontline offenders such as the local poachers who are often at the lowest end of the illegal trade chain, targeting those individuals managing and organizing the illegal activities;
- ii) actively pursue the continued implementation of the different aspects of Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles*, including through the active implementation of its *Regional strategy to combat trafficking in radiated tortoises (Astrochelys radiata) in the Atsimo-Andrefana region (Stratégie régionale de lutte contre le trafic de tortues radiées « Astrochelys radiata » dans la région Atismo Andrefana – in French only)*; and
- iii) revise and update its existing endemic tortoise and freshwater turtle species identification materials and posters to inform the general public about these species and the importance of their conservation and protection, as well as to raise awareness amongst relevant national law enforcement agencies about the way these species are affected by wildlife crime and the importance of the fight against trafficking in these species;

- b) The Committee encouraged Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations implementing programmes in Madagascar or planning to do so, to take into consideration in their work programmes and activities, as appropriate and applicable, recommendations a) i) to iii) above, the provisions of Resolution Conf. 11.9 (Rev. CoP18) on *Conservation of and trade in tortoises and freshwater turtles*, and the *Regional strategy to combat trafficking in radiated tortoises (Astrochelys radiata) in the Atsimo-Andrefana region (Stratégie régionale de lutte contre le trafic de tortues radiées « Astrochelys radiata » dans la région Atsimo Andrefana – in French only)*; and
- c) The Committee requested the Secretariat to continue to monitor illegal trade in tortoise and freshwater turtle species as it affects Madagascar, and the measures being implemented to address it, and to report back at its next meeting.
- d) The Committee invited Madagascar to provide an update on seizures, arrests and prosecutions, including on the outcomes of the prosecutions, and on its work with different partners, at its next meeting.

Maintenance of the Appendices

25. Annotations: Report of the working group SC73 Doc. 25

The Committee did not have time to discuss this agenda item and noted document SC73 Doc. 25.

26. Guidance for the publication of the Appendices: Report of the Secretariat..... SC73 Doc. 26 (Rev. 1)

The Committee did not have time to discuss this agenda item and agreed to defer consideration of this document to its next meeting.

Concluding items

27. Any other business *No document*

The Committee noted the request by Israel to draw the attention of Parties, via the issue of a Notification, to the Guidelines “Reducing public health risks associated with the sale of live wild animals of mammalian species in traditional food markets” issued by the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health and the United Nations Environment Programme.

28. Future Standing Committee meetings and activities..... SC73 Doc. 28

The Committee welcomed the offer by France to consider hosting its 74th meeting. The Committee requested the Secretariat to pursue scenario 2 of a face-to-face meeting under the circumstances where it is possible that all participants are able to attend. Should a face-to-face meeting not be possible, the Committee also requested the Secretariat to develop plans for an online meeting with adjusted modalities, including an extended meeting period, the early submission of documents for comments and the possibility of establishing in-session working groups.

29. Closing remarks *No document*

The Chair and the Secretary-General thanked all participants for their cooperation and thanked the Secretariat, the interpreters, and the online operators for their work, and closed the meeting.