

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

Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Buenos Aires (Argentina), 22 April to 3 May 1985

General Matters of Principle Relating to the Appendices

NOMENCLATURE AND TAXONOMY USED IN THE APPENDICES

This document has been prepared and is submitted by the Secretariat.

1. Through its Resolution Conf. 4.23 on Standard Nomenclature, the Conference of the Parties resolved "that for the purposes of effectively implementing the Convention, the Mammal Species of the World: A Taxonomic and Geographic Reference be adopted as the standardized nomenclatorial reference for mammals..." Pursuant to that decision, the Secretariat changed the presentation of Appendices I, II and III with regard to mammals, in order to follow the classification adopted in the above-mentioned work.
2. Later on, the Secretariat received a letter from the Federal Veterinary Office, the Swiss Management Authority, dated 29 July 1983, expressing the view of the German speaking Parties with respect to this new presentation and the role the above-mentioned book should play (see Annex to this document). A copy of this letter, or of its translation into the Convention's working languages, was sent to the Parties through Notification to the Parties No. 272 of 20 September 1983.
3. In addition, the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Unit (WTMU) of the IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre has drawn the attention of the Secretariat to many inconsistencies existing between the appendices and Mammals Species of the World. This is essentially due to the fact that the document prepared by the Nomenclature Committee [Com. 4.16 (Rev.)] during the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties did not deal with all the cases where the current appendices diverge from the reference book.
4. In order to avoid the renewal of such a situation when the appendices revised after the adoption of amendments during the present meeting are published, the Secretariat urges the Conference of the Parties to give clear and accurate guidance on the nomenclature and taxonomy to be used for the appendices to the Convention.

Office vétérinaire fédéral
Berne, 29 July 1983

CITES Secretariat
1196 GLAND

Subject: Revised Appendices to the Convention

Dear Sir,

Through a Notification of 31 May 1983, you have sent us the revised Appendices I - III of the Washington Convention. We have noticed that these revised appendices differ from the former versions in that their systematics format is now based on J.H. Honacki's "Mammal Species of the World".

After consultation and in agreement with the Scientific Authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, the Principality of Liechtenstein, Austria and Switzerland as well as the Management Authorities of the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria, we wish to communicate to you the following:

1. The Conference of the Parties, in Botswana, decided to use J.H. Honacki et al. (1982) "Mammals Species of the World" as the Standard Reference for taxonomic issues. In our opinion, this does not mean that the content of this book can be transferred into the appendices without criticism. "Mammal Species of the World" represents, rather, a discussion basis on which the Conference of the Parties may take decisions concerning redactional changes to the appendices. The discussion held in Botswana clearly showed that such changes should not be automatically adopted, since the Nomenclature Committee retracted about one third of the proposals presented by its Chairman on the basis of "Mammal Species of the World". In view of this, we consider that the Secretariat was not correct in modifying the existing format of the appendices without referring to the Parties.
2. In our opinion, the adoption of the systematics of "Mammal Species of the World" presents serious practical disadvantages:

Up to now, the appendices have been compiled on the basis of G.G. Simpson's (1931, 1945) "New Classification of Mammals". Simpson's classification is widespread largely through E.P. Walker's (1964, 1968 and 1975) "Mammals of the World", and I.T. Sanderson's "Living Mammals of the World" which is translated into several languages (German edition of 1956), as well as through "Grzimek's Tierleben" (1973). On the other hand, Honacki's mammals classification is known only to a small circle of scientists and in practice not widely used.

3. To implement the Convention, it appears necessary that the appendix systematics be identical to that used for essential reference works. This particularly applies to "ISIS Mammalian Taxonomic Directory" which served as a basis for the "Index of Species Mentioned in Legislation", the "CITES Identification Manual" and for the FAO mammal list, as well as for the "International Zoo Year Book" which has always to be consulted to know whether an animal is bred in captivity, or to which zoo a confiscated animal can be entrusted, as the case may be.

4. In addition, it has to be taken into account that practical implementation in Party states has been fully established on the systematics used up to now. Thus, the National Identification Manuals are, in particular, established on the basis of the appendix classification valid up to now, and, for Switzerland, the electronic treatment of data for the annual reports and for the reference collection will be based on the code numbers of the "Index of Species Mentioned in Legislation", i.e. the "Identification Manual". Modifying this would be both money and time consuming. Re-training of enforcement officers to the level at which they can use the new appendices without difficulty would be even more problematical since they are already accustomed to the systematics used up to now through years of practice.

5. The German-speaking Parties have agreed, consequently, not to adopt the format of the revised appendices proposed by the Secretariat, and to retain the listing of orders accepted up to now*. In addition, they have agreed to retain the taxonomic units of "Pinnipedia" and "Antilocapridae".

Also, in divergence from the appendices valid up to now, they consider it useful to divide the unclearly presented Cercopithecidae and Bovidae families by entering the sub-families and, within molluscs, to give a better overview through the introduction of the classes Bivalvia and Gastropoda. These redactional changes are in conformity with paragraph 3 of the Interpretation of Appendices I and II.

6. We would appreciate the Parties being informed of the position of the German-speaking states.

Yours sincerely,

Office vétérinaire fédéral
Dr. Gafner
Assistant Director

* For the Federal Republic of Germany this applies until the end of this year, since from 1 January 1984, the European Community will assume competence for implementing the Convention.