

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

Twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Santiago (Chile), 3-15 November 2002

Strategic and administrative matters

TITLE OF THE CONVENTION

1. This document has been prepared and submitted by the Secretariat.
2. In 1963, the IUCN General Assembly passed a resolution calling for an 'international convention on regulations of export, transit and import of rare or threatened wildlife species or their skins and trophies'.
3. The 1973 plenipotentiary conference discussed the proposed conclusion of an '**International Convention on Trade in Certain Species of Wildlife**'.
4. Throughout the discussions, the need to restrict the scope of the Convention to endangered species or species threatened with extinction and subject to trade was stressed. In the absence of clear listing criteria, what would become Appendix II contained non-endangered species from the outset and became more and more a list of genera, families and individual species that are 'not necessarily now threatened with extinction' [Article II 2 (a)]. Particularly, the provision of Article II, paragraph 2 (b), to include look-alike species in Appendix II, led to the extension of the scope of the Convention to species that were neither endangered nor threatened.
5. In spite of the inclusion of non-endangered species in the Appendices to the draft Convention, the proposed title evolved from the neutral one in paragraph 3 above, through a proposal for a '**Convention on International Trade in Wild Species Threatened with Extinction**', to the '**Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**'.
6. A clear illustration of the fact that the Convention is mainly about non-endangered species is in the numbers: Appendix I contains fewer than 600 animal species and a little more than 300 plant species, whereas Appendix II covers over 4,100 animal species and 22,000 plant species, i.e. seven times more animal species and seventy times more plant species.
7. For this reason alone, the title of the Convention does not adequately describe its scope. In fact, the title misrepresents the scope and objectives of the Convention and is a cause of common misunderstanding of its nature.
8. A more serious problem related to the current title of the Convention is that it has stood in the way of CITES becoming involved in regulation of trade in economically important species, such as commercial fish and timber species, even in cases where such species are subject to unsustainable levels of exploitation. With very few exceptions, the CITES Appendices only list species of relatively marginal economic interest. This has everything to do with the image of the Convention regulating trade in endangered species. That misconception understandably does not facilitate the listing of species that are the basis of economically important consumer goods.
9. The Secretariat wishes to stress that the intention of its proposal to adopt an appropriate working title for the Convention – contrary to fears expressed by certain members of the NGO community – is not to

persuade consumers to buy endangered species; quite the contrary. In fact the Secretariat is of the opinion that, also in line with the Strategic Vision Through 2005, CITES and other conventions and agreements should become more mutually supportive. CITES should be in a position to implement its part of the international responsibility for the conservation and management of natural resources in the broadest possible sense. The title of the Convention is an important psychologically negative element in achieving this aim.

10. As Article XVII of the Convention requires an extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties to adopt amendments to it as well as their subsequent acceptance by two-thirds of the Parties for them to enter into force, the Secretariat proposes that the Conference of the Parties decide to adopt the following working title for the Convention:

CITES – The Convention on Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora

CITES – Convención sobre el Comercio de Fauna y Flora Silvestres

CITES – Convention sur le commerce de la faune et de la flore sauvages