

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

Plenary meeting

Sixth session: 12 November 2002: 10h30-12h00

Chairman: S. Bitar (Chile)
Chairman Committee I: D. Morgan (United Kingdom)
Chairwoman Committee II: A.-M. Delahunt (Australia)

Secretariat: W. Wijnstekers
J. Armstrong
J. Barzdo

UNEP: P. Chabeda

Rapporteurs: A. Bamford
J. Caldwell

The Chairman welcomed the President of the Republic of Chile, Ricardo Lagos Escobar, to the meeting, noting that although much work remained to be done there was a great commitment to move forward. The Secretary-General thanked the President for Chile's vision, courage and investment in hosting the meeting.

The President emphasized and commended the work of CITES and noted that CoP12 was the biggest environmental event ever to be held in his country. He highlighted the global nature of CITES and stressed the need for all countries to work together to protect biodiversity as part of the heritage that had been bequeathed to us by our ancestors. He further stressed the importance of sustainable development for future generations. [Full text is available.]

Strategic and administrative matters

16. Cooperation with other organizations

d) Cooperation between CITES and the International Whaling Commission

The Chairman noted that the representative of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) (the Chairman of the Commission) and the delegation of Norway wished to make presentations on the issue.

The representative of the IWC stated that there had been extensive debate of this issue under agenda item 66 regarding proposals to amend the Appendices and drew attention to document CoP12 Doc. 66 addendum, related to listing, as well as document CoP12 Inf. 12 summarizing the progress made to date under the Revised Management Scheme for Commercial Whaling (RMS). He noted that the latter document represented his personal view of the current situation and might not reflect the views of each individual member State of the IWC.

The delegation of Norway, supported by the delegation of Japan, had strong reservations about the document. They believed that the report was overly optimistic regarding the progress that had been made with the RMS and that the IWC was further away from reaching a solution than they had been 10 years before. They noted that the document reflected the personal view of the Chairman of the IWC, which was inappropriate when taking into account that his report for CoP12 had been submitted in his capacity as an observer representing the IWC and not in his personal capacity. The delegation of Antigua and Barbuda, supported by the delegations of Dominica, Guinea, and Iceland shared the views of Japan and Norway and believed that the work of the IWC was against the spirit of CITES with regard to sustainable use. They then requested that document CoP12 Inf. 12 be withdrawn. The delegation of the Russian Federation believed that the IWC should consider only biological and statistical data and not issues of a political nature.

The delegation of Mexico recognized that some progress had been made with the RMS and stressed that the IWC was the competent body regarding management of cetaceans.

The delegations of Germany, New Zealand and the United Kingdom stressed that considerable progress had been made with the RMS but that more work was needed. The Netherlands concurred with this view and called on Parties in IWC to work in a spirit of cooperation in order to make progress. These delegations believed that the IWC's position had been agreed at its intersessional meeting in Cambridge. The delegation of Australia drew attention to the fully agreed media release issued by the IWC at the conclusion of the October Intersessional meeting on the RMS which stated that progress had been made on the development of the RMS. The delegation of Denmark stated that the EU had full confidence in both the IWC and its Chairman and implored other Parties to temper the tone of their interventions.

The IWC Chair said the debate reflected polarized views in IWC, but noted progress at the recent RMS intersessional Cambridge meeting.

The session closed at 12h00.