

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



Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
The Hague (Netherlands), 3-15 June 2007

Strategic matters

NATIONAL WILDLIFE TRADE POLICY REVIEWS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. It provides information on the progress made in implementing Decisions 13.74 and 13.75 adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2004).
3. Decision 13.74 states that the Secretariat shall:
 - a) *conduct, in cooperation with the Parties, a review of their national policies regarding the use of and trade in specimens of CITES-listed species, taking into account economic incentives, production systems, consumption patterns, market access strategies, price structures, certification schemes, CITES-relevant taxation and subsidy schemes, property rights, mechanisms for benefit sharing and reinvestment in conservation, as well as stricter domestic measures that Parties apply or are affected by;*
 - b) *compile and synthesize the information provided by the Parties, and produce a report analysing the impacts of national policies for trade in CITES-listed species in terms of socio-economic and conservation benefits and costs, including on the economic value of the species, levels of legal and illegal trade, improvement of the livelihood of local communities, and on how they affect the role of the private sector involved in such trade;*
 - c) *report at the 54th and subsequent meetings of the Standing Committee and at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the progress made with regard to the implementation of this Decision; and*
 - d) *submit a project proposal to the Global Environment Facility, and other funding institutions and development agencies, to seek financial support to prepare the trade policy reviews in the interested countries, in the context of their national and regional strategies for biodiversity conservation.*

Background

4. Pursuant to paragraph d) of Decision 13.74, a project proposal was jointly developed by the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development (UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF), the University of Geneva's Graduate Institute for Development Studies (IUED) and the CITES Secretariat. On April 2005, the project proposal was submitted to funding institutions to seek financial support to conduct wildlife trade policy reviews in interested Parties.
5. The core activities of the two-year project proposal are the development of methodological guidelines for conducting wildlife trade policy reviews and the implementation of pilot projects in four developing countries. At the national level, the pilot projects will be led by national CITES authorities and relevant ministries and implemented by independent national research institutions.

6. The proposal was presented at the 53rd meeting of the Standing Committee (SC53, Geneva, June – July 2005). In September 2005, the Geneva International Academic Network (GIAN) and the European Union through UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF accepted to provide the necessary funds for this proposal.
7. In Notification to the Parties No. 2006/036 of 2 June 2006, the Secretariat informed Parties that the project had been approved and financial support to conduct four pilot policy reviews had been secured. The overall project cost is CHF 986,553 and approximately CHF 40,000 will be allocated to each independent national research institution selected by the four developing countries to undertake the policy review.
8. The principles underpinning the project proposal are:
 - a) Party-driven: the policy review is a voluntary process conducted by the countries.
 - b) Capacity-building oriented: the project is neither prescriptive nor linked to compliance mechanisms.
 - c) Result-oriented: the project focuses on outcomes that will help the effective implementation of CITES.
 - d) Stakeholder-oriented: Particular importance is attached to stakeholder participation as a crucial element to increase the likelihood that the recommendations arising from the reviews will be accepted and implemented. The range of stakeholders includes organizations of rural poor people, cooperatives and community-level committees, representatives of indigenous people, as well as non-governmental organizations, the private sector, experts, relevant national and international organizations, and government bodies.
 - e) Interdisciplinary: CITES-related policies and mechanisms are interdependent and involve scientists and policy-makers, traders and consumers, species and people who share the same habitat. In this project there is an effort to strengthen the links between all of these by integrating different disciplines and types of knowledge, including biology, law, economy, other social sciences and traditional knowledge.
9. As a first step, the project partners are finalizing a wildlife trade policy review framework (hereinafter referred to as 'framework') that will provide guidelines, methodologies and potential indicators for the wildlife trade policy reviews. Countries will then select and adapt the methodologies to fit local conditions and needs. Concurrently with the implementation of the national projects, IUED will undertake a study to identify and analyse the social elements of wildlife trade policies in the participating countries, and another study to extract the methodological lessons learned from the reviews.
10. The outcomes of the reviews, including the IUED studies, will be summarized in a final report. At the conclusion of the project, an international meeting will be organized to validate results and encourage other interested countries to undertake wildlife trade policy reviews.
11. The project includes five integrated and complementary activities:
 - a) Development of the framework;
 - b) Analytical research and studies;
 - c) Four pilot policy reviews;
 - d) Training to CITES authorities, national research institutions and relevant stakeholders; and
 - e) Networking with key partners and organizations.

Establishment of a Project Steering Committee

12. The main partners under this project (CITES Secretariat, IUED, and the UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF) have formed a Project Steering Committee and have met regularly since January 2006. The main discussion points at these meetings have included, *inter alia*, the project's organizational process [establishment of an International Advisory Group (IAG), organization of a meeting of the IAG, refinement of research objectives, etc.], the identification of criteria for the selection of pilot countries, and the design and development of the framework.

Establishment of an International Advisory Group

13. An International Advisory Group, which comprises 13 experts from governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions, has been created to advise the Steering Committee and participating countries on the implementation of the project. A list of the IAG members is attached as Annex 2 to this document.
14. The IAG members have specifically agreed to:
 - a) Provide advice and comments on the refinement of the framework;
 - b) Provide guidance, as needed, on implementation of the project;
 - c) Review and comment on draft national project reports; and
 - d) Provide advice on the final conclusions of the whole project and recommend next steps.

Development of the framework

15. The Steering Committee convened the first meeting of the IAG on 19 and 20 June 2006 to obtain comments and advice on the first draft of the framework. IAG members discussed the various steps outlined in the draft framework, including: the general policy overview; the scope of the impact identification; criteria, indicators and methodologies to be used in the analysis; and, when appropriate, the development and evaluation of policy reforms.
16. As a first step, the Steering Committee – supported by the IAG – developed an initial framework providing guidelines and optional methodologies and indicators for conducting the national wildlife trade policy reviews.
17. This draft framework went under extensive revisions during 2006 following the discussions held and comments received by the IAG. The final draft contains the following elements:
 - a) A combination of broad policy review and impact identification. One methodological challenge in developing the framework was to decide on how much emphasis should be placed, on the one hand, on conducting a policy review by analysing all the elements mentioned in paragraph a) of Decision 13.74, and on the other hand, on identifying the environmental, social and economic impacts of selected key wildlife trade policy issues following UNEP's experience in this area. An integrated approach is taken in the final draft framework by the combination of both.
 - b) A split between the content and the implementation elements of the policy. To ensure that the review covers not only the wildlife trade policy as written, but also the effectiveness of its implementation, the framework distinguishes between the content of the wildlife trade policies themselves, as well as related policies, and its implementation. Determining the effectiveness of a policy requires that information on both its content and implementation be reviewed.

Selection of pilot countries

18. Following issuance of Notification to the Parties No. 2006/036, the Steering Committee received statements of interest from seven countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Uganda and Viet Nam). From these applications, four pilot countries (Madagascar, Nicaragua,

Uganda and Viet Nam) were selected on the basis of IAG recommendations and the project proposals submitted by the countries. Criteria for this selection comprised:

- a) Significant country interest in undertaking a wildlife trade policy review;
- b) Mega-biodiversity and significant volumes of wildlife trade in CITES-listed species;
- c) Existence of institutional capacity to undertake the review project;
- d) Opportunities for cooperation with institutions undertaking wildlife trade projects in the country or region; and
- e) Balanced geographical representation.

Other interested Parties

19. The Secretariat encourages other interested Parties to prepare and submit project proposals to funding institutions to seek financial support to prepare their trade policy reviews, in the context of their national and regional strategies for biodiversity conservation.
20. If additional funds were to be identified, more project countries could be supported, giving priority to the three interested Parties that were not selected in the first round. Some countries might also be willing to undertake the review at their own expense.

Importing countries

21. At SC53, the Depository Government suggested that consumer countries be included in the review. This would facilitate better understanding of wildlife trade policy at both ends of the international wildlife trade (supply and demand). External funds are not available for such a review but the Project Steering Committee has approached several developed countries to see whether they would be interested in undertaking a wildlife trade policy review with their own funding. So far, a Party (Switzerland) and a regional agreement (the European Union) have expressed interest.
22. With an invitation and support from the European Commission, the Secretariat was able to participate in the 'Expert Workshop for EU-CITES Authorities on EC Legislation on Wildlife Trade: Experiences, Challenges and Future Perspectives' held from 13 to 17 November 2006 in Vilm, Germany. The workshop was part of a study on the effectiveness of the current EC Wildlife Trade Regulations. The study includes an analysis of Member States' needs, legislative and non-legislative options for addressing those needs, and an assessment of the potential impacts of those options, including a cost/benefit analysis and an examination of socio-economic effects. The Secretariat explained the work being undertaken under the pilot project and invited Member States and the Commission to consider making use of certain analytical criteria considered under the project.

Capacity-building workshop in Geneva

23. The Steering Committee will convene a three-day capacity-building workshop for national project participants in Geneva from 26 to 28 February 2007. Three participants from each selected country will be sponsored to attend the workshop. The aim of this workshop is to create a shared understanding of the overall objectives and expected results of the project, the methodology suggested in the framework, and to identify key challenges that may arise during the national wildlife trade policy reviews.

Workshops at the national level and establishment of national steering committees

24. The capacity-building workshop will be followed by project-launching workshops in each of the participating countries. The CITES Secretariat and/or UNEP will attend these workshops to provide support and guidance to country teams responsible for conducting the reviews. IUED representatives will also be present, principally gathering data for their research studies.

Presentation of first results at CoP14

25. At the request of the Steering Committee and pursuant to paragraph c) of Decision 13.74, a side event will be held during the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to provide an opportunity for participating project countries to share compiled and synthesized information on the initial results from their wildlife trade policy reviews. Also during CoP14, the Steering Committee will meet with members of the IAG so that they can give the participating countries initial feedback on project development and implementation.

Recommendations

26. Interested importing countries are encouraged to carry out national wildlife policy reviews in order to provide a balance view within the project.

27. Parties are recommended to include in their biennial reports information on the policy measures listed in paragraph a) of Decision 13.74, building to the extent possible on the suggested framework.

28. Feedback is sought on the draft framework and donors are invited to provide financial support to countries interested in preparing these reviews, in the context of their national and regional strategies and action plans for biodiversity conservation.

29. The Secretariat proposed that Decision 13.74 be renewed with the following amendments:

a) keep paragraphs a) and b);

b) renew the deadlines in paragraph c) for reporting to the Standing Committee and the Conference of the Parties; and

c) delete paragraph d).

30. Financial resources are needed to provide technical assistance to Parties interested in conducting the reviews. Costs associated with relevant Secretariat support are included in the costed programme of work. Financial support, which may be needed by certain countries in order to undertake a wildlife trade policy review, has not been included the costed programme of work but could be estimated at a maximum of 30,000 USD per country.

31. Annex 1 to this document contains a series of draft decisions that include the recommendations above and the Secretariat recommends their adoption by the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

National wildlife trade policy reviews

Directed to Parties

- 14.XX Importing countries are invited to carry out national wildlife policy reviews in order to facilitate a better understanding of wildlife trade policy at both ends of the international wildlife trade (supply and demand).
- 14.XX Parties that undertake a wildlife trade policy review should include relevant details in their biennial reports. Other Parties that have not undertaken a wildlife trade policy review, but have experience with the policy measures described in paragraph a) of Decision 14.XX, are invited to include relevant details in their biennial reports.

Directed to Parties and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

- 14.XX Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations should provide feedback on the draft of the wildlife trade policy review framework, as well as financial and technical assistance for conducting the national trade policy reviews.

Directed to the Secretariat

- 14.XX The Secretariat shall, in collaboration with interested producer and consumer Parties:
- a) conduct, in cooperation with the Parties, a review of their national policies regarding the use of and trade in specimens of CITES-listed species, taking into account economic incentives, production systems, consumption patterns, market access strategies, price structures, certification schemes, CITES-relevant taxation and subsidy schemes, property rights, mechanisms for benefit sharing and reinvestment in conservation, as well as stricter domestic measures that Parties apply or are affected by;
 - b) compile and synthesize the information provided by the Parties, and produce a report analysing the impacts of national policies for trade in CITES-listed species in terms of socio-economic and conservation benefits and costs, including on the economic value of the species, levels of legal and illegal trade, improvement of the livelihood of local communities, and on how they affect the role of the private sector involved in such trade; and
 - c) report at the 57th and subsequent meetings of the Standing Committee and at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the progress made with regard to the implementation of this Decision.

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