

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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Compliance and enforcement issues

INTERNET TRADE IN SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES

1. This document has been submitted by Germany, on behalf of the European Community Member States acting in the interest of the European Community.

Introduction

2. In a recent European Commission study on Enforcement of CITES in the European Union, the use of the Internet has been identified as one of the factors in the perceived increase in illegal wildlife trade entering the European Union over the past five years.
3. However, it is difficult to monitor the Internet in order to ensure that specimens of CITES-listed species are not being offered for sale in contravention of CITES, particularly as scams, which fraudulently purport to offer CITES goods for sale, appear to be widespread.
4. Furthermore, increased use of the Internet for trade in CITES-listed species may be changing the nature of traditional wildlife trade and thus affecting trade routes and modes of shipment.

Scope and content of the proposal

5. Given the dramatic growth in global Internet trade and the difficulties in policing these types of transactions, the draft decisions in the Annex to this document suggest convening a workshop to look at the scope of the problem of wildlife trade on the Internet and formulate recommendations for action to tackle illegal trade in wildlife on the Internet.
6. Indicative budgets for the work envisaged in the attached draft decision are:

- a) to undertake work requested of the Standing Committee:

– Secretariat staff time	USD	10,000
– Workshop	USD	100,000
– Printing, etc.	USD	10,000
– Communications	USD	5,000
TOTAL	USD	125,000

- b) to undertake work requested of the Secretariat:

– Secretariat staff time	USD	15,000
– Consultants to support the preparation of the overview	USD	15,000
TOTAL	USD	30,000

## COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

- A. The Secretariat is conscious that the Internet is apparently increasingly used for trade in specimens of CITES-listed species.
- B. Consequently, the Secretariat supports the suggestion to gather relevant information and to convene a workshop to consider the implications of trade on the Internet for CITES implementation and enforcement, in particular: legal trade in specimens of CITES-listed species via the Internet; the role of website owners and Internet service providers; any legislative provisions that should be in place for regulating such trade; how to tackle any illegal trade; and ways of raising awareness among consumers and traders about the provisions of the Convention.
- C. It believes, however, that it may be more efficient for the Secretariat to undertake much of the preparatory work that the draft decision in the document presently seeks to allocate to the Standing Committee. Consequently, the Secretariat proposes the draft decisions below as an alternative approach. It also believes that the two budgets suggested in the document could be combined and that USD 10,000 would be sufficient for the Secretariat's activities. Consequently, the overall budget may be reduced by USD 15,000.

### DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

#### Regarding trade in specimens of CITES-listed species via the Internet

##### *Directed to the Secretariat*

14.XX The Secretariat should:

- a) request, through a Notification issued after the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, information from Parties regarding:
  - i) the scale and nature of wildlife trade via the Internet that apparently involves their country;
  - ii) perceived problems relating to such trade, including illicit trade;
  - iii) the effectiveness of any measures that Parties have taken to address the trade in wildlife via the Internet, including the use of codes of conduct; and
  - iv) any changes in trade routes and methods of shipment that have been observed as a result of increased use of the Internet to promote trade in wildlife.
- b) review the information submitted by Parties and prepare a background document for consideration at a workshop;
- c) seek external funding to convene a workshop on wildlife trade via the Internet, to which the following should be invited to participate: CITES Management Authority and enforcement officials from Parties with emerging or existing wildlife trade via the Internet; experts on Internet trade; owners of relevant websites and Internet service providers; ICPO-Interpol and the World Customs Organization; and representatives of other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;
- d) publish the outcomes of the workshop, including any recommendations, on the CITES website seeking additional comments; and
- e) report on this matter at the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee.

##### *Directed to the Standing Committee*

- 14.XX The Standing Committee should review the Secretariat's report at its 58th meeting and determine whether additional measures are necessary including, if appropriate, directing the Secretariat to prepare a discussion document and draft resolution for consideration at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Internet trade in CITES-listed species

***Directed to the Standing Committee***

14.XX The Standing Committee shall:

- a) contingent on the availability of external funding, before the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, convene a workshop on Internet wildlife trade to consider implementation and enforcement issues and make recommendations, including but not limited to codes of practice, for action to tackle illegal trade in wildlife resulting from the use of the Internet;
- b) invite the following participants to the workshop: enforcement officers and Management Authority and Scientific Authority representatives from Parties identified as having an emerging or large-scale online wildlife trade; representatives from Interpol and other relevant enforcement agencies; representatives from relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations; experts on Internet trade; and owners of relevant websites;
- c) set out the terms of reference for the workshop on Internet wildlife trade, which should include consideration of the overview of Internet wildlife trade prepared by the Secretariat in accordance with Decision 14.XX;
- d) through its clearing-house mechanism, decide on the appropriate way to handle the logistics, agenda and reporting for the workshop and set timelines for the work to be done; and
- e) consider the comments received from the Parties on the workshop report, and consider whether to submit a discussion paper and/or a draft resolution for consideration at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

***Directed to the Secretariat***

14.XX The Secretariat shall assist in obtaining funds from interested Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other funding sources to support a workshop, and contingent on the availability of such funding:

- a) assist the Standing Committee in preparing for the workshop;
- b) request, through a Notification issued directly after the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, information from Parties on:
  - i) the scale and nature of trade in specimens of CITES-listed species on Internet sites registered in their countries;
  - ii) the effectiveness of existing measures taken to address illegal trade in wildlife resulting from the use of the Internet; and
  - iii) changes in trade routes and methods of shipment as a result of increased use of the Internet for wildlife trade;
- c) report through a Notification to the Parties about the recommendations from the workshop;
- d) review information obtained from Parties in response to the Notification and any other relevant information and prepare, in consultation with the Interpol Wildlife Crime Working Group, an overview of the scale and nature of trade in specimens of CITES-listed species on the Internet and its impact on the nature of wildlife trade, trade routes and methods of

shipment as well as implications for enforcement to be considered at the workshop on Internet wildlife trade; and

- e) prepare a discussion paper and/or draft resolution for consideration by the Standing Committee and at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.