

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

Species trade and conservation issues

GREAT APES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat and is intended also to serve as the Standing Committee's report on this subject at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Background

2. At its 13th meeting (CoP13, Bangkok, 2004), the Conference of the Parties adopted Resolution Conf. 13.4 (Conservation of and trade in great apes), which directs the Standing Committee to:
 - a) *review the implementation of this Resolution at each of its regular meetings on the basis of the Secretariat's reports;*
 - b) *consider other measures such as technical missions, organized in cooperation with GRASP and other appropriate partnerships, followed by political missions if necessary; and*
 - c) *report at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of this Resolution, with any recommendations for further action.*

Related activities

3. The subject of great apes was considered by the Standing Committee at its 53rd and 54th meetings [Geneva, June – July 2005 and October 2006 (SC54)], where documents SC53 Doc. 18 and SC54 Doc. 24 were presented by the Secretariat.
4. During SC54, the Secretariat expressed its concern regarding a lack of information relating to orang-utans that had been illegally imported to Cambodia and questioned whether the Convention was being adequately implemented. The Standing Committee called upon Cambodia to facilitate a mission by the Secretariat, to assess implementation of the Convention, and requested the Secretariat to report on this subject at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP14). The Standing Committee recommended that the Conference of the Parties review the report of the Secretariat and decide whether additional measures, including non-compliance measures, were necessary (particularly if the Secretariat were unable to conduct such a mission).
5. The Secretariat advised Cambodia of the decision of the Standing Committee but at the time of writing (December 2006) no response had been received. The Secretariat will provide an oral report at CoP14 on this matter.
6. During SC54, the Secretariat expressed its concerns regarding illicit trade in great apes in Egypt. The Standing Committee requested Egypt to prepare a report for CoP14 on its enforcement of the Convention, particularly with regard to the illicit trade in primates. The Standing Committee

recommended that the Conference of the Parties review the report and decide whether additional measures, including non-compliance measures or a verification mission by the Secretariat, were necessary. The Secretariat advised Egypt of this decision and a report is awaited.

Technical missions

7. At its 53rd meeting, the Standing Committee agreed that the CITES Secretariat should undertake, in conjunction with the GRASP Secretariat, technical missions to Asia to examine the illicit trade in orang-utans. The first of these took place in Indonesia in May 2006. The report of the mission and Indonesia's response can be accessed (in English only) on the CITES website under Programmes/Species programmes/Great apes.
8. At its 54th meeting, the Standing Committee requested that Indonesia report to the Secretariat, by 31 March 2007, on its enforcement work in relation to illicit trade in orang-utans. It also requested that the Secretariat should, thereafter, report at CoP14 on this subject to enable the Conference to determine whether additional measures were necessary.
9. It is intended that further technical missions be conducted to Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand. Malaysia has indicated that it would welcome such a mission but arrangements have had to be postponed on two occasions and it is hoped the mission will take place in early 2007. Thailand has also indicated its willingness to receive a mission and it is intended that this should take place before CoP14. No response has been received from Cambodia to repeated requests by the Secretariat for an invitation to conduct a mission to this country. The Secretariat is grateful to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for providing funds to enable the technical missions to be undertaken.

CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force

10. At its 53rd meeting, the Standing Committee endorsed a proposal that the Secretariat should convene a CITES Great Ape Enforcement Task Force. The Task Force met at UNEP headquarters, Gigiri, Kenya, from 31 October to 2 November 2006. Logistical support was provided by the GRASP Secretariat and funding was provided by the Government of the United Kingdom.
11. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Indonesia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the Sudan and Uganda all participated as range States. Cameroon and Rwanda were also invited to send range State representatives. However, at the last minute their governments declined to give travel authority. Kenya attended to represent transit countries. ICPO-Interpol, the Lusaka Agreement Task Force and the World Customs Organization participated. A half-day session was allocated for representatives of non-governmental organizations to meet with Task Force members and provide relevant information.
12. Having exchanged information on illicit trade in great apes in each of the countries represented, the Task Force then focused its discussions on identifying ways in which such trade can be combated and support might be provided to range States. It was noted that insufficient information was available regarding the nature of the trade and a country profile form was designed to gather more data. The form is to be distributed through CITES, GRASP, ICPO-Interpol and World Customs Organization channels. Information will then be analysed by the CITES Secretariat, ICPO-Interpol and the World Customs Organization to prepare a briefing document to help relevant law enforcement agencies combat illicit trade in great apes.
13. The Task Force also suggested a design for a poster to be distributed to Customs, police and wildlife offices, especially at ports and other places where illicit trade occurs, to help raise awareness. At the time of writing, the Secretariat had obtained support for the production of such a poster and it is being prepared.
14. Lastly, it was agreed that general capacity building is required for law-enforcement officials in range States of great apes. Task Force members recommended that training courses be organized to instruct relevant officials in the implementation and enforcement of CITES, investigation techniques and other relevant subjects. It was suggested that each range State nominate one wildlife, one Customs and one police officer (each to be of operational supervisory level) to attend such a course and that a train-the-trainer module should be included. It was thought that, if possible, such training

should be conducted at a Customs or police college. It was noted that two such courses would be needed; one conducted in English and the other in French. Although intended to support great ape range States, such training is intended to be of benefit generally to wildlife law enforcement and not simply to combat illicit trade in great apes.

15. It was noted that the organization of such training would require substantial funding and logistical support and the Secretariat would welcome offers of such support.

Conclusion

16. The above, together with the relevant Standing Committee documents, summarizes the work conducted in relation to great apes. The Secretariat will provide an oral report at CoP14 on any further developments.