

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

Sturgeons and paddlefish

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. At its 13th meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted the following Decisions:

Directed to Parties

- 13.44 *In consultation with the CITES Secretariat and relevant experts, interested Parties should undertake an assessment of the technical and legal feasibility to establish a database concerning trade in sturgeon specimens subject to annual quotas as outlined in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13). This database would be updated regularly and could include, pending needs identified under the assessment, information on species, specimens, volumes exported as well as the status of export quotas, the country, date of issuance and number of export permits and re-export certificates that are sent to the CITES Secretariat by relevant Parties.*
- 13.45 *Pending the results of the assessment referred to in Decision 13.44, and subject to the availability of funds, the interested Parties may submit a proposal for a pilot project on the provision of a database, for consideration by the Standing Committee at its 54th meeting.*
- 13.46 *In accordance with the Standing Committee's decision regarding the proposal referred to in Decision 13.45, the Parties concerned should report on the outcome of this pilot project and its recommendations at the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Directed to the Secretariat

- 13.47 *Subject to the availability of funds and the Standing Committee's support for a proposed pilot project, as referred to in Decision 13.46, all relevant information and documentation shall be forwarded on a regular basis to the relevant Party in charge, as approved by the Standing Committee at its 54th meeting.*
3. In order to expedite the actions envisaged in these Decisions, the Secretariat undertook discussions with UNEP-WCMC on this subject. As a result, UNEP-WCMC offered to adapt the CITES Trade Database so that information relating to sturgeon quotas and data collected from export and import

permits and re-export certificates issued by the Parties for trade in caviar could be entered. This enables the database to 'track' trade in caviar and identify anomalies in any permits or certificates that are issued.

4. This feature in the trade database is operational and the Secretariat is grateful to the European Commission for funding this work. However, the effectiveness of the database is completely dependent upon the regular submission of copies of export permits and re-export certificates issued to authorize trade in caviar. The submission of such copies to the Secretariat is already recommended in Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13) (Conservation of and trade in sturgeons and paddlefish).
5. The Secretariat has noted that several Parties are complying with the recommendation in an exemplary fashion. France, Germany and the United Arab Emirates regularly submit copies. Italy, Luxembourg and Spain have also supplied some copies but many more Parties that engage in trade in caviar have yet to submit any copies at all. In 2006, due to limited caviar quotas, it was expected that submissions would similarly be limited. If more extensive production and exports resume in 2007, it will be important for all Parties to implement the recommendation on a regular basis. The Standing Committee, at its 54th meeting (Geneva, October 2006), noted the establishment of the database and encouraged Parties to submit copies of permits and certificates.

Other activities

6. From 27 to 29 June 2006, the European Commission hosted an international sturgeon enforcement workshop to assist the combating of illegal trade in caviar. The proceedings of the workshop are available, in English only, on the CITES website and were also distributed as document SC54 Inf. 6 at the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee.
7. At the same meeting, the Standing Committee established a working group to review issues related to the trade in caviar and the conservation of sturgeons and paddlefish. It is expected that the working group will prepare a report for CoP14 and that this will contain a draft revision of Resolution Conf. 12.7 (Rev. CoP13).

Conclusion

8. The Conference of the Parties is asked to note this report.