

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

Summary record of the first session of Committee II

5 June 2007: 09h15-12h05

Chairman: C.S. Cheung (China)

Secretariat: W. Wijnstekers
J. Barzdo
M. Jankowska
M. Yeater

Rapporteurs: J. Boddens-Hosang
P. De Angelis
R. Mackenzie
C. McLardy

The Chairman drew the attention of Committee II to the working programme in document CoP14 Doc. 4. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would commence by considering agenda items 7.1 and 7.2, followed by agenda item 11 and then agenda item 7.3.

Administrative matters

7. Financing and budgeting of the Secretariat and of meetings of the Conference of the Parties

7.1 Financial reports for the years 2004 to 2006

The Secretariat introduced document CoP14 Doc. 7.1 (Rev. 1), drawing attention to the high percentage of the budget spent in the years 2004 and 2005, and to the fact that expenditure had been lower than projected in 2006, resulting in an increase in the balance of the CITES Trust Fund. After the Secretariat clarified some of the figures in Annex 10 to the document, it was accepted by the Committee.

7.2 Estimated expenditures for 2007

The Secretariat introduced document CoP14 Doc 7.2 (Rev. 1), and asked the Committee to approve the drawdown of USD 85,670 from the accumulated Trust Fund balance as outlined in paragraph 3 of the document. The Committee accepted the estimated expenditure for 2007 and approved the drawdown of USD 85,670.

Strategic matters

11. CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013

Canada, as Vice-Chairman of the Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG), introduced document CoP14 Doc. 11. They noted that the SPWG had received comments on the draft Strategic Vision during and after the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee. They noted that the SPWG had

chosen not to provide a prescriptive action plan but had prepared a framework and general indicators that Parties could adapt to the conditions in their own countries.

Japan questioned the implications of the draft Strategic Vision for the costed programme of work for the CITES Secretariat for the triennium 2008-2011 in Annex 1 of document CoP14 Doc. 7.3 (Rev. 1) and in particular the allocation of activities to the Trust Fund or external funding. They suggested amending the first operative paragraph of the draft resolution contained in document CoP14 Doc. 11, which reads "ADOPTS the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013*, annexed to this Resolution," by adding the words subject to the availability of funds.

The Secretary-General clarified that document CoP14 Doc. 7.3 (Rev. 1) contained the estimated cost of the activities required to implement the draft Strategic Vision, resolutions and decisions. He said that it was for the Parties to decide which activities should be included in the work programme and, of those, which should be supported from the Trust Fund and which from external funding.

Australia supported the outcome-based approach outlined in the draft Strategic Vision and the mission statement. However, they remained concerned about some aspects of the draft, noting in particular, in relation to Goal 3, that CITES should not be subordinated to other multilateral environmental agreements, goals or targets. They added that they would make further comments in any working group established to address this item.

The United States observed that the draft Strategic Vision reflected two potentially competing themes: the need for CITES to continue to improve its traditional role in the management of wildlife trade; and the need to evolve in relation to issues of biodiversity, international trade and human welfare. They said that the working group might need to take up a number of issues including improving the implementation of CITES, understanding the views of the Parties on the draft Strategic Vision, the question of the need for an action plan, and the link between the draft Strategic Vision and the costed programme of work.

Brazil, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean region, and supported by Malaysia and Zimbabwe, expressed concern about the lack of reference in the draft Strategic Vision to the need for capacity building and the provision of financial and technological resources to developing countries. They raised concerns about the proposal to give greater attention to timber and aquatic species, suggesting that such developments could weaken the ability of CITES to protect species already listed in the Appendices. Brazil also stressed that CITES should not endorse subsidies or trade barriers unjustifiable under international law. Brazil proposed a number of specific amendments to the draft Strategic Vision.

Malaysia considered that the draft Strategic Vision was ambitious for the proposed time-frame and questioned whether its objectives were achievable given that many developing countries were still struggling with implementation. Malaysia emphasized the need for further financial and technical assistance and suggested deleting the reference to risk assessment in Objective 1.5. Indonesia agreed, pointing out that most Parties to CITES were developing countries whose needs should be taken into account when developing the Strategic Vision.

Israel stressed that Objective 1.3 should in no way undermine the right of Parties under the Convention to adopt stricter domestic measures. In relation to Objective 1.5, they believed that non-detriment findings should be peer-reviewed.

Kenya supported the emphasis on implementation and enforcement, and the need for a sound financial basis for the Convention. They stressed the need for the Strategic Vision to focus on realizing the core objectives of CITES: the protection of species from unsustainable international trade rather than the promotion of sustainable trade. They made reference to Target 4.3 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in relation to the 2010 Target.

Norway, agreed with the Secretariat that the draft Strategic Vision did not extend too far beyond the core purpose of CITES and that CITES could not be considered in isolation from other relevant instruments. Nonetheless, they stressed that it was important to avoid duplication with other management bodies. This view was supported by Iceland and Switzerland.

Germany, on behalf of the Member States of the European Community, endorsed the general approach of the Strategic Vision but regretted that the aspect of CITES as an instrument to reduce biodiversity loss by 2010 had been removed and requested that this be reinstated.

China, a member of the SPWG, supported the approach of the draft Strategic Vision. Mexico recognized the need to reflect further on how to translate the Strategic Vision into a viable programme. New Zealand, also a member of the SPWG, explained that document CoP14 Doc. 11 was not intended to be comprehensive but rather to provide a high level framework with measurable indicators, providing a guide towards the future without being prescriptive. They hoped that any working group established to examine the draft would endeavour to keep it clear and simple.

Japan, referring to Objectives 1.3 and 1.7 in the Annex to document CoP14 Doc. 11, emphasized the importance of a facilitation process before taking punitive measure, i.e. informal consultations between the Secretariat and the Parties in ensuring compliance with the Convention.

IUCN, speaking also on behalf of WWF and TRAFFIC, referred to their briefing document that outlined their joint position with regard to the Strategic Vision. They expressed their interest in joining the Working Group. Other non-governmental organizations including Fauna & Flora International, International Fund for Animal Welfare, IWMC, SSN and Safari Club International also voiced comments and added their wish to elaborate upon these in the working group if invited.

The Chairman announced that an open-ended working group, to be chaired by Canada, would include amongst others: Australia, Brazil, Chile, Dominica, Iceland, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, the United States of America, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Zimbabwe. The mandate of the working group was to provide a revision of the draft Strategic Vision in document CoP14 Doc. 11 after consideration of the comments made.

Administrative matters

7.3 Costed programme of work for the Secretariat for the triennium 2009-2011

The Secretary-General introduced document CoP14 Doc 7.3 (Rev. 1) and gave a detailed presentation outlining the Secretariat's suggested approach to managing resources linked to the Strategic Vision, Resolutions and Decisions (see document CoP14 Inf. 47, English only). He emphasized that Parties must decide which activities they wish to be implemented, how these should be funded and, for those to be externally funded, which should be given priority. He recommended the formation of a small budget working group that would liaise with Committees I and II, as well as the working group on the Strategic Vision, and report to the Bureau.

Germany, on behalf of the Member States of the European Community, noted the need to prioritize activities to be funded by the CITES Trust Fund, thus clarifying the need for additional funding. They suggested that an open working group review the budget lines and consider possible cost-saving measures.

Japan believed the working group should be closed and felt that if proposed staffing resources were necessary, they should be arranged on a scrap-and-build basis. Concerning the costed programme of work, the Secretary-General stated that any staff changes should follow the approval of the costed work programme and that this would fall under his responsibility.

Brazil, China, Colombia and Norway expressed concern about possible increases in contributions and wished to join the budget working group.

The session was closed at 12h05.