

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



Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Doha (Qatar), 13-25 March 2010

Strategic matters

Cooperation with other organizations

SYNERGY WITH BIODIVERSITY-RELATED INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Background

2. Since the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (The Hague, June 2007), three significant biodiversity-related international initiatives have arisen: the development of post-2010 biodiversity targets, the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP) [<http://www.twentyten.net/language/en-us/home>] and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) [<http://ipbes.net> (English only)]. Additionally, the issue of climate change and its potential environmental impacts has come increasingly to the fore. The Secretariat believes that the Conference of the Parties should take account of these developments and that CITES should participate in the BIP and IPBES initiatives.

Post-2010 biodiversity targets

3. In the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, August-September 2002), Heads of State and Government committed themselves to “the achievement by 2010 of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity”. This date is about to be reached, with a one-day high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly with the participation of Heads of State and Government planned for September 2010 to discuss the urgent need to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and to provide access to and share benefits from the use of genetic resources in the coming decade. Attention has now therefore turned to the post-2010 target for biodiversity. UNEP convened an Expert Meeting on Development of Post 2010 Global Biodiversity Targets (Kenya, October 2009) to reflect on the way forward and the CITES Secretariat and the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees were invited to participate. At this meeting, a first draft of a new vision was agreed, together with goals and targets which will be used at a series of regional consultations and meetings culminating in the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2010 and, later, the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya, November 2010). The Secretariat has also been involved in the discussions on this matter in the forum of the Environmental Management Group (EMG). The EMG is a United Nations system-wide coordination body whose membership consists of the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations including the secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements. It is preparing a UN system-wide contribution to the debate on post 2010 biodiversity targets.
4. The present *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-13* contains a number of references to the World Summit on Sustainable Development target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. These are likely to need updating in the light of any newly adopted post-2010 targets. Consequently, the Secretariat proposes a decision contained in the Annex to the present document to facilitate this updating.

2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership

5. a) The BIP initiative is led by the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) with an initial USD 3.6 million of funding from the Global Environment Facility to support the development of biodiversity indicators for the 2010 biodiversity target. The Partnership is composed of more than 40 partners from around the world, including UN agencies (such as UNEP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), multilateral environmental agreements [such as CITES, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Ramsar], intergovernmental organizations [such as International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)], scientific research institutions and non-governmental organizations (such as BirdLife International and WWF International). The three main objectives of the 2010 BIP are:
- i) To generate information on biodiversity trends which is useful to decision-makers;
 - ii) To ensure improved global biodiversity indicators are implemented and available; and
 - iii) To establish links between biodiversity initiatives at the regional and national levels to enable capacity building and improve the delivery of the biodiversity indicators.
- b) A major benchmark for the Partnership is to provide a contribution to the third edition of CBD's Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-3), which is scheduled for completion in May 2010.
- c) At the first meeting of the Partnership in September 2007, the CITES Secretariat was asked to be the key indicator partner for the 'Status of species in trade' element of the indicators of sustainable use. The Secretariat is working in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC to achieve this objective. The indicator is still under development. The current version and background can be viewed on the <http://www.twentyten.net/language/en-us/home> website. Linkages and overlaps exist with the other indicators such as: wild commodities index, living planet index, global wild bird index and IUCN red list index. In the case of the latter, a published paper [[Butchart, Stuart H. M. \(2008\). Red List Indices to measure the sustainability of species use and impacts of invasive alien species. *Bird Conservation International*, 18, pp S245-S262](#)] already indicates some of the possibilities for detecting change in the status of species in international trade. Further work will be needed to try and incorporate consideration of factors that influence such change including legislative actions, volumes of legal trade and estimates of illegal trade. In view of the nature of indicator 3.4.1 agreed by the Standing Committee for measuring progress towards implementation of the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013*, this work also has potential for measuring the effectiveness of the Convention.
- d) The Secretariat has sought to ensure that the profile of the Convention is maintained in the BIP in order to demonstrate the pertinence of CITES to the wider goal of conserving biodiversity and ensuring that it is used sustainably. It has kept the Animals and Plants Committees informed of developments and sought their input as this initiative has evolved (see documents AC23/PC17 Doc. 7 and PC18 Doc. 7.1/AC24 Doc. 6). The Partnership hopes to obtain further funding to continue its work after 2010, in which case a stronger input from CITES will be needed. The Secretariat therefore proposes a draft decision accordingly, which can be found in the Annex to the present document.
- e) Financial provision for implementation of the draft decision is already provided in Activities 34 and 42 of the Costed Programme of Work and no new budgetary impact is envisaged.

Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

6. a) At the Paris Conference on Biodiversity, Science and Governance, held in January 2005, a consultation to assess the need for and scope and possible form of an International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB) was proposed. This consultation, focusing on the need for an objective source of information about biodiversity change and its impacts on ecosystem services and human well-being, was held between 2005 and 2007 under the direction of an International Steering Committee comprising representatives of governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including the CITES Secretariat. The consultation culminated in a request from the International Steering Committee that the Executive Director of UNEP continue to explore the establishment of an international interface between science and policy to address these objectives.

- b) Subsequently, under the title Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, UNEP convened two intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meetings (Putrajaya, November 2008, and Nairobi, October 2009) to discuss this matter. The Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committee, and the Secretariat were invited to participate in these meetings. The Chair of the Plants Committee and the Secretariat attended the first, and the Vice-Chair of the Animals Committee, Chair of the Plants Committee and Secretariat, the second. The meetings focussed on linkages between IPBES, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment follow-up process and other similar processes, and participants in the Nairobi meeting reviewed a key preparatory document entitled *Gap analysis for the purpose of facilitating the discussions on how to improve and strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services* [English only].
- c) Throughout the discussions about a possible Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the role and needs of and relationship to, the scientific subsidiary bodies of multilateral environmental agreements, such as the Animals and Plants Committees, have been frequently referred to. The Animals and Plants Committees have been kept informed of developments as this initiative has evolved (see documents AC23/PC17 Doc. 7 and PC18 Doc. 7.1/AC24 Doc. 6).
- d) Decisions concerning the need for and nature of, any mechanism to improve the interface between science and policy are for national governments to make within the framework of the consultations organized by UNEP. The role of the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat in these consultations has been limited to commenting on the current provision of, and use of, science within CITES, offering the positive engagement and cooperation of CITES in implementing any decisions taken, and reporting to the CITES Parties.
- e) The second consultation meeting made further progress in defining the need for and nature of a possible [Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#). Should such a Platform be formed, it seems likely that the chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees will be invited to participate in its governance structure. This would be a welcome recognition of the wider role that CITES plays in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Whilst it might be anticipated that external funding may be provided for the participation of the Chairs in this activity, the Secretariat believes that it reinforces the need for the Parties to make provision in the Trust Fund budget for a limited amount of travel funds to permit the Chairs to fulfil their wider responsibilities outside the meetings of the committees. In this context the Secretariat has already drawn attention to the vital role that the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees play in the meeting of the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions forum (see documents AC23/PC17 Doc. 7, AC24 Doc. 6.1 and PC18 Doc. 7.1). Other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements such as CBD and Ramsar already make such provision in their budgets.
- f) The Secretariat suggests that the budget committee review the need to provide financial support to the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees in order to enable them to undertake representational duties other than at meetings of their committees.

Climate change

- 7. a) There is considerable evidence that the world's climate is changing at quite a rapid rate. The Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2007) contains detailed information on this change. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change defines "Adverse effects of climate change" as changes in the physical environment or biota resulting from climate change which have significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems on the operation of socio-economic systems or on human health and welfare. Such adverse effects also impact on CITES-listed species and the habitats upon which they depend. Indirect impacts on these species as a result of climate change mitigation and adaptation activities are also being experienced. The effects on CITES-listed species include changes in range, abundance and productivity of species, but precise impacts will vary depending on the resilience of the species, its life history, dispersal ability, dependence on other affected species and adaptive capacity. The impacts of climate change on biodiversity have already been recognized by other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, such as CBD, Ramsar and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.
- b) In addition to potentially compromising the effort to achieve the World Summit on Sustainable Development target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 to which CITES implementation contributes, climate change may have more direct effects on the implementation of the

Convention, and on the decisions taken at meetings of the Conference of the Parties. Examples may include the making of non-detriment findings and the inclusion of species in the Appendices.

- c) The Secretariat does not believe that the Convention has a major role to play in addressing the causes of climate change or the overarching mitigation and adaptation measures required to deal with it. Other agreements and organizations are better placed to do this. However, it does believe that the Parties should first recognize the actual and potential impacts of this change on the implementation of the Convention, and second work with sister organizations to address the wider impact of climate change. Consequently, the Secretariat proposes three draft decisions on this matter which can be found in the Annex to the present document.
 - d) Financial provision for implementation of these draft decisions is already provided in Activities 41 and 42 of the Costed Programme of Work and no new budgetary impact is envisaged.
8. The Secretariat recommends that the Conference adopts the draft decisions in the Annex to the present document.

DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Post-2010 biodiversity targets

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 15.xx The Standing Committee shall review the adopted post-2010 biodiversity targets and, if necessary, make adjustments to the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013* as appropriate.

Biodiversity Indicators Partnership

Directed to the Secretariat

- 15.xx The Secretariat shall continue to provide its services as a key indicator partner in the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, consulting the Animals, Plants and Standing Committees where necessary, and shall report on its work in this regard at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat

- 15.xx Without taking a position about the necessity for, or nature of, such a Platform, the Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committees and the Secretariat shall, if invited, participate in discussions concerning a possible Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to ensure that the role of CITES receives due recognition.

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

- 15.xx The Chairs of the Animals and Plants Committee shall accept any invitation to participate in the governance structure of any Platform or other structure established. The Chairs shall advise the Standing Committee of any such invitation and report on the implementation of this Decision at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Climate change

Directed to the Animals and Plants Committees

- 15.xx The Animals and Plants Committees shall identify the scientific aspects of the provisions of the Convention and of Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties that are actually or likely to be affected by climate change and report their findings at the 62nd meeting of the Standing Committee.

Directed to the Standing Committee

- 15.xx The Standing Committee shall identify the non-scientific policy aspects of the provisions of the Convention and of Resolutions of the Conference of the Parties that are actually or likely to be affected by climate change.
- 15.xx The Standing Committee shall review the climate change-related activities of other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements and identify scope for synergy and collaboration.
- 15.xx The Standing Committee shall report on the implementation of Decisions 15.xx, 15.xx and 15.xx and make recommendations for further action at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.