

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

Capacity building

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat.
2. Capacity building in CITES relates to supporting and improving national and regional efforts to implement the Convention. This document provides information on several recent capacity-building activities of the Secretariat.
3. The Secretariat is actively involved in providing training on CITES through national and regional training workshops for Management and Scientific Authorities, law enforcement agencies including Customs, and legislators. The Secretariat also conducts train-the-trainer workshops to improve teaching and facilitation skills and to encourage the use of CITES training materials and, through its MIKE programme, capacity building activities in connection with this elephant monitoring programme in African and Asian elephant range States (see document CoP15 Doc. 44.2).

Strengthening CITES implementation

4. The Secretariat has secured funding of USD 1,405,000 from the European Commission for a project to strengthen the CITES implementation capacity of developing countries to ensure sustainable wildlife management and non-detrimental trade. The Secretariat is grateful to the European Commission for this important funding contribution to CITES capacity building.
5. A major challenge for many countries is the difficulty in meeting the requirements for trade in CITES-listed species, ranging from legal sourcing and sustainability requirements, to the effective control of legal trade and deterrence of illegal trade. Mechanisms exist in CITES and in both exporting and importing countries that promote and facilitate compliance. Countries that are believed not to meet CITES requirements may be subject to a range of international compliance measures, including trade suspensions.
6. While mechanisms for identifying non-compliance and recommending actions to restore compliance are well developed, programmes to encourage and assist countries in meeting trade requirements are limited and solutions are hampered by a lack of capacity in many exporting countries, or a lack of current biological or trade information with respect to certain species. The result is reduced levels of trade, which in turn impacts on economic growth and local livelihoods, and reduces options and incentives for conserving and managing wild resources effectively. The aim of the EC-funded capacity building project is to strengthen capacities to implement the Convention and satisfy the CITES-related requirements of trading partners (such as the European Union), to prevent overexploitation and to ensure legal international trade in wild fauna and flora does not exceed sustainable levels.
7. The project involves identifying underlying problems affecting CITES implementation and fulfilment of import requirements, designing and delivering e-training to address these problems, convening two regional workshops for Africa, one workshop for Central and West Asia, one workshop for South and Southeast Asia, and one workshop for Central and South America, before the end of 2010. The project will also support a limited number of post-workshop activities aimed at addressing implementation weaknesses

and immediate data needs, such as population studies and surveys, further national-level training, and so on. It is expected that two of the five workshops will have taken place before CoP15, and an oral report on implementation of the project, and possible follow-up activities, will be provided at the present meeting.

#### Science in CITES

8. One of the key areas of work for capacity building by the Secretariat is the assistance provided to Scientific Authorities through its '*science in CITES*' workshops, organized in collaboration with national CITES Authorities (addressing the call for such workshops in Resolution Conf. 10.3). These workshops focus on the making of non-detriment findings, setting of quotas, adaptive management, and other tasks and responsibilities of Scientific Authorities. A recent example is a regional workshop organized in Palić, Serbia in March 2009.
9. While regional workshops engender international collaboration, national-level workshops provide the opportunity to reach all of the agencies and stakeholders within a country, for the purpose of raising awareness, sharing knowledge and building working relationships. A recent example is a workshop held in Conakry, Guinea, in September 2008.

#### The Green Customs Initiative

10. The Green Customs Initiative, launched by UNEP in 2001, is a partnership of international organizations. Its objective is to enhance the capacity of Customs and other relevant enforcement personnel to monitor and facilitate the legal trade, and to detect and prevent illegal trade in environmentally-sensitive commodities covered by the relevant conventions and multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). These include ozone-depleting substances (ODS), toxic chemical products, hazardous wastes, CITES species and living modified organisms. This is achieved through awareness-raising on all the relevant international agreements as well as provision of assistance and tools to the enforcement community. Green Customs is designed to complement and enhance existing Customs training efforts under the respective agreements.
11. The partners of the Green Customs Initiative comprise the secretariats of the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal; Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction; CITES; Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants), Interpol, UNEP, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the World Customs Organization.
12. The initiative has resulted in regular training events to raise awareness amongst Customs officers of the various MEAs (14 Green Customs workshops have been held since 2004), and the publication by UNEP of the *Green Customs Guide to Multilateral Environmental Agreements* (2008). The Secretariat participated in the preparation of the Guide, and contributes training materials for the workshops. Twenty five presentations on CITES subjects have been prepared for use in these workshops, mainly focusing on specimen identification and procedures, allowing participants to choose the subjects most relevant to their work. The Secretariat has also participated as a trainer or facilitator in several of the Green Customs workshops.

#### Advice on the use of new information and communication technologies

13. In July 2009, the Secretariat published Issue No. 18 of *CITES World*, devoted to the subject of electronic permitting systems. This edition presented articles on the need for harmonization with initiatives related to electronic commerce and Customs, especially those related to or promoted by the Single Window environment, the World Customs Organization and the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT). Further information on electronic permitting and related capacity building is found in document CoP15 Doc. 30.

#### Regional cooperation

14. The Secretariat is collaborating with the International Technical Assistance Program of the United States Department of the Interior on an initiative to strengthen CITES implementation in Parties included in bilateral Free Trade Agreements between the United States and Middle East and North African countries,

and between the United States and Central American countries and the Dominican Republic. This collaboration involves developing comprehensive, region-specific CITES training curricula and innovative training materials, conducting training workshops, providing technical assistance, and assisting local institutions. Within this context, an interactive CD-ROM course was developed in support of the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic. Recent initiatives include workshops in El Salvador (January 2008), Oman (March 2009), Guatemala (August 2009) and Morocco (October 2009). As a result of this collaboration, a large number of training materials for Management and Scientific Authorities have been translated into Arabic (see Notification to the Parties No. 2009/022 of 8 June 2009), and the Secretariat is grateful to the United States Department of the Interior, with support from the United States Department of State Middle East Partnership Initiative, for arranging the translation of CITES training materials.

#### Training trainers

15. The Secretariat developed a course for CITES trainers, *Presentation skills training for CITES trainers*, to improve their presentation and facilitation skills. The course is composed of three modules: *Approaches to instruction*, *What is learning*, and *Presentation skills*. The CD-ROM version of the course was launched in July 2008. It offers a balanced overview between educational theory and practice, complemented by readings and exercises. The course is currently available only in English, and a French and Spanish version of this CD-ROM will be developed subject to the availability of financial resources.

#### Updates to training materials

16. In February 2008, the Secretariat informed the Parties of the launch of an improved and updated version of the CD-ROM course *Interactive training course for enforcement officers and information module for prosecutors and the judiciary*, available for the first time in the three working languages of the Convention (see Notification to the Parties No. 2008/014 of 26 February 2008). The Secretariat is grateful to the European Commission for its financial support, which has made possible the development of this interactive course and information module.
17. A revised and updated version of the interactive CD-ROM course *Introduction to CITES for Customs* was launched in April 2009 (see Notification to the Parties No. 2009/018 of 29 April 2009). The Secretariat is grateful to the Canada Border Services Agency for permitting it to adapt their product for CITES training and to the Enforcement Branch of the Canadian Wildlife Service for its help in the preparation of the original version of the course in 2004.
18. Together with the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, the Secretariat is preparing a revised and updated version of *CITES and Plants: A User's Guide*, in the form of an interactive CD-ROM course. Version 3 of the guide was published by the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, in 2004, but this useful tool is now out of print. The new version will bring the content up to date and provide additional resource material. A report on progress with this joint initiative will be provided at the present meeting.

#### Collaboration with other multilateral instruments

19. Pursuant to Goal 3 of Resolution Conf. 14.2, *CITES Strategic Vision*, and at the request of the Biodiversity Liaison Group, the Secretariat developed a CD-ROM on the application of the Addis Ababa principles and guidelines within the biodiversity-related conventions. This electronic resource contains information on the application of the Addis Ababa principles and guidelines by the six biodiversity-related conventions, the full text of the principles and guidelines, relevant decisions, recommendations and resolutions, and background documents and other materials, including links to relevant websites.

#### Identification training

20. The implementation of CITES involves many tasks and requires many skills. One area of capacity building that is essential to the implementation of trade controls is the identification of CITES specimens. The Secretariat has been improving its support to national training initiatives by developing training materials on specimen identification, acquiring by donation and long-term loan a representative collection of specimens to be used in identification training, and modernizing the CITES Identification Manual (see document Doc. 15.38 on the Identification Manual). The Secretariat is grateful to Parties that have provided it with specimens for identification training purposes. Training materials, which are meant to complement the CITES Identification Manual, currently address the identification of furs, precious corals, tortoiseshell, snake skins, ivory, chameleons and giant clams. Recent identification training initiatives include a

workshop in Kuwait City in November 2008, organised by the Management Authority of Kuwait, and a timber identification workshop held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo in June 2009, as part of the joint ITTO-CITES timber project.

#### Collaboration with non-government organizations

21. The Secretariat is aware that a number of non-governmental organizations offer CITES-related training to CITES Parties. The Secretariat encourages governments to take the lead in any CITES capacity-building efforts supported by NGOs, and it encourages the use of standard CITES training materials. The Secretariat is willing to work with NGOs developing CITES-related training materials to ensure the accuracy of these materials and to prevent out-of-date, incorrect or biased interpretations of the Convention. In this regard the Secretariat has reviewed and commented on materials produced by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the TRAFFIC Network, and has provided Species Management Specialists with materials used in their CITES-related training. The Secretariat has also met with representatives from IFAW and the Humane Society of the United States to discuss areas of support and collaboration on CITES-related training materials.

#### Support to Master's degree programmes

22. The Secretariat contributes to Master's degree programmes that include study of the Convention. It has given lectures for the Master's course on *Management, Access and Conservation of Species in Trade: The International Framework* offered by the International University of Andalusia (Spain), and the Master's course on *Conservation and International Wildlife Trade* offered by the University of Kent and the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). Staff of the Secretariat are also acting as thesis advisors to five graduate students of the programme established by the International University of Andalusia. The Secretariat is grateful to these institutions for supporting the participation of Secretariat staff in these important programmes.

#### Internet-based training and the CITES Virtual College

23. The Secretariat believes that Internet-based training offers the means and scope to provide general and specialized training at a level that can most effectively support national and regional training needs. The Secretariat refers to this approach as the 'CITES Virtual College', and the concept for this was previously explained in document CoP14 Doc. 16.
24. When this approach was introduced at 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (The Hague, 3-15 June 2007), the Secretariat had contracted an e-learning provider to help develop and host pilot courses. Unfortunately, the provider could not deliver the expected services, and the Secretariat sought other ways to advance the CITES Virtual College concept. The Secretariat has established a formal collaboration with the International University of Andalusia to make use of the university's virtual education platform for the development and delivery of Web-based capacity-building courses and instructional materials in support of the CITES Virtual College. The Secretariat is very grateful to the University for generously making its virtual education platform available for courses to enhance the capacity of CITES Authorities and to increase awareness of the role and purpose of the Convention. A first introductory course has been prepared, and the Secretariat will give an oral report on progress with this initiative at the present meeting.
25. The Secretariat is participating in UNeLearn, a UN-wide network on technology-supported learning launched in December 2008 to share information and expertise on capacity building approaches, and to collaborate on the sustained deployment of e-learning. Sixteen UN agencies are participating in this initiative aimed at improving coherence and effectiveness among UN projects at the national level

#### Recommendations

26. The Secretariat encourages Parties to make use of the capacity-building courses, tools and materials it has prepared in their own training and outreach programmes. The courses, tools and training materials are available upon request to the Secretariat.
27. The Secretariat further encourages Parties to support Master's degree programmes that contribute to a greater understanding of the Convention. The Secretariat therefore recommends maintaining Decision 14.10 on Support to Master's programmes.