

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

Interpretation and implementation of the Convention

Trade controls and marking

PRODUCTION SYSTEMS FOR SPECIMENS OF CITES-LISTED SPECIES

1. This document has been prepared by the Animals and Plants Committees\*.
2. Decision 14.52 directed to the Animals and Plants Committees stated that the Committees shall:
  - a) *review the CITES trade data maintained by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre to determine the species for which source code R has been used for trade, and the countries where this has occurred;*
  - b) *survey countries applying source code R to species other than crocodylians transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II subject to ranching, and obtain information on the management programme for the species to which this source code is applied;*
  - c) *review the literature on wildlife management for current information on management systems that would resemble ranching (i.e. primarily focused on the harvest of specimens representing early life stages for rearing in captivity) and identify common elements in these programmes;*
  - d) *based on this review, propose a definition of ranching and the use of source code R for CITES purposes; and*
  - e) *report at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of this decision.*

Animals Committee

Review of the use of source code R.

3. During their joint meeting in April 2008, the CITES Animals and Plants Committees (AC23/PC17) discussed the review of source code R for ranching, as directed by Decision 14.52, based on document AC23/PC17 Doc. 9 (Rev. 2), prepared by the Secretariat.
4. Source code R was used originally for crocodylian species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II. Ranching is defined in Resolution 11.16 as 'rearing in a controlled environment of specimens taken from the wild'. Source code R is currently been used by 44 countries for many animal and plant species in Appendix I and II.

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\* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

5. An intersessional working group of the joint AC/PC studied the list (AC23/PC17 Doc. 9 (Rev. 2) of countries and species and identified those combinations for which the source code R had been used on a regular basis in the past 15 years.
6. The working group requested information from 27 countries through a questionnaire.
7. A description was asked about the harvest of wild specimens for ranching, the methods of ranching, the benefits of ranching for conservation and views about the definition of ranching.
8. Thirteen countries replied of which six countries answered the questions in the questionnaire. The information provided was rather limited and formed a rather small basis for review and analysis. Despite the low level of response the Plants Committee (PC18) in March 2009 and the Animals Committee (AC24) in April 2009 decided to proceed with this issue.
9. The review of literature by volunteers of the working group provided no information.
10. Based on the available information the working group concluded that source code R had been used erroneously in several countries. Also source code R had been used for export of several species where the country had no ranching operation. Although this is no obligation for Appendix II species, one could question whether these specimens could be considered as 'reared in a controlled environment of specimens taken from the wild' or should have been exported as wild.
11. Furthermore there were several indications that the conservation benefits of ranching may be absent, unknown or questionable. Some ranching operations however seemed to have some conservation benefit and the use of source code R could be justified in line with the considerations of Resolution Conf. 11.16.
12. Based on the report of the intersessional working group (AC24 Doc.8.1) the Animals Committee (AC24) in April 2009 discussed the options to delete source code R completely, to use source code R only for down listed populations of Appendix I or to use source code R also for Appendix II species.
13. The Animals Committee at its 24th meeting formulated the following recommendations:
  - a) Source code R is to be maintained only for species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II, in conformity with Resolutions Conf. 9.20 (Rev.) and Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14).
  - b) "Ranching" is to be defined as follows: "Ranching means the rearing in a controlled environment of specimens which have been taken as eggs or juveniles from the wild where they would have a very low probability of surviving to adulthood."
  - c) For a better guidance to the Parties on the use of source code R a manual should be produced which might provide such guidance on the use of source code R (and other source codes). For this purpose the following draft decision directed to the Secretariat is submitted to the CoP:

*Contingent upon the availability of external funds, the Secretariat shall contract an appropriate expert to prepare a guide to advise the Parties on the appropriate use of source codes.*

#### Plants Committee

14. The response to the questionnaire did not provide an example for ranching of plants. The intersessional working group of the joint AC/PC suggested not to use source code R for plants (PC18 Doc. 9). The Plants Committee (PC18) in March 2009 advised that the concept of ranching was not appropriate for plants and was concerned that continued use of source code R could permit laundering of wild plants. The Plants Committee (PC18) in March 2009 agreed to recommend at CoP15 that Parties not use source code R for plants.

## COMMENTS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

NB: Text to be deleted is ~~crossed-out~~. Proposed new text is underlined.

- A. The Secretariat agrees with the recommendations made in paragraphs 13 a) and 14 above, and suggests that in order to bring it into effect, a change be made to paragraph g) under RECOMMENDS in Section I of Resolution Conf. 12.3 (Rev. CoP14) on *Permits and certificates* as follows:
- g) the following codes be used to indicate the source of the specimens:
- W** Specimens taken from the wild
  - R** Specimens originating from a ranching operation for animal species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II, in conformity with Resolution Conf. 9.20 (Rev.) or Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14)
- B. The Secretariat agrees with the principle of the recommendation made in paragraph 13 b) above, and suggests that, if Resolution Conf. 11.16 (Rev. CoP14) on *Ranching and trade in ranched specimens of species transferred from Appendix I to Appendix II* is maintained (see document CoP15 Doc. 28 Annex 3), then, in order to bring it into effect, a change be made to paragraph a) under DECIDES of that Resolution as follows:
- a) the term 'ranching' means the rearing in a controlled environment of ~~specimens~~ animals taken from the wild as eggs or juveniles from the wild, where they would otherwise have had a very low probability of surviving to adulthood; and
- C. In relation to the recommendation in paragraph 13. c), the Secretariat believes that the recommendations in sub-paragraphs 13. a) and b) make the definition of the term 'ranching' and the use of source code 'R' perfectly clear and that the production of a manual to provide further guidance on the use of source code 'R' (and other source codes) would not be a good use of time and resources.